

The parables peculiar to Luke show a strong tendency to link the end with the beginning, and this recursion is presumably a discourse feature of some significance which Luke controlled better than Matthew or Mark. If we pay more attention to this than we traditionally have, it affects our perception of the main point of several of the parables. This leads us to suggest alternative titles or section headings for the parables concerned. In turn, looking at a parable under a different title may well affect our approach to its structure in translation.

We might conclude that Luke is a more artful user of parables than Matthew or Mark. Matthew with his formula “the Kingdom ... is like ...” tends to give the key to the interpretation at the beginning. By avoiding this, Luke does more to let the story speak and convey the challenge for itself. It is surely no accident that the two best known and loved of all the parables both come from Luke’s unique material.

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– Editor]

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“JEALOUS” IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: the Hebrew *qana*’ and related words

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*[Here is the second part of this article, continued from the April 1997 issue of
The Bible Translator. For general discussion of the meaning of the term qana’,
readers should refer back to that first part of the article.*

– Editor]

(5) Psalm 73.3

“For I was envious of the arrogant,
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked” (RSV).
“... because I was jealous of the proud
when I saw that things go well for the wicked” (GNB).

The first 12 verses of this psalm appear to support the traditional interpretation of jealousy and envy. The Psalmist, in the midst of suffering and looking at the wicked who are healthy and prospering, almost desires to be like them. But he does not actually do so. In verse 2 he says that he had **almost** lost his faith, he had **almost** become like one of the wicked, but verses 13 and 15 make clear that he did not give in; to have done so would have been sin. The psalm goes on to describe God’s justice and care for his own people. Once again, like Psalm 37, it is a case of “God will take care of you – and the wicked!”

So the same general argument applies to this psalm as in the previous two examples. The traditional rendering may be just as restrictive here as it was there. Instead of feeling emotions of envy or jealousy, the

Psalmist was more likely to have been uptight or in a knot about the comparative unfairness of his situation; it had got under his skin!

(6) Job 5.2

"Surely vexation kills the fool, and jealousy slays the simple" (RSV).

"To worry yourself to death with resentment would be a foolish, senseless thing to do" (GNB).

Like Psalm 73, the background of this verse is the unfair situation that Job found himself in. The intense emotion of Job's speech in chapter 3 carries over into these words of Eliphaz. There is no hint anywhere in the context of anything demanding the translation "jealousy". What we find instead is *qana'* in parallel to *ka'as*, a variation of the word frequently used in passages where God is provoked, irritated, angered, vexed, or made jealous by the apostasy of the people. Both Hebrew terms carry a heavy loading of intense emotion, and the context demands that they be translated with words like "anger", "resentment", "getting hot under the collar", "seething" and so on.

Some translations recognise this. GNB focuses on the ideas of "worry" and "resentment", but it is not clear which English term is used for which Hebrew word. NJV uses "vexation" in the first half of the verse and "passion" in the second half. These are terms that reflect the intense emotion of the Hebrew without being restrictive. Interestingly, CEV also seems to have recognised that both words mean the same, but for some curious reason it goes the other way and restricts the meaning to "envy and jealousy"!

(7) Psalm 106.16

"When men in the camp were jealous of Moses and Aaron" (RSV).

"There in the desert they were jealous of Moses and of Aaron" (GNB).

This psalm praises the goodness and salvation of God. In it, the Psalmist recalls the history of Israel from their time in Egypt, through the Exodus and the wandering in the desert, and into the time of the judges. In verses 16-18, the Psalmist relates one episode of that history, the episode of Korah's rebellion, which is recorded in Numbers 16. Since the psalm is composed of several separate episodes, there is no context from which to judge the significance of the use of the term *qana'* here. Therefore we must look back at the Numbers passage to see if we can discover what sense may be intended, even though the Hebrew word does not appear in Numbers 16. Were Korah, Dathan, Abiram and On envious or jealous of Moses and Aaron? Or were they upset, angry, or agitated in some other way?

In Numbers 16 these four men, together with 250 other leaders of the community, approached Moses and Aaron and accused them of having "gone too far" and of setting themselves "above the Lord's community" (verse 3, GNB). On the face of it, this sounds as if they were jealous of Moses' position of leadership. True, they wanted to depose Moses and Aaron, and presumably some of them saw themselves as candidates for

the leader's position, but the text does not say that. Rather it was the nature of Moses' leadership that was the focus of their discontent. In verses 13 and 14, they described what they were dissatisfied with:

"Isn't it enough that you have brought us out of the fertile land of Egypt to kill us here in the wilderness? Do you also have to lord it over us? You certainly have not brought us into a fertile land or given us fields and vineyards as our possession, and now you are trying to deceive us" (GNB).

This is a charge that Moses has not delivered on his promise. They are dissatisfied with his leadership, disappointed and upset that they have not reached their goal, and angry that he seems to be lording it over them. The situation is tense and full of deep feeling; it is full of *qana'ah*. Although there may be envy of Moses' position, that is certainly not the uppermost thing in the story.

Once again, the use of terms like "envy" (NJV) and "jealous" (RSV, GNB, CEV) in Psalm 106.16 restrict the reader's ability to understand the full range of emotions that the rebels were probably feeling. "Indignant", "dissatisfied", "angry", "riled", "seething" – these words grasp the intense emotion of the situation better, without being so restrictive.

(8) Proverbs 3.31

"Do not envy a man of violence
and do not choose any of his ways" (RSV).

"Don't be jealous of violent people or decide to act as they do"
(GNB).

The same principles and arguments apply to this saying as to Psalms 37 and 73 above. The context contains nothing that requires the meaning "envy" or "jealous" for the term *qana'* here, and the warning not to envy the wicked is out of place in the Old Testament. Thus, a less restrictive translation would use a term like "indignant", "angry", "riled", "upset", "hot under the collar".

We should notice, however, that the verb in the second line of this parallel structure is strange; the term *bachar* is nowhere else paired with *qana'*. Perhaps this is the reason that BHS suggests making a change in the text to the word which means "do not get yourself heated up", from the same root as the parallel verbs in Psalm 37.1 and Proverbs 24.19. This is an extreme, and unnecessary, solution. All that the second half of the verse says is that a person should not, by a deliberate act, act as an oppressor, that is, live as a "sinner". The Hebrew Scriptures are full of such warnings. Hence, the conclusion about the first half of the verse may stand.

(9) Proverbs 14.30

"A tranquil mind gives life to the flesh,
but passion makes the bones rot" (RSV).

Peace of mind makes the body healthy, but jealousy is like a cancer"
(GNB).

This is one of only four instances where RSV abandons the terms "jealous", "envy", and "zeal" to render *qana'*. NJV also uses the word "passion", whereas GNB and CEV revert to "jealousy" and "envy" respectively.

We cannot doubt that deep-seated envy or jealousy does eat away at a person and can ultimately destroy them emotionally and physically. But is envy, or jealousy, the only emotion that can do that? Anger, for instance, can do the same, as can unrequited love, or hatred, or prejudice. In fact, any intense emotion that is inappropriately dealt with would fit the description here. It is therefore difficult to be sure of what the author had in mind.

It is, of course, risky to call upon context to support any argument in Proverbs, because the book is in large measure a collection of independent sayings. Yet in this instance there may be something helpful in the previous verse. Verse 29 contrasts the person who is "slow to anger" with the one who has a "hasty temper" (RSV; compare GNB "stay calm" and "hot temper"). Thus, if context is allowed in support, a focus on intense emotion, whether present or absent, has already been established. Verse 30 continues this theme: a healthy, composed mind gives life and vitality to the body, but an agitated mind destroys the very core of a person's being.

So the rendering "jealousy" or "envy", however true, is once again highly restrictive. The Hebrew word is best translated by a neutral term of intense emotion or agitation. RSV and NJV have recognised this, but their choice of "passion" is not particularly clear or helpful, since the word "passion" tends to have a sexual meaning in modern common English.

(10) Proverbs 23.17

"Let not your heart envy sinners,
but continue in the fear of the Lord all the day" (RSV).
"Don't be envious of sinful people;
let reverence for the Lord be the concern of your life" (GNB).

This verse is perhaps the best example of the difficulties faced by translators who do not fully appreciate the significance of the Hebrew term *qana'*. The core of the difficulty is hidden in both the above translations, but it becomes clearer in these two:

"Do not let your heart envy sinners,
but always be zealous for the fear of the Lord" (NIV).
"Let not thine heart envy sinners, but *be thou* in the fear of the
Lord all the day long" (KJV).

The italicised words *be thou* in KJV indicate that there is no verb in the second half of the verse. The verb in the first part, a form of *qana'*, applies to both halves. KJV is the only version of the four above that does not camouflage this.

The difficulty lies in the fact that, in the first half, the verb requires a negative sense (since it is in a prohibition), but in the second half, it requires a positive sense (since it is something to be done to or with "the fear of the Lord"). The difficulty for translators is to find in their language

an appropriate word that can have both a negative and a positive sense in the same way as the Hebrew word, or to change from the negative to the positive without too much dislocation. NIV has recognised the difficulty and has used two forms which it regularly uses to render *qana'*. After using a word with a negative sense, "envy", in the first half, NIV then supplies a positive word, "zealous", in the second half of the verse to make the contrast clear. This is clumsy, but it gets the meaning across.

Some may object that the change of sense from negative to positive overworks the single Hebrew verb; and even if it were acceptable in Hebrew, it would not be allowed in other languages like English. Not so. Such a practice is a perfectly acceptable literary convention in English – I have used it twice above.

Given that *qana'* here does double duty for both halves of the verse, translators would do well to focus first on the core meaning of the term, that is, intense emotion. The verse is a command not to direct that emotion towards the wicked, but to focus it on the Lord and obeying him. We have already seen examples of how such emotion should not be directed towards the wicked (Ps 37.1; 73.3; Prov 3.31), and suggestions for understanding and translation have been given. But in this context we also have to deal with the positive direction of such emotion. Here modern English lets us down: "zealous" is too high-level, "passionate" is likely to be misunderstood, "the concern of your life" (GNB) lacks force and loses the connection with the first half of the verb. Despite this, GNB provides a guide to an acceptable rendering of the Hebrew:

"Don't let sinful people be your major concern;

Let reverence for the Lord be the constant concern of your life."

Stuck for a good word, I asked a young friend if there was a word in modern teenage Australian English that expressed this positive sense forcefully. He answered that there was: the word "stoked". This is a word that is used to describe someone being emotionally charged, eager and enthusiastic for something; for example, "I am really stoked about going surfing today". I thanked him and suggest the following model:

"Don't get uptight about crooks, but get really stoked about obeying God always."

This is a little colloquial, perhaps, but at least the youth of Sydney will understand it accurately!

(11) Proverbs 27.4

"Wrath is cruel, anger is overwhelming;
but who can stand before jealousy?" (RSV).

"Anger is cruel and destructive, but it is nothing compared to jealousy (GNB).

No one is likely to doubt that *qana'* here is an intense emotion; the whole verse is superheated with emotion. But nothing in the context demands that it be restricted to jealousy. In fact, the context (I think it may be more justifiable to use the context here than in many other places in

Proverbs) suggests the opposite. Verse 3 is similar to verse 4 in structure, and very similar in meaning as well. It focuses on the "provocation" (RSV, NIV), "vexation" (NJV) or "trouble" (GNB, CEV) caused by fools. The Hebrew term used here, *ka'as*, is often used in conjunction with *qana'* in passages recounting the history of Israel where God is provoked, irritated, angered, vexed, or made jealous by the apostasy of the people. It is therefore a word which also has an element of intense emotion. So verses 3 and 4 both deal with intense emotions, and it is too restrictive to limit the latter to "jealousy". Verse 5 goes on to talk about "open reproof" (NJV), "open rebuke" (RSV, NIV). This may be in contrast, not only to the "hidden love" (RSV, NIV) in the second part of the verse, but also to the intense (but unexpressed) emotion of verse 4.

As in Proverbs 14.30, the truth of this proverb as it is traditionally translated makes it hard to see that it could have another, less restrictive, interpretation. But the use of "jealousy" to render *qana'* here restricts the meaning to only one aspect of intense emotion. Are there not other intense emotions that can be just as destructive? What about hatred? Or unrequited love? Or prejudice? Translators in most languages will probably have to settle for one of these restrictive terms, but there may be some languages that can reflect the Hebrew adequately.

(12) Ecclesiastes 9.6

"Their love and their hate and their envy have already perished (RSV).

"Their loves, their hates, their passions, all died with them" (GNB).

The emotions mentioned in this verse, love, hate and *qana'ah* are all deep, intense emotions, but there is no way of knowing for sure what the third one means in this context. Even if it were possible to be sure whether these emotions, which have now ceased, had been felt by the people who had died (so GNB, CEV, NJV, and perhaps other translations), or by their survivors towards the deceased, it would not help to uncover the meaning. We can say, however, that the context provides no compelling reason to restrict the meaning to "envy" or "jealousy", as the majority of the translations do. In fact, such a restriction seems rather out of place, and is probably another example of unnecessarily restrictive translation.

(13) Song of Songs 8.6

"... for love is strong as death,
jealousy is cruel as the grave" (RSV).

"Love is as powerful as death;
passion is as strong as death itself" (GNB).

Strong love like this can be the cause of passionate jealousy, so that there could be an element of lovers' jealousy involved in this verse, as the older translations suggest; but the context hardly invites, much less compels, such an understanding. The more recent translations have acknowledged the positive sexual nature of the context and rendered *qana'ah* as "passion" (so GNB, CEV, NJB, NJV, REB, NRSV). Even NIV has offered in a footnote "ardor". In parallel with "love", this is certainly appropriate.

(14) Isaiah 11.13

“The jealousy of Ephraim shall depart,
and those who harass Judah shall be cut off;
Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah,
and Judah shall not harass Ephraim” (RSV).

“The kingdom of Israel will not be jealous of Judah any more,
and Judah will not be the enemy of Israel” (GNB).

qana' is used here in parallel with a term that means “to be hostile”, “to treat with enmity”, “to vex”. Such hostility is frequently reflected in the history of the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah (for instance, 2 Sam 2.12–3.1; 1 Kgs 12.16-19; 2 Chron 13.1-18; 16.1-6; 25.17-24). Feelings often ran high between them, and anger blazed out into open warfare, but nowhere in the Hebrew Scriptures is the relationship between Israel and Judah characterised by jealousy, as the translations suggest. Why, it may be asked, was the northern kingdom envious of the south, or vice versa? It may be possible to speculate and suggest something, but we are hard pressed to find evidence for it.

It is better to start from the core meaning of *qana'*, that strong, intense emotion, which here is reinforced by the intense emotions involved in hostility, to understand the meaning of this verse. The verse looks forward to an time in the future when the kingdom of David will be restored, and Israel and Judah will put aside their hostility and mutual hatred to live together in peace. The mutual *qana'ah* of the past is thus more likely to be “hatred” than “jealousy”.

(15) Isaiah 42.13

“The Lord goes forth like a mighty man,
like a man of war he stirs up his fury” (RSV).

“The Lord goes out to fight like a warrior;
he is ready and eager for battle” (GNB).

These two versions obscure the use of *qana'* here. It is much clearer in NIV (although the meaning suffers somewhat):

“The Lord will march out like a mighty man,
like a warrior he will stir up his zeal.”

The meaning of the word here is not easy to pinpoint. KJV, NKJV and NIV stick with “zeal” with all the attendant problems of obscurity. RSV, NRSV, NJV, and REB prefer the more meaningful terms “fury” or “rage”, although, in context, we wonder what the Lord is angry about. GNB avoids the temptation to render with a formal equivalent.

What exactly is the Lord doing here? He is compared to a warrior going out to battle, giving a “war-cry”, “a battle-shout” (GNB), and showing his power to his enemies. It is doubtful that this requires a show of fury. More likely, the focus is on the excitement and intense emotional build-up that leads up to any major physical contest. GNB and NCV (“He will be excited”) capture this sense, but a more forceful, although colloquial, rendering would be “He gets himself really psyched

up". This more accurately reflects the intense emotion in *qana'* than restrictive words like "fury" or "rage", and obscure terms like "zeal".

(16) Psalm 119.139

"My zeal consumes me,
because my foes forget thy words" (RSV).
"My anger burns in me like a fire,
because my enemies disregard your commands" (GNB).

The meaning of this verse is not clear. Even those versions that try to make it clear what "zeal" means come up with a wide range of interpretations. NJV "rage" and REB "indignation" agree with GNB, while CEV "It upsets me greatly" is similar to NCV "I am so upset". Briggs sees it as "jealousy for the Law and its observance", and Allen translates it as "My passion". It is difficult to see why so many translators chose to restrict the meaning to the emotion of anger, since nothing in the context requires it or leads us to expect it. Even the claim that the Psalmist is being persecuted for his devotion to the Law is hard to substantiate. It is just as likely that the Psalmist feels intense emotional distress when he sees others disregarding and violating the Law he loves so deeply; in fact, this is what he seems to say in verse 136. This is the thrust of CEV and NCV, and is the least restrictive interpretation before us.

(17) Joel 2.18

"Then the Lord became jealous for his land,
and had pity on his people" (RSV).
"Then the Lord showed concern for his land;
he had mercy on his people" (GNB).

Despite the use of the preposition "jealous for", which alerts the reader to the use of the positive sense of the word, "jealous" is an inadequate translation in this context; many of the newer translations recognise this. Although this rendering might fit under Webster's third definition ("vigilant in guarding a possession"), it would seldom be understood that way in modern common English. GNB, NCV and CEV better reflect this positive emotion of a caring concern for the people. NJV ("the Lord was roused") and REB ("the Lord showed his ardent love") raise the intensity of the emotion, which more accurately reflects the sense of *qana'*.

(18) Zechariah 1.14

"Cry out, Thus says the Lord of hosts: I am exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion" (RSV).
"... proclaim what the Lord Almighty had said: 'I have a deep love and concern for Jerusalem, my holy city' " (GNB).

Again the preposition "for" in RSV alerts the reader to a positive sense of "jealous", but this is unlikely to be enough to ensure that the meaning is received accurately. The true meaning, the intense positive emotion on the part of God, is much easier to grasp in GNB.

(19) Zechariah 8.2

“Thus says the Lord of hosts: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath” (RSV).

“I have longed to help Jerusalem because of my deep love for her people, a love which has made me angry with her enemies” (GNB).

Once again the rendering “jealous” is unlikely to convey the correct meaning for modern audiences. The most important element in this verse also is the sense of intense positive emotion. The Hebrew establishes this with a three-fold repetition of *qana*. It strongly expresses positive emotion like “deep love” (GNB), “strong love” (NCV), “love ... so much” (CEV).

In the latter part of the verse, *qana’ah* is paralleled by the term *chamah*. This noun form usually means “burning rage”, but in its verbal form this root means “to be hot”. In this verse even the noun may be characterised more by the heat or intensity of the emotion than by its extended meaning of anger. There are some considerations in support of this. Firstly, RSV “wrath” introduces a negative emotion into a verse which is otherwise wholly positive. Secondly, Zechariah’s usual word for the anger of God (used seven times) is *qatsaf*. This is the only time he uses the word *chamah*, so it is difficult to be confident of its exact meaning. Thirdly, the verse is incomplete, in that it is not clear what the word “wrath” refers to, forcing GNB and CEV to introduce unnamed enemies as the object of the Lord’s anger. In the context, this is highly intrusive. Very rarely in Zechariah chapters 1-8, and nowhere in the immediate context, is there any focus on the enemy nations that fought and defeated the people of God.

There is, of course, a close similarity between 1.14-15 and this verse. In chapter 1, there is a clear reference to God’s anger at the nations. It may then be that the word *chamah* in 8.2 also carries the sense of divine anger at the foreign nations. But given that different words are used, the general similarity cannot be conclusive. In fact, if the primary meaning of the term in this verse is “anger”, it would be more likely for the objects of God’s anger to be Jerusalem and Judah, since in Zechariah God’s displeasure is directed against them far more often than against the foreign nations (see, for example, 1.2, 12; 5.3-5; 7.8-12; 9.14).

In view of all this, the rendering of NCV (“My strong love for her is like a fire burning in me”) is the best way to understand verse 2, because it captures the emotional intensity of God’s attitude towards Jerusalem, without any restrictions.

(20) Ezekiel 16.38

“[I] will bring upon you the blood of wrath and jealousy” (RSV).

“In my anger and fury I will punish you with death” (GNB).

Ezekiel 16.42

“So I will satisfy my fury on you, and my jealousy shall depart from you; I will be calm, and will no more be angry” (RSV).

“Then my anger will be over, and I will be calm. I will not be angry or jealous any more” (GNB).

Ezekiel 23.25

"And I will direct my indignation against you, that they may deal with you in fury" (RSV).

"Because I am angry [...], I will let them deal with you in their anger" (GNB).

In chapters 16 and 23, Ezekiel compares the apostasy of Judah and Israel to the adultery of an unfaithful wife. Consequently the ordinary meaning of "jealous" may be appropriate, even though the idea is introduced unexpectedly. Interestingly, however, GNB replaces it with "fury" and "angry" in two instances, and even RSV replaces it with "indignation" once. CEV retains "jealous" only in 16.42, preferring "in my fierce anger" and "I am angry" in the other two passages. NJV omits any hint of jealousy.

The context demands a strong negative emotion, which is well within the domain of *qana'*, and the change to "anger" is probably due to the use of the word *chamah* in the same context. The use of the more restrictive word "jealous(y)" seems justified in these instances. However, in light of the discussion of *chamah* above, the focus of all the related words may be more on the heated, burning emotion, however expressed, than on the emotion of anger. This is very difficult to capture in English, but at least a more accurate reflection of the sense can be achieved in 16.38 by taking the two words together and using CEV as a model.

(21) Ezekiel 36.6

"Behold, I speak in my jealous wrath" (RSV).

"... what I [...] am saying in jealous anger" (GNB).

NJB ("... in my jealousy and rage") reflects the Hebrew more literally than either of the above translations, which have taken the two words together as a single expression. However, it is again difficult to see in the context why God should be jealous; he is speaking in judgment against the surrounding nations who have plundered and humiliated the land of Israel. Instead the word *qana'ah* is more likely to indicate the intense emotion behind God's words and threatened action. A better translation would be "I am very angry" (CEV) or "I declare in my blazing wrath" (NJV). The latter picks up the picture of fiery, blazing emotion in verse 5, where *qana'ah* is linked with fire ("by/in the fire of").

(22) Deuteronomy 29.19

"The Lord would not pardon him, but rather the anger of the Lord and his jealousy would smoke against that man" (RSV).

"The Lord will not forgive such a man. Instead, the Lord's burning anger will flame up against him" (GNB).

Psalms 79.5

"How long, O Lord? Wilt thou be angry for ever?

Will thy jealous wrath burn like fire?" (RSV).

"Lord, will you be angry with us for ever?

Will your anger continue to burn like fire?" (GNB).

In these passages, *qana'ah* is in close parallel with a word which in its metaphorical sense means "anger". Although the Deuteronomy passage appears in the context of warnings against idolatry (and therefore an argument may be made that the term "jealousy" is appropriate), the focus is not really on jealousy at all. Instead it is on that intense negative emotion involved in God's judgment and punishment of sinners. "Anger" is certainly a valid rendering of this. However the intensity of the emotion in *qana'* is highlighted in both passages by the use of verbs relating to a burning fire. GNB captures this in Deuteronomy with the expression "burning anger"; CEV goes close in the psalm ("Will your angry feelings keep flaming up like fire?").

(23) Ezekiel 36.5

"I speak in my hot jealousy ..." (RSV).

"I have spoken out in the heat of my anger" (GNB).

Zephaniah 1.18

"In the fire of his jealous wrath, all the earth shall be ..." (RSV).

"The whole earth will be destroyed by the fire of his anger" (GNB).

The Hebrew literally reads "in the fire of my jealousy" (compare KJV). The same phrase is used in similar circumstances in Zephaniah 3.8, while in Psalm 79.5 God's *qana'ah* is described as burning "like fire". In Ezekiel 38.19, God speaks "in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath" (compare KJV).

The reference to fire is generally taken as metaphorical and is seldom rendered literally. Most of these renderings view the phrase as an expression in which "fire" adds intensity to *qana'* which is interpreted as "anger", "jealousy", or "zeal". In none of these passages does "jealousy" make good sense in modern English, and "zeal" does not transmit clear meaning. In four of the five passages, however, *qana'* is linked in context with a word meaning "anger", which establishes the element of intense emotion. The same sense probably applies in Ezekiel 36.5, despite the lack of the parallel word.

(24) Psalm 78.58

"For they provoked him to anger with their high places;

They moved him to jealousy with their graven images" (RSV).

"They angered him with their heathen places of worship,
and with their idols they made him furious" (GNB).

Psalm 78 recalls the story of the people of God from the Exodus until the exile of the northern kingdom. On reaching Canaan, they often turned to idols and false gods; thus, they "provoked God to anger" and "moved him to jealousy". This pairing of terms is found in an identical linguistic situation in Deuteronomy 32.16 and 21. The term *qana'* is also found in the same sense, but without the parallel term, in 1 Kings 14.22.

These passages confront us with a very difficult translational issue in English. Because we lack an English word with the same range of meaning as the Hebrew, we are either likely to focus on exclusive worship

in the covenant relationship and render the word with a form of "jealous" (so RSV and most versions), or we will focus on the parallel verb and render *qana'* with a form of "angry" (so GNB, NJV, CEV, NCV, GeCL). Both are restrictive solutions in that they use words whose meanings unacceptably restrict the meaning of the original. Thus in choosing a way to translate *qana'* the intense emotion of its core meaning can easily be overlooked. Such is the peril of translation.

The best way through this problem is to look carefully at all the elements of meaning in the parallelism of this verse. There are three significant elements in the verse: the idols and worship places, provoking God, and the intense emotion of *qana'*, which has both covenantal ("jealous") and emotional ("anger") aspects. If we follow the interpretation of GNB, the two halves of the verse become so closely equivalent that there is a temptation to telescope them into one. But if that happens, only two of the three elements remain. Therefore it is better to allow the emotional aspect of *qana'* to combine with the similar element in *ka'as* ("provoke") and find some meaningful way to retain the covenantal ("jealous") element. CEV provides a good model for this in Psalm 78:

"God demanded all their love, but they made him angry by worshipping idols."

(25) Numbers 25.11-13

"Phinehas ... has turned back my wrath from the people of Israel, in that he was jealous with my jealousy among them, so that I did not consume the people of Israel in my jealousy ... because he was jealous for his God" (RSV).

"Because of what Phinehas has done, I am no longer angry with the people of Israel. He refused to tolerate the worship of any god but me, and that is why I did not destroy them in my anger ... because he did not tolerate any rivals to me" (GNB).

This passage contains four instances of *qana'*. Two of them (verses 11a, 13) have Phinehas as their subject; God is the subject of the other two (verses 11b, 11c). GNB has rendered three of these with its own unique phrase "tolerate no rivals", and the fourth (verse 11c) is rendered "anger". Here we examine only the two usages with the human subject.

By executing one of the apostate leaders of Israel and his Moabite mistress, Phinehas turned away the punishment of God from the people. When he did this, he was acting passionately and fervently on behalf of God. His intense emotion is shown by his outrage at the sin that had been committed, and his personal destruction of some of the perpetrators. In fact, his emotions, probably including anger, agitation, frustration, hurt, feelings of betrayal, and so on, were matched only by the similar feelings of God. His actions are reminiscent of a person high on adrenaline. It is therefore one-sided and restrictive for GNB ("He refused to tolerate

the worship of any god but me” and CEV (with the words “faithful” and “loyalty”) to limit the meaning to the covenantal use of the root only.

(26) Ezekiel 8.3

“He brought me ... to the entrance of the gateway of the inner court that faces north, where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provokes to jealousy” (RSV).

“He took me to the inner entrance of the north gate of the Temple, where there was an idol that was an outrage to God” (GNB).

The “image of jealousy” (RSV) is mentioned again in verse 5.

It is not hard to imagine or appreciate the intensity of emotion behind this usage of *qana'*, dramatically repeated as it is in the Hebrew structure. The placement of an image of the Canaanite goddess Asherah immediately outside the front gate of the Temple would surely have made God's blood boil, speaking in human terms, that is. Whatever emotional elements were involved, and how God chose to express them, we cannot be sure, but the intensity of the emotion is quite clear.

Translating the term, however, is much harder. The variety of ways in which the less formal translations describe this image reflects the difficulty of the task; for example, “the infuriating image that provokes fury” (NJV), “an idol that disgusted the Lord and made him furious” (CEV), “the idolatrous image that arouses God's indignation” (REB), “a statue which is an ... affront to God” (FrCL). Most of these focus on the emotional (“anger”) aspect of *qana'* and ignore the covenantal (“jealous”) element; only GNB “outrage” and FrCL “affront” reflect the latter.

Conclusion

In this article I have dealt with one of the more difficult words in the Hebrew Scriptures. Not only is it a word that suggests a view of God in strongly human terms, but it is also a word that covers a wide range of emotions. It is therefore extremely difficult to translate adequately. As a result, many translators and commentators have given in to the temptation to be too restrictive in their understanding and rendering of the word.

I have tried here to make clear the full meaning of each usage of the word in the Hebrew Bible. I hope that not only will this be an aid to translators, so that they will not be misled by restrictive renderings in the models they are working from, but that it will also provide new insights into certain texts whose original meaning may not be what the traditional English translations suggest.

TABLE 2 (INDEX)

In this table, I list the references to all the usages of the root *qana'* in the Bible, together with the RSV rendering and the section of this paper where the passage is discussed. I hope this will help translators find the passages where they need to be especially careful.

Reference	RSV rendering	Section
Genesis 26.14	envied	A
Genesis 30.1	envied	A
Genesis 37.11	jealous	C (1)
Exodus 20.5	jealous	B (3)
Exodus 34.14 (twice)	Jealous, jealous	B (3)
Numbers 5.14 (4 times)	jealousy, jealous, jealousy, jealous	A
Numbers 5.15	jealousy	A
Numbers 5.18	jealousy	A
Numbers 5.25	jealousy	A
Numbers 5.29	jealousy	A
Numbers 5.30 (twice)	jealousy, jealous	A
Numbers 11.29	jealous	C (2)
Numbers 25.11 (3 times)	jealous, jealousy, jealousy	B (2), C (25)
Numbers 25.13	jealous	C (25)
Deuteronomy 4.24	jealous	B (3)
Deuteronomy 5.9	jealous	B (3)
Deuteronomy 6.15	jealous	B (3)
Deuteronomy 29.20(19)	jealousy	C (22)
Deuteronomy 32.16	jealousy	C (24)
Deuteronomy 32.21 (twice)	jealousy, jealousy	C (24)
Joshua 24.19	jealous	B (3)
2 Samuel 21.2	zeal	B (1)
1 Kings 14.22	jealousy	C (24)
1 Kings 19.10 (twice)	very jealous	B (1)
1 Kings 19.14 (twice)	very jealous	B (1)
2 Kings 10.16	zeal	B (1)
2 Kings 19.31	zeal	B (2)
Job 5.2	jealousy	C (6)
Psalms 37.1	envious	C (3)
Psalms 69.9(10)	zeal	B (1)
Psalms 73.3	envious	C (5)
Psalms 78.58	jealousy	C (24)
Psalms 79.5	jealous wrath	C (22), C (23)
Psalms 106.16	jealous	C (7)
Psalms 119.139	zeal	C (16)
Proverbs 3.31	envy	C (8)
Proverbs 6.34	jealousy	A
Proverbs 14.30	passion	C (9)
Proverbs 23.17	envy	C (10)
Proverbs 24.1	envious	A
Proverbs 24.19	envious	C (4)
Proverbs 27.4	jealousy	C (11)
Ecclesiastes 4.4	envy	A
Ecclesiastes 9.6	envy	C (12)

Song of Songs 8.6	jealousy	C (13)
Isaiah 9.7(6)	zeal	B (2)
Isaiah 11.13 (twice)	jealousy, jealous	C (14)
Isaiah 26.11	zeal	B (2)
Isaiah 37.32	zeal	B (2)
Isaiah 42.13	fury	C (15)
Isaiah 59.17	fury	B (2)
Isaiah 63.15	zeal	B (2)
Ezekiel 5.13	jealousy	B (2)
Ezekiel 8.3 (twice)	jealousy, jealousy	C (26)
Ezekiel 8.5	jealousy	C (26)
Ezekiel 16.38	jealousy	C (20)
Ezekiel 16.42	jealousy	C (20)
Ezekiel 23.25	indignation	C (20)
Ezekiel 31.9	envied	A
Ezekiel 35.11	envy	A
Ezekiel 36.5	jealousy	C (23)
Ezekiel 36.6	jealous	C (21)
Ezekiel 38.19	jealousy	C (23)
Ezekiel 39.25	jealous	B (2)
Joel 2.18	jealous	C (17)
Nahum 1.2	jealous	B (3)
Zephaniah 1.18	jealous wrath	C (23)
Zephaniah 3.8	jealous wrath	C (23)
Zechariah 1.14 (twice)	exceedingly jealous	C (18)
Zechariah 8.2 (3 times)	jealous, jealousy, jealous	C (19)

Abbreviations used in the article

CEV	Contemporary English Version	NCV	New Century Version
FrCL	French Common Language version	NEB	New English Bible
GeCL	German Common Language version	NIV	New International Version
GNB	Good News Bible (Today's English Version)	NJB	New Jerusalem Bible
JB	Jerusalem Bible	NJV	New Jewish Version
KJV	King James Version	NKJV	New King James Version
NAB	New American Bible	NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NASB	New American Standard Bible	REB	Revised English Bible
		RSV	Revised Standard Version