

**NOTES ON THE GREEK TEXT OF THE
EPISTLE OF PAUL TO PHILEMON, AS THE
BASIS OF A REVISION OF THE COMMON
ENGLISH VERSION; AND A REVISED
VERSION, WITH NOTES; PP.1-87**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649375844

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Cover @ 2017

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PAUL

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PHILEMON.

N O T E S
ON
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EPISTLE OF PAUL TO PHILEMON,
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AND
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WITH NOTES.

Πάντα δε δοκιμάζετε· τὸ καλὸν κρατέετε (1 Thess. 5 : 21).

NEW YORK:
AMERICAN BIBLE UNION.
LOUISVILLE: BIBLE REVISION ASSOCIATION.
LONDON: TRÜBNER & CO., No. 60 PATERNOSTER ROW.
1860.

AMERICAN BIBLE UNION, }
No. 350 BROOME STREET, NEW YORK. }

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WM. H. WYCKOFF,
Corresponding Secretary,

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1890, by
THE AMERICAN BIBLE UNION,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

THOMAS HOLMAN, PRINTER AND SETTERS, NEW YORK.

P R E F A C E.

OF the two principal parts which compose this publication, the second is obviously dependent on the first, though the first is complete, in a certain sense, without the second. An exposition of the text, as a mental process at least, on the part of the interpreter (though the results may not be written out), must precede a translation. The Notes, therefore, here laid before the reader, have the same interest and value as a means of understanding the text of the Epistle, as if they were unaccompanied by a revision of the Common English Version.

But the other portion of the work has also its separate claims on the attention of the Biblical student. An addition of this nature has become, within a few years, a common feature in the best exegetical works published in this country, and in

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England. The fact sets forth an important truth. It is felt more and more that critical attempts to explain the meaning of the Scriptures should, as the proper test of their definiteness and precision, terminate in an endeavor to express the sense as nearly as possible in our own language; and furthermore, that they must assume this form, in order to render such studies available in any great degree to the bulk of English readers.

The topic last suggested here deserves a word further. This matter of the history of the current translation of the Bible, and a comparison of its renderings, with those of the preceding translations,* out of which the Common Version has arisen, are opening to us a range of study, comparatively new and attractive certainly to those who enter upon it. Some of the best scholars of

* It can not have escaped notice that the various English readings have begun to form an important new material in our works of Biblical criticism. Professor Alexander of the Princeton Theological Seminary, whose recent death is a calamity to the cause of sacred learning, has enriched greatly his New Testament Commentaries by his copious illustrations of this character.

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the day are giving their attention to it. The student of English literature will reap profit as well as gratification from it. The different epochs of our language are well marked in the style of the different versions. We learn, thence, that the English race, even since the dawn of Protestantism, and during some of the most effective periods of the national development, have not been dependent upon any single translation of the Bible, but have received their knowledge of the gospel through various channels. It is no disservice to be taught that the power of Christianity resides in its doctrines and ideas, and not in any set of words or phrases which it may outgrow with the advance of Biblical science, and the mutations of language, and must then, or should, discard for other forms. It is seen from such recurrence to the past, to be the wisdom of the church, to which have been committed the Oracles of God, to open promptly every source of religious knowledge to the many as well as the few. The names of Wiclif, Tyndale, Frith, Coverdale, are witnesses how slowly this truth has made its way in the world, in regard to the use and treatment of translations of the Sacred word into