

# PRETRANSLATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE BIBLICAL TEXTS (PROBLEMS AND DIFFICULTIES OF TRANSLATION)

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The theme “religion” is one of the most important parts of modern society. In different situations religion can become the topic of communication. Theological faculties are being opened in universities throughout our country. Biblical quotations have become popular and they are a part of the phraseology of many languages. The theme of religion has been ignored for many years due to the ideology in our country. And even now religion is a delicate theme, because each person has his own attitude towards belief in God. But the consequences of ignoring this theme while teaching English are negative. It results in helplessness in translating biblical texts. Christian translation is the translation of all kinds of biblical texts, which forms an independent genre.

## **The Bible as a Hypertext.**

The term “hypertext” was introduced by mathematician and philosopher Theodore Nelson in 1965. A hypertext is a complex type of text. Its fragments are interrelated by complex cross references and by means of textuality in a broad sense. The text of the Bible is a hypertext because it is not one book but a collection of books written at different times.

## **Different translations of the Bible.**

There is a well-known legend about the translation of the Bible. It says that 70 of the best experts of Holy Scripture were put in different premises so that they could not consult with each other. In 70 days they finished their translation and it turned out that the contents of all manuscripts were the same. It was considered to be a miracle of God. From that time on a tradition has existed to translate all sacred books as they were spoken by God: word-for-word. By 2000 the Bible had been translated into more than 2000 languages. The Synodal translation of the Bible (translation of the books of Holy Scripture into Russian) was done in the 19th century. It was the first translation approved by Russian church. The translation of the Bible into English, the so called King James Bible, was done in 1611 under the auspices of James I of England. Up to the present time this translation has an official status.

## **The problems the translator faces while translating the Bible and biblical texts.**

The translator has a huge responsibility of correct translation because wrong interpretation may lead to theological misunderstanding. Here are some of the problems of theological translation:

- hermeneutical aspect – interpretation and comprehension of the source (initial) text
- large choice of equivalent Christian vocabulary
- avoiding those elements of western Christianity about which the Russian Orthodox Church has a different opinion or position
- lack of good religious dictionaries. No possibility to select the appropriate variant of translation as well as a comprehensive comment on it

For example in Religious Russian-English dictionary written by O.Chalenko for Russian миропомазание the following variants of English translation are given:

- **anointing**
- **chrismation**
- **sacring**
- **unction**

But the meaning of all of these words is different.

**Anointing – the process of anointing**

**Chrismation – the name of sacrament**

**Sacring- the act of anointing when somebody is being crowned**

**Uction- anointing of the sick**

But the Catholic word “ confirmation” was not mentioned in the dictionary at all.

- inappropriate substitution of Orthodox terminology by the terminology of a Catholic divine service

There is an opinion that the Bible can not be translated completely and precisely into any language. On the one hand the aim of the translator is to decipher the meaning of the texts of Holy Scripture; on the other hand it is necessary to make the translation understandable for even an unprepared reader. The problem of a typological classification of Christian translation also arises.

**Peculiarities of the Bible and Biblical texts translation**

1. The use of archaisms is a powerful means which gives a solemn style to the Bible.

**Hath; hast instead of has; have**

**Shalt instead of shall**

**Art instead of are**

**Thou – you**

**Thee (objective case) – you**

**Thy, thine (possessive case) – their**

▪ **I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, and hear my speech.**

▪ **К Тебе взываю я, ибо Ты услышишь меня, Боже; приклони ухо Твое ко мне, услышь слова мои.**

▪ **Thou hast seen it; for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite it with thy hand: the poor committeth himself unto thee; thou art the helper of the fatherless.**

▪ **Ты видишь, ибо Ты зриаешь на обиды и притеснения, чтобы воздать Твоею рукою. Тебе предает себя бедный; сироте Ты помощник.**

2. The use of the pronoun of the second person plural when addressing the Israeli people.

**Местоимение 2 лица мн.ч. Ye (обращение к народу Израилеву в целом)**

**Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel .**

▪ **Боящиеся Господа! восхвалите Его. Все семя Иакова! прославь Его. Да благоговет пред Ним все семя Израилево!**

▪ **Why leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the LORD will dwell in it for ever.**

▪ **Что вы завистливо смотрите, горы высокия, на гору, на которой Бог благоволит обитать и будет Господь обитать вечно?**

The King James Bible has only one pronoun **you**. It erases all differences and we can see the intention of the translator to make the Bible more popular for ordinary people.

3. Lexical means in translation:

a. calque

Western translations of the Mother of God are the following: **The Holy Virgin; Virgin Mary; Our Lady**. The authors of the Russian Orthodox Church, while translating the texts into English address her as **the Holy (Mother of God)**

b. the use of special vocabulary

**sky – firmament (небесный свод)**

**much- abundantly**

**husband – husbandman**

c. the technique of accurate matching when translating the names

**Moses – Моисей ; the Kingdom of Heaven- царство небесное ; the Holy Spirit- святой дух**

d. explicatory translation (with a lot of notes and comments)

**Sanhedrim** – совет старейшин в древней Иудее ; **Pharisees**- член еврейской секты, верующий в жизнь после смерти

4. Grammar traits of the Bible

a. the use of the Past Simple tense

- **When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.**

- **Услышав это, Ирод царь встревожился, и весь Иерусалим с ним.**

b. the use of imperative mood in biblical texts

- **And God said, “Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water”**

- **И сказал Бог: да будет твердь посреди воды, и да отделяет она воду от воды**

5. Stylistic peculiarities and their translation

a. inversion

**“Me have ye bereaved of my children” instead of “Ye have bereaved me of my children”.**

b. anaphora

In the beginning of the paragraph or a new sentence there is the repetition of the conjunction ( and) **И**

- **God called the expanse “sky”. And there was evening, and there was morning – the second day.**

- **И назвал Бог твердь небом. И был вечер, и было утро: день второй.**

c. graphic stylistic devices

6. The use of the capital letter in addressing the Creator and in the pronouns relating to God.

**Why standest thou afar off, о LORD? Why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?**

- **Для чего, Господи, стоишь вдали, скрывая Себя во времена скорби?**

In conclusion it is necessary to say that the Bible is an everlasting book. It is an inexhaustible source of inspiration, knowledge and wisdom. It offers great possibilities for translators and interpreters.