

The Historic Translation of John 1:3-4

Our English Bible gradually developed over the last six hundred years. John Wycliffe is credited with the first English translation of the New Testament which was completed about 1380 C.E. Until that time the Word of Yahweh was locked up in the Latin tongue which was unknown to the common people. The Latin Vulgate translated by Jerome about 400 C.E. was the standard Bible used in the Roman Catholic Church.

Wycliffe's translation is based upon the Latin Vulgate, not the Greek. It is therefore a "translation of a translation." In Wycliffe's translation, John 1:3-4 uses the word "him" in reference to the "Word" of verse 1 and is a translation of the Latin "ipsum" and "ipso" (he, she, or it).

The next great English translator was William Tyndale. He was an excellent Greek scholar who had access to the Greek text of Erasmus which Wycliffe did not have. The hand of the Almighty was upon Tyndale as He used him to give us our first English translation based upon the Hebrew and Greek. His New Testament was published in 1526 and revised to its final state in 1534.

Tyndale's translation of John 1:3-4 reads, "All things were made by it, and without it, was made nothing that was made. In it was life, and the life was the light of men." As you can see, Tyndale used "it" instead of "him." "It" is a translation of the Greek "autou" meaning he, or it. What this tells us is that Tyndale did not read Messiah into the "logos" or "word" of verse 1 and he was not influenced by the Latin Vulgate or Wycliffe. Miles Coverdale, a friend of Tyndale, gave us the first complete Bible printed in English in 1535. It was not a firsthand translation from the Hebrew and Greek, but was based on the Latin Vulgate and Tyndale's translation. Coverdale used "him" in John 1:3-4.

In 1537, John Rogers, using the pseudonym "Thomas Matthew," published a translation based largely on Tyndale and Coverdale which became known as Matthew's Bible. He uses "it" in John 1:3-4. The Great Bible followed in 1539 and was a revision of Matthew's Bible. The first edition was prepared by Miles Coverdale. For some reason Coverdale decided "it" was more correct than "him" which appeared in his 1535 version based on the Latin Vulgate and left John 1:3-4 as it was in Matthew's translation, "it" instead of "him." The Great Bible was the first authorized English version and was ordered to be placed in every church.

Under Queen Mary the printing of the English Bible ended and its use in the churches was forbidden. This gave rise to a version completed in Geneva. The Geneva Bible of 1560 was the first Bible to have numbered verses, each set off as a separate paragraph. This Bible became the "household Bible of the English-speaking nations." It held that position for about 75 years. It was Shakespeare's Bible and that of the Puritans who settled New England. Once again, the translation of John 1:3-4 follows Tyndale's example, "it" instead of "him."

Queen Elizabeth eventually reinstated the order that a copy of the Bible be placed in every church and she encouraged its reading. Since there were not enough copies of the Great Bible, the bishops themselves made a new revision known as the Bishop's Bible. It was published in 1568. It was used mostly by the clergy, not being very popular with the common people. It, too, renders John 1:3-4 using "it," not "him."

In 1582, the Roman Catholic version of the New Testament was completed and known as the Rheims New Testament. It was the result of a battle between Papists and Protestants, the former believing the Latin Vulgate to be the standard upon which all translations should be made. It was the work of Roman Catholic scholars based on the Latin. They chose to render John 1:3-4 using "him" as did the previous versions based on the Vulgate. From that point on, many future English versions, beginning with the King James version of 1611, used "him" instead of "it" in their translation of John 1:3-4.

As you can see, [Our Translation](#) of John 1:3-4 is not without historic and linguistic foundation; ***3 All things through it [the spoken word] came into being and apart from it [the spoken word] came into being not even one thing, which has come into being. 4 In it [the spoken word] was life, and the life was the light of men;***

The "logos" (Word) of John 1:1 is defined as 'speech, oral expression, reasoning, spoken word (including thought)' summarized as 'The oral expression, or Logic' pertaining to YHWH.

In that sense, 'word' is an "it," not a person but an expression without gender or personality (a thing). Stated another way, Yahweh spoke creation into existence, by His oral expression, His spoken word. This understanding agrees perfectly with passages such as Gen.1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, and 24, all of which begin, "And Alueim said." Yahweh spoke and it was done. Ps.33: 6, 9 says, "By the word (oral expression) of Yahweh were the heavens made; and all the host by the breath of his mouth. . . For He spoke and it was; He commanded, and it stood fast." Not only did Yahweh speak creation into existence, but He also spoke His Son Yahshua into existence; "And the word (Yahweh's spoken word) was made flesh" (Jn.1:14). Yahshua did not become the "Word of Yahweh" until his birth as a flesh and blood male child, and until Yahweh's Spirit fully filled the physical body (tabernacle) of Yahshua.

To say the "logos" of John 1:1 as a reference to the Messiah is to read '**him**' into the text which cannot be supported by Scripture. Roman Catholic scholars did this in order to support their unscriptural trinity doctrine. If Messiah did not pre-exist, the trinity doctrine would collapse, it being based upon the belief that all three members of the "godhead" were co-eternal. However, since Messiah only pre-existed in Yahweh's plan of salvation and did not pre-exist literally, it becomes clear that the trinity doctrine is of pagan origin, and not supported by the Scriptures.

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