

On 13/11/2017 19:56, xxxx xxxx wrote:

I'm curious why you are so passionate about this? What's your background?

XXXX XXXX

Acquisitions & Editorial Director

BroadStreet Publishing Group

[BroadStreetPublishing.com](http://BroadStreetPublishing.com)

[thePassionTranslation.com](http://thePassionTranslation.com)

Tel. xxx

On Mon, Nov 13, 2017 at 1:53 PM, Andrew Chapman <> wrote:

Thank you, sir, much appreciated.

Andrew

On 13/11/2017 19:44, xxxx xxxx wrote:

Thanks for your email. I will address this issue with our team.

XXXX XXXX

Acquisitions & Editorial Director

BroadStreet Publishing Group

[BroadStreetPublishing.com](http://BroadStreetPublishing.com)

[thePassionTranslation.com](http://thePassionTranslation.com)

Tel. xxxx

On Mon, Nov 13, 2017 at 10:43 AM, Andrew Chapman <> wrote:

Thanks, xxxx, for the rapid reply. I would like, if you will bear with me, to press you a little on what you mean by 'working from'. Brian may well have the Greek or Hebrew text open in front of him, but what is his reading proficiency, if any? Is he working primarily from English texts and only secondarily from Greek and Hebrew texts? I found this shortly after I wrote to you (by Michael Heiser, my emphasis):

As I noted earlier, the description of Simmons from the translation's own website doesn't provide any indication that Simmons has the skills to produce a translation from the original texts. His credential is being a linguist, church planter, and Bible translator for the Paya-Kuna people of Panama (Simmons worked with New Tribes Bible Institute). Being someone who translates the Bible into a modern language (especially a language that doesn't have a Bible translation) **does not guarantee the translator knows Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic**. I know that because I know people who have translated the Bible into such languages (tribal) **who don't know any of the biblical languages**. **They use an English translation** (or whatever their own first language is) and, perhaps, tools keyed to Strong's numbers. The results are quite serviceable, so I'm not being critical of the method. I'm being critical of **the deceptive marketing**. The marketing for the Passion Translation suggests it's a translation from the originals that is chock-full of insights heretofore neglected or missed. It isn't, as Athas notes in his review. [<http://drmsb.com/review-of-passion-translation-of-song-of-songs-solomon-truly-awful/>]

My own experience with Wycliffe translators confirms this. Possibly Brian feels he can say that he is 'working from' Greek and Hebrew if he makes recourse to them, looking up some words and so on. But can he read them, this is the question. Please ask somebody who knows Greek and Hebrew to have a look at

my points and see if he or she agrees with me that Brian lacked even elementary Greek and Hebrew at the time of making these translations (I am using the 2015 edition of John, by the way, but my examples 1 & 4 are from the 2014 edition).

We now have George Athas, a Hebrew scholar, appealing to Christians to:

Please, please, please in God's name avoid this so-called "translation."

You have to address this, and not just fall back on Brian's personal character, which is not a matter of dispute so far as I am aware. It's only his competence to translate the holy Bible which is at issue.

In Christ,

Andrew Chapman

Hi Andrew,

Thanks for your note. Brian is indeed working from the original Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic manuscripts, although he does not claim to be an Aramaic expert. With the release of the full New Testament on Oct. 31, he's made a number of changes to the 2014 version you have.

Brian is a very humble man of integrity who has a passion to accurately convey the words and heart of God. He is constantly improving the translation (I know since I have to make all the changes), and considers all the feedback we receive about the translation.

God bless you,

XXXX XXXX  
Acquisitions & Editorial Director  
BroadStreet Publishing Group  
The Passion Translation  
[BroadStreetPublishing.com](http://BroadStreetPublishing.com)  
[thePassionTranslation.com](http://thePassionTranslation.com)

On Mon, Nov 13, 2017 at 5:08 AM, Andrew Chapman <> wrote:

Hi xxxx,

Thanks very much for getting back to me. I have a further concern which I would like to share with you. I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that Brian is not translating at all, but rather is working from English texts, and using lexicons and commentaries to add some insights – if such they are – or variations to the usual translations. Please consider the following:

### **1) John 1.34 in the 2014 edition**

And now I have seen this revelation [aw] fulfilled with my own eyes! I can tell you for sure that this man is the Son of God.

[aw] The Greek word John uses for "seen," *ophesthe*, is always used in John's gospel for spiritual vision, or seeing in the spiritual realm.

[2014 edition, <https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=I1GKBAAAQBAJ>]

The Greek (Nestle–Aland 28) reads:

καὶ γὰρ **ἑώρακα** καὶ μεμαρτύρηκα ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ.

**ἑώρακα** is the first person singular perfect act indicative of **ὄραω** and means 'I have seen'. It could be transliterated as *heōraka*. So how can Simmons transliterate it as *ophesthe*? *ophesthe* transliterates back as **οψεσθε**, which is not a Greek word, but appears occasionally as a misprint for **ὄψεσθε** which is the second personal plural future middle indicative of the same word – 'you will see'. If Simmons knows Greek, why did he write *ophesthe* rather than *heōraka*?

This footnote was removed from the 2015 edition.

## 2) John 1.18

No one has ever gazed upon the fullness of God's splendor except the uniquely beloved Son, who is cherished by the Father [i] and held close to his heart. Now he has unfolded to us [a] the full explanation of who God truly is!

[i] 1:18 Or "He has led the way into the knowledge of God." The Greek word, **hexegeomai**, can mean either, "to lead the way" or, "to explain."

The Greek (Nestle–Aland 28) reads:

Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε· μονογενὴς θεὸς ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκεῖνος **ἐξηγήσατο**.

The Greek prefix **ἐκ-** is extremely common. Before a vowel it turns into **ἐξ-** as here. The lexical form is **ἐξηγέομαι**, which could be transliterated as *exēgēomai*. Why does Simmons transliterate it as *hexegeomai*, as if it had a rough breathing – **ἐξ-** ? It seems to me that anyone that reads Greek would see that as wrong straight away.

## 3) John 1.5

And this Living Expression is the Light that bursts through gloom—[a] the Light that darkness could not **diminish!** [b]

[b] 1:5 The Greek has a double meaning here. Darkness could not diminish this Light, nor could it comprehend it. The darkness can also be a metaphor for the sons of darkness.

The Greek (Nestle–Aland 28) reads:

καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει, καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν

**κατέλαβεν** is the third person singular aorist active indicative of **καταλαμβάνω**, meaning i) to lay hold of; ii) to overtake; iii) to comprehend (as for example we say to grasp something, meaning to understand it). **λαμβάνω** is an extremely common Greek word meaning 'to take' or 'to

receive' and κατα- is a very common prefix, so anyone who reads Greek would find the 3 real meanings of καταλαμβάνω unsurprising, but conversely would be very surprised to find it meaning 'diminish'.

#### 4) John 1.10–11 in the 2014 edition.

10) The Creator [n] entered into  
The very world he created,  
Yet the world [o] was unaware.  
11) He came to the very people he created;[p]  
To those who should have recognised him,  
But they did not receive him.

[n] 1:10 Implied in the text. The Greek is, '**he came to his own things.**'  
[o] 1:10 Or, "the world (of humanity) didn't perceive it."  
[p] 1:11 Or, "**to his own** (things or people)."

The Greek (Nestle–Aland 28) reads:

10 ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν, καὶ ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ ὁ κόσμος αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔγνω.  
11 εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθεν, καὶ οἱ ἴδιοι αὐτὸν οὐ παρέλαβον.

which could be translated:

10) He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, and the world did not know Him;  
11) He came to his own (things) – and (His) own people did not receive Him.

Footnote 'n' makes no sense. 'He came to his own things' would be a good translation of εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθεν in verse 11. It doesn't correspond to anything in verse 10. It was removed for the 2015 edition. I fail to see how anyone who reads Greek could have written it.

Footnote 'p' seems to fail to recognise that ἴδια is neuter. It's hard to see how it could mean 'own people'.

#### 5) John 2.1–3

Now on the third day [g] there was a wedding feast in the Galilean village of Cana, [h] and **the mother of Jesus** was there. Jesus and his disciples were all invited to the banquet, [a] but with so many guests in attendance, they ran out of wine.[b] And when **Miriam** [c] realized it, she came to him and asked, "They have no wine, can't you do something about it?" [d]

Or "Mary." It is unfortunate that translations of the Bible have substituted Miriam with Mary. Both Greek and Aramaic leave the Hebrew name as it is, Miriam. This translation will use the correct name, Miriam, throughout.

The Greek (Nestle–Aland 28) reads:

1 Καὶ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ γάμος ἐγένετο ἐν Κανὰ τῆς Γαλιλαίας, καὶ ἦν ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐκεῖ.  
2 ἐκλήθη δὲ καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν γάμον.  
3 καὶ ὑστερήσαντος οἴνου λέγει ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ πρὸς αὐτόν· οἶνον οὐκ ἔχουσιν.

The Greek has ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, 'the mother of Jesus' in both verse 1 and

verse 3. Why does Simmons translate it as 'the mother of Jesus' in verse 1 and then put in 'Miriam' in its place in verse 3? Why go on to write a footnote about using Miriam in preference to Mary, when the original text doesn't give her name at all? Is he even looking at the text?

## 6) John 3.13

No one has risen into the heavenly realm except the Son of Man who also exists in heaven. [a]

[a] 3:13 Jesus shares a mystery with Nicodemus. While he was on the earth ministering, Jesus was also in heaven in the spirit realm. Being in two places at the same time is also the privilege given to every believer. We are seated with Christ in the heavenly realm and living our earthly life to please him. This is what it means to be “in Christ.” See Ephesians 2:6 and Colossians 3:1–5. In the realm of the Spirit, heaven and earth is one. Jesus is telling Nicodemus that only those who are seated in the heavenly realm will understand spiritual truths. See 1 Corinthians 2:1–10. There are **some Greek** manuscripts that read, “the Son of Man who came from heaven.” But the Aramaic is clearly, “who is in heaven.”

The two main variants of the Greek text are:

13 καὶ οὐδεὶς ἀναβέβηκεν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἰ μὴ ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. [NA 28]

and no-one has gone up into heaven except **the one who came down from heaven**, the Son of Man.

13 καὶ οὐδεὶς ἀναβέβηκεν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἰ μὴ ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὁ ὢν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ. [BGNT, <http://bgnt.net>]

and no-one has gone up into heaven except **the one who came down from heaven**, the Son of Man **who is in heaven**.

The Aramaic text is clearly translated from the longer Byzantine version (for a word by word analysis see <http://bit.ly/2ztw2xL>):

وَلَا يُعْصَلُ سَلَقٌ لَّا هَوَّ سَمَّيَّا بَرَّهَ دَنَآسَا هَوَّ دِتَّو بَآسَمَّيَّا  
 وَلَا يُعْصَلُ سَلَقٌ لَّا هَوَّ سَمَّيَّا بَرَّهَ دَنَآسَا هَوَّ دِتَّو بَآسَمَّيَّا

wālā nāš sələq lašmayyā ʿellā haw danḥeṭ men šəmayyā bərəh dənāšā haw dīṭaw bašmayyā

which has been translated as, for example:

And no man hath ascended into heaven, but **he who descended from heaven**, the Son of man, **he who is in heaven**. [Etheridge]

And no one hath ascended to heaven, but **he that descended from heaven**, the Son of man **who is in heaven**. [Murdock]

Now look again at the relevant part of Simmons' footnote:

There are **some Greek** manuscripts that read, “the Son of Man who came from heaven.” But the Aramaic is clearly, “who is in heaven.”

a) All Greek and Aramaic manuscripts have 'he who came down from heaven'. But Simmons has omitted it. If he is translating from the Aramaic as he implies, why does he do so?

b) He makes it sound like the Aramaic is different from the Greek, whereas in fact it is as close as can be to the Byzantine text.

## 7) John 15.22

“If I had not come and **revealed myself** [g] to the unbelieving world, they would not feel the guilt of their sin, but now their sin is left uncovered. [h]

[g] 15:22 As translated from the Aramaic. The Greek is, “spoken **these things**.”

The Greek (Nestle–Aland 28) reads:

Εἰ μὴ ἦλθον καὶ ἐλάλησα αὐτοῖς, ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ εἶχουσαν· νῦν δὲ πρόφασιν οὐκ ἔχουσιν περὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν.

αὐτοῖς is the dative plural, either masculine or neuter, of the personal pronoun αὐτός. Here it must mean 'to them'. If the Lord Jesus had wanted to say 'spoken these things', it would I think have been ἐλάλησα ταῦτα, where ταῦτα is the accusative plural neuter of the demonstrative pronoun οὗτος (meaning 'this') – thus 'these things'. This is very basic Greek, which Simmons appears not to know.

Simmons says his text is translated from the Aramaic, but this isn't true. The text reads:

כֹּדְ אֲנִי לֹא אֶבְיֵן מַלְלֵי טַעֲמֵהּ, כִּי לֹא הָיוּ חַטֻּאֵיהּ, אֲבָל עַתָּה יֵשׁ לְהוֹנֵהוּן חַטֻּאֵיהּ מִפְּנֵי שֶׁלֹּא הָיוּ חַטֻּאֵיהּ.

ʿelū ʿennā lā ʿeṭīṭ **mallet** camhon layt wāt ləhon ḥəṭīṭā hāšā dēn layt ləhon celtā cal ʿappay ḥəṭīṭhon

مَلَلْتُ (mallet) is the first person singular perfect Pa'el of مَلَّ meaning 'to speak', which gives us:

If I had not come and **spoken** with them, they had not had sin; but now have they no pretext for their sins. [Etheridge]

If I had not come and **discoursed** with them, sin would not have been to them; but now there is no excuse for their sins. [Murdock]

just as it is in the Greek. As to where Simmons got 'revealed myself' from, I think it is probably from the fantasist Victor Alexander's New Testament, which has ([http://www.v-a.com/bible/suppositories/john\\_15-21.html#JOHN#15](http://www.v-a.com/bible/suppositories/john_15-21.html#JOHN#15)):

But if I had not come  
**To manifest myself** to them,  
 they would not have had sin.  
 But now they have no excuse for their sins.

## 8) John 15.25

And all of this has happened to fulfill what is written in their scriptures: [a]

They hated me for no reason. [b]

[b] 15:24 See Psalm 35:19 and 69:4. The Greek text can also be translated, “They hated **my undeserved gifts.**”

The Greek (Nestle–Aland 28) reads:

ἀλλ' ἵνα πληρωθῆ ὁ λόγος ὁ ἐν τῷ νόμῳ αὐτῶν γεγραμμένος ὅτι ἐμίσησάν **με δωρεάν.**

Simmons claims that:

ἐμίσησάν με δωρεάν

could be translated

They hated **my undeserved gifts.**

Does he not know that με is accusative? 'My' would be the genitive μου.

Does he not know that δωρεάν is singular? 'Gifts' would be δωρεάς.

It has become clear to me that Brian does not know Greek.

## 9) Psalm 1.1

What delight comes to **those** [b] who follow God's ways! [c]  
They won't walk in step with the wicked,  
nor share the sinner's way,  
nor sits in the circle of scoffers.

[b] 1:1 The Hebrew text is actually “**that One**,” and refers prophetically to the Lord Jesus Christ, our Tree of Life. Every one of us who belongs to “that One” can also walk in the light of this psalm.

The Hebrew text (BHS) reads:

אֲשֶׁר־יֵאֱיָשׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא הִלְךְ בְּעֵצַת רְשָׁעִים וּבְדַרְךְ  
חַטָּאִים לֹא עָמַד וּבְמוֹשָׁב לְצִיִּים לֹא יֹשֵׁב:

ash'rëy-**häiysh** ásher lo hálakh' Baátzat r'shäiyim ûv'derekh' cha#äiyim lo ämäd ûv'môshav  
lëtziyim lo yâshäv

אֲשֶׁר־יֵאֱיָשׁ means ‘the man’. הַ is the article (the patach – the vowel – changes to a chametz when joined to this noun) and אִישׁ means 'man'. That is all there is to it. It doesn't mean 'that One' as Simmons claims.

## 10) Psalm 59.13

May your wrath be kindled to destroy them; finish them off!  
Make an end of them and their deeds until they are no more!  
Let them all know and learn  
that God is the Ruler over his people, [b]  
the God–King over all the earth!  
*Pause in his presence*

[b] 59:13 The Hebrew is literally “God of Jacob.”

The Hebrew text (BHS) reads:

כִּי־אֱלֹהִים מִשָּׁל בְּיַעֲקֹב  
לְאַפְסֵי הָאָרֶץ סֵלָה׃

KaLēh v'chēmāh KaLēh w'ëynēmô w'yēd'û Kiy-élohiym moshël B'yaáqov l'af'sëy hääretz šeläh

Let us take the clause which Simmons has translated:

that God is the Ruler over his people, [b]

and where he says that:

The Hebrew is literally “God of Jacob.”

The Hebrew is:

כִּי־אֱלֹהִים מִשָּׁל בְּיַעֲקֹב

כִּי (Kiy) is an extremely common causal conjunction which can most often be translated 'because' or, as here, 'that'.

אֱלֹהִים (élohiym) means God.

מִשָּׁל (moshël) is the Qal active participle of מָשַׁל meaning 'to rule'. Here it is used as a verb, so just 'rules'.

בְּיַעֲקֹב (B'yaáqov) contains the prefix בְּ a preposition meaning 'in', followed by יַעֲקֹב Jacob.

God rules in Jacob. It can't mean anything else. Simmons wants to let the reader know that he has substituted 'his people' for Jacob. But his footnote betrays the fact that – if I am not mistaken – he doesn't read Hebrew. 'God of Jacob' would be:

אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב (élohëy yaáqov)

where אֱלֹהֵי is in the construct form, indicating the genitive relationship. אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב, 'God of Jacob' occurs in Psalm 46.7 and many places.

11) Psalm 74.13



It was you who split the sea in two by your glorious strength.  
You smashed the power of Tannin, the sea-god! [a]

74:13 As translated literally from the Hebrew. The Septuagint says, "You've crushed the heads of the dragons in the water [water spirits]."

The Hebrew for the B-line is:

שְׁבַרְתָּ רָאשֵׁי תַנִּינִיִּם עַל-הַמַּיִם

shiBar'Tä räshëy taNiyaniym al-haMäyim

Taking this one word at a time:

שְׁבַרְתָּ (shiBar'Tä) is the 2nd person singular masculine Pi'el perfect of שָׁבַר meaning 'to smash, shatter'. Thus, 'you shattered'.

רָאשֵׁי (räshëy) is the construct plural of ראש meaning 'head', so 'heads of'. Holladay's Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon gives 8 meanings of the word including 'beginning' and 'leader'. 'Power', as Simmons has it, is not one of them.

תַּנִּינִיִּם (taNiyaniym) is the plural of תַּנִּינִי meaning 'sea monster', 'sea-dragon', 'serpent'. Please note that Simmons has it as a singular.

עַל- (al-) means 'upon' or 'over'.

הַמַּיִם (haMäyim) has the article הַ, followed by מַיִם meaning 'water' or 'waters'.

So the Hebrew can only mean something like:

You shattered the heads of the sea-dragons upon the water

Simmons has:

You smashed the power of Tannin, the sea-god!

'Power' is wrong; 'Tannin' is wrong because:

- a) the word is plural and
- b) it is not a proper name. See Genesis 1.21 ('sea creatures'); Psalm 148.7, and 25 other places.

and 'upon the water' is completely omitted. Yet he claims that this is a literal translation!!

He then seems to contrast the Hebrew with the LXX. But the LXX is:

σὺ συνέτριψας τὰς κεφαλὰς τῶν δρακόντων ἐπὶ τοῦ ὕδατος.

which simply means:

You smashed the heads of the dragons upon the water.

just as the Hebrew does.

## Conclusion

Clearly, if Brian has not been translating from the Greek and Hebrew and Aramaic as he claims, then you have no right to call his version the *Passion Translation*.

One thing I discovered in recent years – I learned this in connection with Wycliffe Bible Translators rather than New Tribes Mission with whom Brian served, but perhaps the same applies – is that in-the-field bible translators generally know little Hebrew or Greek. They translate from English (say) into the language of the people group they are serving. They may look up Hebrew and Greek words, but they are not reading in the original text. This is can obviously be defended, if the English translation is a good one, as at least a first step in getting the holy word of God to those precious people. But what can't be defended is 'translating', as it were, from English to English, and bowdlerising and confusing God's holy and precious and mighty word in the process.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Chapman

Hi Andrew,

A number of months ago I received the emails below. As amazing as search engines are, and even asking my assistant for help tracking these down, I have been unable to find these until today. I apologize for such a long delay.

Please accept our thanks for your comments, and be assured that we have taken your feedback into consideration and have implemented key adjustments for the fall release of The Passion Translation's New Testament with Psalms, Proverbs, and Song of Songs.

We do feel the weighty responsibility of stewarding the Word of God, and thank you for your input, which has helped us to refine this translation. You may or may not agree with the changes, or lack of them, but we do want you to know we did consider the issues you have raised here.

God bless you as you continue to pursue God passionately,

xxxx xxxx

Editorial Director and Acquisitions Editor  
 BroadStreet Publishing Group  
[BroadStreetPublishing.com](http://BroadStreetPublishing.com)  
[thePassionTranslation.com](http://thePassionTranslation.com)

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**From:** Andrew Chapman []  
**Sent:** Friday, April 21, 2017 7:21 AM  
**To:** BroadStreet <[customerservice@broadstreetpublishing.com](mailto:customerservice@broadstreetpublishing.com)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: The 'Passion Translation': evidence of fraud and deception

Dear Sir/Madam,

May I expect a reply to this email, sent nearly a month ago? I understand that Authentic Media also forwarded to you an almost identical email which I sent to them, so I feel sure that you will have paid the matter some attention. My work has now been picked up at <http://readingthepassionbible.com/victoralexander/>. No-one has found any flaw in my reasoning so far, and I rather think that it will stand, since all I am doing is looking up the meaning of the Aramaic words in the Peshitta in the Syriac lexicons in the normal way. It appears that Simmons failed to do this, despite claiming to be translating directly from the Aramaic at certain points, as indicated by his footnotes and his FAQs. His translations are fraudulent and should not be sold.

Yours sincerely,

In Jesus Christ,

Andrew Chapman

----- Forwarded Message -----

**Subject:**The 'Passion Translation': evidence of fraud and deception  
**Date:**Fri, 24 Mar 2017 16:00:30 +0000  
**From:**Andrew Chapman <>  
**To:**BroadStreet <[customerservice@broadstreetpublishing.com](mailto:customerservice@broadstreetpublishing.com)>

Dear Sir/Madam,

I was struck by a claim made by Brian Simmons on the Sid Roth show (broadcast 2 February 2015) that:

the Aramaic text is: 'Wives be tenderly devoted to your husband as the church is tenderly devoted to Christ.' [References are carried in the three articles linked to at the end of this email.]

As Roth observed, there is a 'big difference' between this and the

normal rendering.

I checked the meaning of the Syriac word ܫܒܪܬܐ (shin-‘ē-beth-dalath) used here in the Peshitta (which is the Aramaic text Simmons claims to be working from – see the FAQs at [thepassiontranslation.com](http://thepassiontranslation.com)) and found that it in the middle/passive voice as here it meant 'submit oneself to' or 'be subject to' much as ὑποτάσσω does in Greek.

This started me on an investigation which I am now part way through. I think it would be right to inform you of my preliminary findings, as I trust you will be eager to prevent any misleading descriptions of your products, and indeed withdraw from publication anything purporting to be something which it is not. Needless to say, I have no personal animosity against Simmons. I have tried unsuccessfully to contact him through his web-sites, and through Twitter; but then had a short exchange with him on The Passion Translation Facebook page which tended to confirm the other indications that he is not actually translating from Aramaic when he says he is.

I bought a Kindle copy of Letters from Heaven and then, to avoid selectivity on my part, simply looked at the first ten occasions where there is a footnote that says 'As translated from the Aramaic' or similar.

I found no cases where this could be said to be accurate. More disturbingly still, there were six instances where it was clear that Simmons had taken text from Victor Alexander's 'Aramaic Bible'. Alexander is a film-maker who promotes a style of 'Felliniesque' film-making where, by his own account, 'dreams and reality are perceived as one experience'. He claims to be translating from a manuscript written in the 'Sacred Scribal Language of the Scriptures' which was used, according to Alexander, by both the Hebrew prophets and the apostles of 'Eashoa Msheeka' (Jesus Christ). He writes:

All human languages evolved out of the Leeshana Ateeqah (Ancient Tongue) that was spoken in Mesopotamia thousands of years before the Bible was written. However, Leeshana Ateeqah became the Leeshana Supprayah (Scribal Language). This is the Sacred Scribal Language of the Scriptures, which the Hebrew Prophets used and the Apostles of Eashoa Msheekha used. In fact, it is the language Eashoa Msheekha read the Scriptures from in all the synagogues and temples that He visited when He came to the world. This translation has been made from the Leeshana Supprayah, the Sacred Scribal Language of the Scriptures. This is the only Bible that has been translated from scratch using this language as the source material.

But elsewhere on his web-site, he says that he is unwilling to specify what this manuscript is, since it would take too long to explain:

I don't need to prove that the manuscript I'm translating from is the oldest found; archeology is not the issue. I don't need to prove that the manuscript I'm translating from has been sanctioned by any church; doctrine is not the issue. I don't need to prove that the manuscript I'm translating from is in the proper dialect; nationalism is not the issue. The only thing I need to prove is whether or not the manuscript I'm translating from contains the fundamental belief system of the Apostles of Eashoa, the belief system which Eashoa taught. This I've done, even if you take just two words: Maryah and Milta. I have a lot

more and they'll be revealed in subsequent commentaries, as I said. If I were to present archeological proof, doctrinal ideas or a chain of authority, it would take me a thousand years and more books than the whole universe could hold. This is what John was talking about when he concluded his Gospel with the following words: John 21:25. 'But there were also a great many things that Eashoa did, that if they were written of one by one, not even the whole universe, I expect, would hold them all.'

In Galatians 3.19, Simmons has 'Joyous Expectation' instead of 'seed', which again is a big difference. A footnote to Alexander's version of the same verse includes the phrase 'joyous expectations', and this is clearly Simmons' source, a deduction which he did not refute when I challenged him about this on Facebook on 8 March. When I asked Simmons where Alexander derived his 'joyous expectations' from (which, incidentally, comes in addition to 'seed' in Alexander, not as a replacement for it), he replied that:

I believe Alexander is a present day Aramaic speaker so his perspective would be how a current day reader would understand it

But surely if, for sake of argument, the Aramaic word in question, ܙܪܥܐ (zarċā) had in the last 1600–1800 years added a new meaning of 'joyous expectation' to its original meaning of 'seed', this would be no reason to translate with a current meaning, rather than with the meaning current when the Peshitta was translated from the Greek.

When the American missionaries went to Urmia in the 1830s, they found that the neo-Aramaic speaking people could not understand their Syriac bibles (which had almost exactly the same text as the Peshitta editions we have today), and thereupon translated them into the modern Syriac of that day. So even if Alexander is fluent in Aramaic as he claims – possible, but somewhat surprising since he lives in the USA, and the Assyrian communities there speak English – this does not demonstrate competence in the Syriac of the Peshitta (if that is what he is actually translating from, as seems likely).

I have written this up in three main posts, as follows. Please forgive my referring to this as an anti-translation. The point is that if we replace the words and meaning of holy scripture by alternative words and meanings, the effect is to oppose the real sense of the text, and to put something else in its place (the two senses of 'anti').

1) <http://theriveroflife.com/2017/03/19/brian-simmons-sid-roth-the-passion-anti-translation-and-ephesians-5-22-submit-or-be-tenderly-devoted/>

This contains a detailed examination of 'tenderly devoted to' in Ephesians 5.22, and information about Alexander. For this verse in particular I went to the Oriental Institute in Oxford and used the most up-to-date Syriac Lexicon (Sokoloff's).

2) <http://theriveroflife.com/2017/03/21/the-passion-anti-translation-is-brian-simmons-really-translating-from-the-aramaic-when-he-claims-to-be/>

Here I lay out my reasons why I doubt that Simmons is really translating from the Syriac text, as he claims to be doing.

3) <http://theriveroflife.com/2017/03/23/brian-simmons-claims-to-be-translating-from-the-aramaic-the-ten-cases-in-summary/>

Here I present my results from the first ten places in Letters from Heaven where Simmons claims that his text is translated from the Aramaic. For each, there is a link to a longer examination of the verse concerned.

I hope and pray that you will treat this matter with the seriousness it deserves. We change the text and meaning of holy scripture at our peril, and I trust that as publishers you feel the weight of responsibility you carry for the material you publish, and infinitely more so of course for something that claims to be the Word of God (Translator's Introduction, Letters from Heaven).

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Chapman

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