of study, Mark directed his attention to the believing community. This praying community for Mark is "another" Temple, so to speak, "not made with hands" (Mark 14.58).

In Mark's Gospel there are two foci of the presence of God: Jesus and the Temple. Both are destroyed at the same time (15.33-39). The community (Mark's church) established by the risen Lord needs to know on what basis they can expect their prayers to be heard and answered while they wait for his return. With Peter the community exclaims, "Master, look! The fig tree has withered! The Temple is condemned to destruction". Mark responds, through the figure of Jesus, "Have faith in God". Mark 11.22-25 is the evangelist's answer to the question, "If the efficacy of prayer does not depend on the Temple, on what then does it depend?"[15]

Conclusion.

The framework on prayer in Mark 11 is fundamentally determined by the motif of the destruction of the Temple and by Mark's theological transitional evaluation of the problem of the efficacy of prayer. Mark is saying in effect that the effectiveness of prayer does not depend on the Temple but on faith in the God for whom all things are possible and to whom the praying community offers petitions according to his will; and that in the praying community forgiveness for one another should be operative.

Therefore in the translation of Mark 11.22-25 (perhaps better 11.20-25), the subtitle of this section should be "Faith and Prayer" or "The Effectiveness of Prayer" instead of "The Lesson of the Fig-Tree".

[15] Abraham Kon, *Prayer* (London: Soncino Press 1971), 100.

KENNETH NEWPORT

SEMITIC INFLUENCE ON THE USE OF SOME PREPOSITIONS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

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Introduction.

It has long been recognized that the Greek of the book of Revelation has its own peculiar flavour and diverges frequently from the norms of Classical grammar and syntax. As far back as the third century, Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, put the problem succinctly when he wrote: "I observe that his (John's) language and style are not really Greek".[1] The present study seeks to explain the reasons for some of these divergencies with respect to the use of prepositions.

1. *Apo prosōpou*

The phrase *apo prosōpou* appears seven times in the NT; 2 Thes 1.9 (which is probably a quotation of Isa. 2.10, 21, LXX), Acts 3.20, 5.41, 7.45, where it clearly means "From the presence of", and Rev 6.16, 12.14, 20.11. In Rev 6.16,

[1] Eusebius, *The History of the Church* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books 1965), 313.

20.11, as in the occurrences in Acts, the phrase is almost certainly best translated "from the presence of" and if so doubtless reflects the Hebrew *mipp'nê*. Rev 20.11 is a quotation of Ps 114.7, *apo prosōpou,* being used to translate *mipp'nê* as in the LXX. Other examples of *apo prosōpou* being used to translate *mipp'nê* are common in the LXX, see for example Gen 3.8, 4.16.

Further evidence to support the view that *apo prosōpou* as used in Revelation is under strong Semitic influence is found in 12.14 for here it appears to reflect a particularly strong Hebrew idiom, use of the *mipp'nê* meaning "because of" or "on account of". This view is taken by Charles[2] who suggests that since some sixteen words come between the verb *petētai* and the prepositional phrase *apo prosōpou* it is unlikely that the idiom means "from the presence of", i.e. "to fly away from the presence of." Rather it is to be translated "because of" which, says Charles, is an ordinary meaning of *mipp'nê* in Hebrew.

Charles perhaps overstates his case here, for this usage does not seem to be as common as he implies.[3] But the idiom does exist. It is found, for example, in Isa 19.17 "everyone to whom Judah is mentioned will be terrified because of what the Lord Almighty is planning against them" where "because of" translates *mipp'nê,* (LXX *dia*). So too Hos 10.15 "Thus it will happen to you, O Bethel, because of your great wickedness", *mipp'nê rā'at ra'atkem,* which the LXX translates using *apo prosōpou.*

Bible translators have not paid attention to the possible Semitic influence in Rev 12.14. Their translations err by being either too literal, making the phrase difficult for the English reader to understand, or they are too free with the verse and equally distort its meaning. KJV along with the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures falls foul of the first of these snares, rendering the latter part of the verse "from the face of the serpent." The Good News Bible translates "safe from the dragon's [earlier editions: serpent's] attack." Likewise NIV and NEB which agree that *apo prosōpou* means "out of the reach of the serpent." Such translations do not accurately portray the meaning of the Hebrew idiom encased in the Greek prepositional phrase. Nor do they fit the context of the passage. In the next verse it is said that the dragon, (who is the serpent, see Rev 12.9), had access to the woman and attempted to drown her. The woman may have flown "from the presence of the serpent" or "because of the serpent", but she was certainly not out of its reach or safe from its attack.

It is suggested that the following two translations of Rev 12.14 more accurately reflect the likely Semitic influence upon the verse,

> either;
> And the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman so that she might fly into the desert, to her place, to be fed there for a time and times and half a time, because of the serpent.
> or

[2] R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John.* 2 vols. ICC (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark 1920), 1.128.

[3] F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1929), 818.

> And the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman so that she might fly from the presence of the serpent into the desert, to her place, to be fed there for a time and times and half a time.

2. *Martureō epi*

A peculiar usage of *epi* is found in Rev 22.16, *"Egō Iēsous epempsa ton angelon mou marturēsai humin tauta epi tais ekklēsiais.* Bauer seeks to explain this use of *epi* by reference to the classical construction *epi* governing the dative case meaning 'about'[4] and would thus presumably translate the verse, "I Jesus, sent my messenger to bear witness to you these things concerning the churches." The translators of the English Bibles do not agree. KJV has "in the churches", NEB "for the churches", the Jerusalem Bible (also New Jerusalem Bible) has "for the sake of the churches", and it is perhaps the latter that comes closest in making allowance for possible Semitic influence upon the Greek construction.

Martureō epi is found once in the books of the LXX whose original language was Hebrew.[5] But since this occurrence (Num 35.30) has the meaning of 'testify against' it is unlikely that a consideration of this verse will aid an understanding of Rev 22.16.

Perhaps a more profitable line of approach is an investigation into the use of *epi* as a translation for the Hebrew *'al* where the Semitic preposition means "for the sake of" or "because of."[6] Thus it appears in Ruth 1.19 *"kai ēchēsen pasa hē polis epi autais"* for *watēhôm kol hā'îr 'ālêhen,* likewise Ezra 3.11 *"kai pas ho laos esēmainon phōnēn megalēn ainein tō kuriō epi themeliōsen oikou kuriou, ('al hûsad bēt HYHVH).* The translation of Rev 22.16 given in the Jerusalem Bible seems justified; under Semitic influence the preposition *epi* may mean "for the sake of" or "because of." This translation fits the context of Rev 22.16 well: "I Jesus, for the sake of the churches, sent my messenger to testify to you concerning these things."

3. *Propheteuō epi*

Much of what has been said above concerning *martureō epi* could apply equally well to *prophēteusai epi* in Rev 10.11. The verse could be translated, "and they said to me 'it is necessary for you to prophesy again for the sake of the people and the nations and tongues and many kings.'" This, however, is not the only possible explanation of the use of *epi* in this verse.

The construction *propheteuō epi* is found frequently in the LXX as a rendering of *nibbā 'al,* which is often best translated 'prophesy against'. This is the case in Jer 25.13,14 "And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have spoken against it *('ālēhā,* LXX *hous elalēsa kat' autēs),* and all that is written in this book which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations, *(nibbā' yirᵉmyāhû 'al kol*

[4] W. Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1958), 287.

[5] *Martureō epi* is found also in 1 Macc 2.56 where *epi* has the normal Greek meaning of 'in the presence of'.

[6] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *op. cit. s.v. 'al* II.1f(*b*) cite Gen 20.3; 21.16; 26.7,9; 27.41; 42.21; Lev 4.3,28; 5.18; 19.17; 26.18,24,28.

haggôyim, LXX *ha eprophēteusen Ieremias epi ta ethnē).*" This meaning of *propheteuō epi* is found in Ezek 4.7, 11.4, 13.16, 25.2.

With these considerations in mind Rev 10.11 may be translated "and they said to me 'it is necessary for you again to prophesy against peoples, nations, and tongues and many kings'." This possibility seems not to have been recognised by the translators of the English Bibles who have variously translated as "utter prophecies over" (NEB), "prophesy about" (NIV, RSV, Jerusalem Bible), and "prophesy before" (KJV). The Vulgate goes so far as to leave out the preposition altogether, using simply the dative case, rendering the verse, *"Oportet te iterum prophetare gentibus, et populis et linguis, et regibus multis."* [The New Jerusalem Bible (1985) has "prophesy . . . against."—Ed.]

4. *Porneuō meta*

Ozanne notes that the transitive use of the active of *porneuō* is not found in Classical Greek,[7] a point which is also noted by Charles.[8] Ozanne goes on to suggest that the root of *porneuō meta,* found three times in Revelation (17.2, 18.3,9) is embedded in the Hebrew *zānāh'et. This, however, is a difficult case to support. The text Ozanne gives as evidence for his claim is Isa 23.17 where he translates 'et* as a preposition, 'with'. But it is not altogether certain that *'et* in this verse is to be taken as a preposition. Gesenius for one thinks it far more likely that *'et* here is the sign of the direct object following.[9]

The verb *zānāh* is found without a preposition in Jer 3.1, where the meaning is clearly to commit fornication 'with'. Here the LXX has *kai su exeporneusas en poimesin pollois* for *w^{e}'at zanît rē'îm rabbîm.* Prepositions are used with zānāh; b^{e} is found in Ezek 16.17 which the LXX renders *en* but not, it seems, *'im* or *'et* which would explain the *meta* of Rev 17.2, 18.3,9.

Porneuō meta does appear in the LXX, but, it seems, only once, (Ezek 16.34). Charles has drawn attention to this occurrence though he does not see in the Hebrew which lies behind it an explanation for this peculiar Greek construction in Revelation,[10] but Charles may have overlooked an important point.

In Ezek 16.34 the verb *zānāh* is followed by *'aḥ^{a}rê* and the sense of the verb is 'to chase after', or 'to go whoring after' rather than 'to fornicate with'. The verse reads, "So you were different from other women in your harlotries: none solicited you to play the harlot; and you gave time while no time was given to you; therefore you were different" (RSV). Here "none solicited you to play the harlot" translates *w^{e}'^{a}ḥarayik lo' zûnnah.* The Jerusalem Bible has "no one was running after you."

That fact that it is *'aḥ^{a}rê* that appears in conjunction with *zānāh* and not *'im* or *'et* rules out the possibility of translating the verse "no one fornicated with you." This is an important point. The *meta* which appears in the LXX translation of

[7] G. C. Ozanne, "The Influence of the Text and Language of the Old Testament on the Book of Revelation." PhD dissertation, Manchester University, 1963, p. 44.

[8] Charles, 1:cxxxiii n.1.

[9] William Gesenius, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1929), 249.

[10] Charles, ibid.

Ezek 16.34 translates *'aḥ^{a}rê* and should therefore be rendered in English as 'after' and not 'with'.

'To go whoring after' in the OT sometimes has a figurative sense as can plainly be seen in the common expression *zānāh 'aḥ^{a}rê 'elōhîm 'aḥ^{a}rîm* 'to go whoring after, i.e. to chase after, strange gods', see Deut 31.16; Judg 2.17. Akin to this are several idioms all of which have in common the notion of departing from the true God. Such is the case in Lev 20.6 "and the person who turns to mediums and spiritists, to go whoring after them *(liznôt 'aḥ^{a}rêhem)*, I shall set my face against that person", LXX *ekporneusai opisō autōn* (see also Ex 34.15,16; Lev 17.7, 20.5,6; Deut 31.16; Judg 8.27,33).

It is possible then that the author of Revelation had in mind *zānāh 'aḥ^{a}rê* when he wrote *porneuō meta,* and if this is so then we must take note of the meaning of the Hebrew idiom when dealing with the phrase as it appears in Rev 17.2, 18.3,9.

None of the English translations allows for the possible Semitic influence. All are content with a literal translation of *porneuō meta* as 'commit fornication with'. Thus we read in RSV for Rev 18.3 "And the kings of the earth have commited fornication with her." Similarly NIV and NEB. A translation which recognised the possible Semitism might read "and the kings of the earth have chased after her."

5. *Moicheuō meta*

Like *porneuō meta* is *moicheuō meta.* Once again it is possible that a less than literal sense is meant by our author. The OT gives examples. Jer 3.9 reads "and she (Judah) defiled the land and committed adultery with (*w^{a}tin'ap 'et.* LXX *emoicheusen* followed by accusative), stones and trees."[11] *Moicheuō meta* does not appear in the LXX, the normal translation of *nā'ap 'et* is *moicheuō* followed by the accusative case. But nevertheless the possibility remains that our author has translated the Hebrew phrase literally.

Similar observations to those made above under *porneuō meta* could be made with reference to *moicheuō meta* in Rev 2.22. The woman with whom others have committed adultery is Jezebel, a false prophetess. The adulterers are those who have left the worship of the true God and turned to the ways of this evil woman.

6. *Enōpion* with *histēmi*

There is considerable evidence to support the view taken by Charles[12] and Sollamo[13] that *histēmi enōpion,* as used in Semitic Greek, can mean 'to attend upon' or 'to be the servant of'. Consider for example 1 Kings 17.1 (LXX) *"ho theos Israēl ho parestēn enōpion autou"* where *"parestēn enōpion autou"* translates "'āmadtî l^{e}pānāyw", (see also Judg 20.28; 1 Kgs 18.15, 2 Kgs 5.16; Jer 15.19). There is one example of this use of *enōpion* in the NT other than those in Revelation. Luke 1.19 reads *"Egō eimi Gabriēl ho parestēkōs enōpion tou*

[11] For figurative meaning of *nā'ap* see Gesenius 525.

[12] Charles, 1.225.

[13] R. Sollamo, "Some 'improper' prepositions such as *enōpion, enantion, enanti,* etc., in the Septuagint and Early Koine Greek," *Vetus Testamentum* 25 (1975), 778.

theou." Here "I am Gabriel, I stand in the presence of God" (NIV), is perhaps less in tune with the context of the verse than "I am Gabriel, the servant of God".

Two examples of this use of *enōpion* are found in the Apocalypse. Rev 11.4 reads *"houtoi eisin hai duo elaiai kai hai duo luchniai hai enōpion tou kupiou tēs gēs testōtes."* The NIV translates this verse "These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth." This is a good literal translation, but it perhaps misses the point.

The *'houtoi'* of this verse refers to the two witnesses mentioned in Rev 11.3-4. They are described as the two olive trees and the two lampstands. But the phrase *"hai enōpion tou kuriou hestōtes* (sic)," appears to refer not to the position of the two lampstands and olive trees but rather, perhaps, to the fact that the two witnesses are 'servants of the Lord of the earth'.

There is obvious confusion here, for the article *'hai'* (feminine plural) does not match the participle *'hestōtes'* (masculine plural), a difficulty which has been noted before, as the various 'corrections' in the MSS show. The Greek is confused. There can be no certainty. But it is at the very least possible that for *hai* we should read *hoi,* and translate accordingly "these (two witnesses) are the two olive trees and the two lampstands. They are the servants of the Lord of the earth."

The position is clearer in Rev 8.2, *"kai eidon tous hepta angelous hoi enōpion tou theou hestēkasin . . ."* "Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God . . ." (RSV). Allowing for the probable Semitic influence the verse might perhaps better be translated, "Then I saw the seven angels who serve God . . ."

7. *Thaumazō opisō*

Charles notes that the *ethaumasthē* in Rev 13.3 is neither Greek nor Hebraic and concludes that it is based upon a corrupt text.[14] Ozanne, however, makes use of the work of Torrey and Driver in uncovering uses of *'aḥ^{a}rê* to mean "on account of" or "concerning" in the Elephantine papyri and the Manual of Discipline where *'aḥ^{a}rêkem* means "on account of" or "because of"[15] To these Ozanne has added the following OT examples: 1 Sam 7.2 *w^{a}yyinnāhû kol bêt yiśrā'ēl 'aḥ^{a}rê HYHWH,* (LXX *kai epeblepsen pas oikos Israēl opisō kupiou),* 1 Sam 13.7 *w^{e}kol hā'ām ḥārdû 'aḥ^{a}rāyw,* (LXX *kai pas ho laos exestē opisō autou).*

Thompson has noted the "incongruous aorist passive" form of the verb *thaumazō* in Rev 13.3.[16] Translators have indeed had trouble with this peculiarity but generally have translated *ethaumasthē* as active, leaving it for the grammarians to suggest that the verb here is used deponently. But, as Thompson points out, the verb is used actively elsewhere in the Apocalypse, which makes this suggestion unlikely.[17] Thompson may well be correct in seeing the Hebrew/Aramaic root *šmm* lying behind the Greek verb, (see Dan 4.16 [MT]; Lev 26.32, where the LXX translates using *thaumazō).*

[14] harles 1.337.

[15] Ozanne 41, 42.

[16] S. Thompson, *The Apocalypse and Semitic Syntax* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 12.

[17] Ibid.

On the basis of this evidence Thompson translates Rev 13.3 "The whole world was devastated in the wake of (taking *'aḥ^{a}rê* as the root of *opisō* = 'behind') the beast . . .' Taking into account the possibility that *opisō* = *'aḥ^{a}rê* = 'because of', we might perhaps better read "The whole world was devastated because of the beast . . ."

Conclusion

The use of these prepositions in Revelation strongly suggests that the Greek is under significant Semitic influence. An appreciation of this Semitic element will help explain constructions which are otherwise confusing. In several instances allowance for Semitic syntax will significantly alter the meaning of the verse. The translator should proceed with caution, keeping constantly in mind the possibility that although the author wrote in Greek, his thought pattern was Semitic.

JOHN ELLINGTON

MISCARRIAGE OR PREMATURE BIRTH?

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The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20) summarize the covenant governing the relationships between God and his people and among the people of God. This 'covenant law' is amplified in the so-called 'book of the covenant' in the three chapters following Exodus 20. These chapters contain numerous regulations concerning fairness and justice in human relations. They deal with the treatment of slaves, theft and repayment, various kinds of violence, sexual morals, religious practices and celebrations.

Among those cases of accidental violence regulated in this portion of Scripture is the hypothetical case where men involved in some kind of physical struggle unintentionally collide with a pregnant woman (Ex 21.22ff). In the current debate on abortion in some Western cultures, this passage is often quoted and used to justify the practice of taking the lives of unborn children. The exegesis and translation of this part of Scripture are, therefore, of critical importance. In some ways this problem is similar to the one posed by the translation of *zara'a* and *lepra* where a translation decision directly affects human lives. The mistranslation of these words as "leprosy," according to one writer, has caused "immeasurable suffering" (Johs. G. Andersen, "Leprosy in translations of the Bible", TBT, vol. 31, no.2 (April 1980), 212). Likewise, the translation of Exodus 21.22ff may have some bearing on the modern abortion debate and consequently on the decision of whether or not many unborn children will be allowed to live. In fact, Dr. Bruce Waltke has argued that "according to Exodus 21.22-24, the destruction of a fetus is not a capital offense" *(Christianity Today,* "The OT and Birth Control," Nov. 8, 1968). But this argument seems to be