

A Sixteenth-Century Glossary of the Bible

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IN HIS STIMULATING ARTICLE "And Adam Gave Names" (*Names*, VI) Mr. George R. Stewart suggests a rich field for investigation. Among the books of a later period which might be useful in such a study there is a scarce Renaissance glossary of the Bible which deserves special attention. My purpose here is to describe this glossary and to suggest its significance for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

In 1527–28 Robert Stephanus (Estienne) of the famous French family of classical scholars and printers, published in folio his Latin *Biblia* together with an elaborate glossary and an index of words and things.¹ This glossary and index were published in octavo, 1537, without the Biblical text. The title page of this volume, which begins *Hebraea, Chaldaea, Graeca, et Latina nomina . . .*, may be Englished thus:

Names, Hebrew, Chaldee, Greek, and Latin, of men, women, peoples, idols, cities, rivers, mountains, and of all other places in the Scriptures, set in alphabetical order with a Latin interpretation. . . . Also an index of things and ideas contained in the Bible. . . . Paris, from the press of Robert Stephanus, 1537.

Although I have not found any edition of the *Hebraea . . . nomina* later than 1537, the contents of this glossary would have been well known through the Latin *Biblia* of Stephanus, which went through six editions by 1557.² Also in 1553, our glossary of Biblical terms was absorbed in the Latin dictionary of proper names, compiled by Charles Stephanus, brother of Robert. But this is to anticipate.

The method of the glossary may be observed in the opening, reproduced on p. 106 of this essay. Hebrew and Greek terms are

¹ Elizabeth Armstrong, *Robert Estienne, Royal Printer* (Cambridge University Press, 1954), pp. 11–12 *et passim*. ² *Ibid.*

printed in the outer margins; and the text proper, arranged in alphabetical order, is in Latin. Each entry generally is followed by its etyma or words and phrases indicating the primitive meaning. See, for example, *Thomas*, *Thophel*, and *Thubal* in the photostatic reproduction. Then follow the identification and description of the name and its application together with the pertinent references to the Scriptures where the word is found.

In some of the entries the author supplies descriptions and references from authorities other than the Bible. See *Tiberias* (photostat), in which Stephanus cites Josephus and Egesippus; and *Tigris* which draws largely from Solinus. Damascus has, besides a dozen Biblical references, citations of Justinus, St. Jerome, and Tertulian. The entry *s. v. Babylon* is supported by a cluster of classical and mediaeval authorities — Josephus, St. Augustine, Pliny, Strabo, Herodotus, and Pomponius Mela.

Three entries of medium length and without reference to authorities outside the Scriptures are *Heliopolis*, *Syria* and *Tharsis*. As these seem to be fairly typical, I here present a rough translation of each:

Heliopolis, which in the Hebrew is called On, may be interpreted as grief, or sadness, or fortitude. In Greek, Heliopolis is translated as the city of the sun. It is also a city of Aegypt which is other wise called Thebes.

Syria, in Hebrew called Aram, is interpreted as noble or sublime, or beguiling, or their slander. The region is called Aram from the son of Sem (Shem) who established the Arameans, whom the Greeks call Syrians. Syria, once the greatest of the lands, was distinguished by many names. See Mesopotamia . . .

Tharsis, contemplation of joy, or a searching out of marble, or a turtle of joy, or a chrysolite stone . . . The son of Javan. gen. 10. a. d. It is also the name of a region once called Cilicia, from Tharsis the son of Javan. 3. reg. 10. d. . . Whence the chief city of this region, having changed Theta (Th) to Tau (T), obtained the name of Tarsus. In the Acts of the Apostles this word is written without the aspirate. Vide *Tarsus*. Some suppose Tharsis to be the Mediterranean Sea.

Of other entries, especially those concerned with items in the Old Testament, we may list the following as typical: *Arnon*, *Asmodeus*, *Azotus* (*Asdod*), *Baal*, *Ber-sabee* (*Beersheba*), *Ephraim*, *Esh-taol*, *Hebron*, *Labana*, *Nesroch*, *Rabba*, *Samaria*, *Siloe*, *Thophet* (*Tophet*). To some of these we shall return for illustrations.

So much for the form and content of the *Hebrae . . . nomina*. What can be said of its subsequent history and influence? As suggested above, this Latin glossary of the Bible, except the Hebrew and Greek names in the margin, was absorbed by the more comprehensive *Dictionarium Historicum, Geographicum, Poeticum* (1553) of Charles Stephanus. This book went through many editions in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Latin-English lexicographers of the seventeenth century borrowed freely from the *Dictionarium*, including many of the Bible glossary entries. See, for example, Francis Gouldman's *Copious Dictionary in Three Parts* (1664) and Adam Littleton's *Latine Dictionary in Four Parts* (1678). Annotations of the proper names in the marginal notes of the Geneva Bible often depend, directly or indirectly, on the 1537 glossary. Through the Bible notes and the dictionary this glossary was given a vicarious existence to the end of the seventeenth century.

Details of the relationships of this early glossary to subsequent proper name dictionaries, to Biblical annotations, and to literature must await treatment in another essay. Two illustrations³ may suggest, however, the nature of these relationships.

AZOTUS (ASDOD)

Glossary, 1537. Azotus, Hebraice dicitur Asdod, id est, depraedatio, siue ignis dilecti, aut ignis patruī. Insignis Palaestinae vrbs inter Ascalonem & Ioppen in tribu Dan, in qua gigantes habitarunt, capta a Iosue duce, Iosue 11. Sorte cessit tribui Iudae, Iosue. 15f. Haec vna e quinque civitatibu(s) Allophylorum, templo Dagon idoli nobilitata, 1. regum. 6. . . .

Dictionarium, 1595. (The language is the same as in the Glossary.)

³ George W. Whiting, *Milton and This Pendant World* (University of Texas Press, 1958), pp. 134–135, suggested these illustrations.

Geneva Bible, 1607. Azotus or Ashdod is a famous city in the land of Palestine.

Paradise Lost (l. 462). Dagon his name . . .
 . . . yet had his Temple high
 Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
 Of Palestine, in Gath, and Ascalon,
 And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.

Samson Agonistes, 980 ff. (Dalila speaking).
 But in my country where I most desire,
 In Ekron, Gaza, Asdod, and in Gath
 I shall be named among the famousest.

Since the Glossary and the *Dictionarium* entries on *Azotus* are the same in phrasing and content, no comment is required. The Geneva Bible shows little relationship to the dictionary entries though "a famous city in the land of Palestine" could be a translation of the "Insignis Palesthinae vrbs." Of more interest is the possible relation of the passages in *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes* to the glossary-dictionary entry *Azotus*.

Azotus (*Asdod*) celebrated for the temple of the idol Dagon, the mention of Palestine and Ascalon in the entry and the reference to the five cities of Philistia are all noteworthy here. Milton not only refers to the famous temple of Dagon but mentions the coast of Palestine, and specifies the cities of the Philistines — Azotus, Gath, Ascalon, Accaron, and Gaza; and Milton's spelling of these names is the same as that found in the glossary-dictionary.

In *Samson*, Dalila is thinking of the principal cities of Philistia. She begins with the northernmost Philistine city, Ekron (Accaron), as Merritt Y. Hughes notes,⁴ and next names the southernmost, Gaza, and then two other principal cities of Philistia to suggest that she will be known everywhere. In the various versions of the Bible, we read *Ashdod*. Milton uses the Hebrew form *Asdod* as in the glossary-dictionary.

⁴ *Paradise Regained, The Minor Poems, and Samson Agonistes* (Doubleday Doran, 1937), p. 584N.

THOPHETH (TOPHET)

Glossary. Thopheth, Tympanum, vel seductio, aut dilatatio. Locus est in valle filii Ennom: qui cernitur in Ierosolymae suburbanis, vbi quondam parentes filios igni exustos deuouebant, et immolabant daemonio Moloch, isa. 30. g. iere. 7. g. 19. d.

Dictionarium. (The entry is the same as in the Glossary except the first sentence is placed at the end of the *Dictionarium* entry.)

Geneva Bible. Tophet or Topheth is defined: "A place in the valley of the sonnes of Hinnom, which is in the suburbs of Jerusalem, where parentes were wont to offer their children half burnt in the fire to the devill Moloch."

Paradise Lost, 1.392. First Moloch horrid king besmeared with blood

Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears ...

..... the wisest heart

Of Solomn he led by fraud to build

His Temple right against the Temple of God

On that opprobious hill and made his Grove

The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence

And black Gehenna call'd, the type of Hell.

Again the glossary-dictionary entries are the same. The annotation of the Geneva Bible appears to be a direct translation of the glossary entry, except the omission of the first sentence. In the glossary, in the Geneva Bible, and in *Paradise Lost*, Moloch is associated with the valley of Hinnom and Tophet and he is the idol to whom parents offer their children as burnt sacrifices.

INTERPRETATIO

376 indic. i. b. nunc. r. c. Rex Gestur, i. reg. i. c. i. para. 3. n
 Tholomal, idē. Filiū Aminud regi. Genit. 3. reg. 19 g
 Thomas, Abythus vel geminū. & Græce didymus ap
 pellatur, quod interpretatur gemellus, id est ille qui cū
 alio uno & eodem patre nascitur. D. Vnus ex Apoſto
 lis. math. 10. a. ioban. 11. b
 Thopua, Ruina, aut solitudo, sine inſolitis, aut inſi
 pidatis. Locus est in deserto tēram Iordanem & regionē
 Iericho, vbi Moſes quintum liberum edidit, dicit. 1. a
 Thopheth, Tympanum, vel feditio, aut dilatacio.
 Locus est in valle ſibi Ennomi qui cernitur in Ierofoly
 ma ſuburbanis, vbi quondam parentes filios igni exu
 ſos deuocant, & immolabant demonio Moloch, iſa.
 30. g. i. ut. 7. g. 39. d
 Thopo, Locus. G. Nomen loci, i. machab. 9. c. Scrib.
 T opo.
 Tholaiter, Diſſipatio vel diſſipatus, aut caſus, i. pe
 rilip. 11. g
 Thou, Errans. Rex Emath, i. reg. 8. c. 1. para. 18. c
 Thraes, Alperī vel Saxoſi. G. Populi, i. machab. 1. f
 Tharſea, Audax, vel temerarius. G.
 Thabal, Orbis vel mundanus, aut confuſo vel igno
 minia, ſci. portatus vel adductus. Filius Iapheth, genſ.
 10. a. A quo Iberi dicitur quidam Italos ſuſcipitur) ori
 ginem traſerunt, ezech. 37. c
 Thyatis, Olor ſive Iſtericum laboris vel conſuetu
 dinis. G. Vbi Lydia regionis in Aſia minore: Macedoni
 habitatio, quam nonnulli Myſorum vltimam dicunt,
 18. 16. c. apoc. 1. g
 Thyatirani, Idem. P. n.
 Thyatira, Bona viſio vel ambilioſus, aut cōfractio. D.
 Vbi Gallizæ ad mare ſita, quod. A iſta ciuitas appell.
 laur mare Thiberiadis, ioban. 6. Hæc ciuitatem olim Ce
 nereth appellatam, Herodes Tetrarcha in honorem Ti
 berij Caſaris condidit, & Thiberiadem vocauit, velle Ie

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From the Hebraea . . . nomina (1537) of Robert Stephanus