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THE GOSPEL  
OF  
JOHN

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OF  
JOHN

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VOLUME II OF THE NEW TESTAMENT  
TRANSLATION SERIES

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A MODERN TRANSLATION WITH NOTES  
AND THE ORIGINAL GREEK TEXT

EDITED AND WRITTEN BY

MARVIN JOHANNING

OCTOBER, 2021  
MARVIN JOHANNING

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ΤΟ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ  
ΚΑΤΑ  
ΙΩΑΝΝΗΝ

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ΤΟΜΟΣ ΔΕΥΤΕΡΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΣΥΛΛΟΓΗΣ  
ΤΩΝ ΤΗΣ ΚΑΙΝΗΣ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗΣ ΜΕΤΑΦΡΑΣΕΩΝ

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ΜΕΤΑΦΡΑΣΙΣ ΚΑΙΝΗ ΥΠΟΜΝΗΜΑΣΙ  
ΚΑΙ ΔΗ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΙΣ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΙΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟΙΣ ΛΟΓΟΙΣ

ΤΟΥΤΟ ΤΟ ΒΙΒΛΙΟΝ ΕΓΡΑΦΗ ΥΠΟ ΤΟΥ  
ΚΛΕΟΦΙΛΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ

ΕΚΑΤΟΜΒΑΙΩΝ ΤΟΥ ΒΚΑ' ΕΤΟΥΣ  
ΚΛΕΟΦΙΛΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ

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ΜΑΚΑΡΙΟΣ Ο ΑΝΑΓΙΝΩΣΚΩΝ  
ΚΑΙ ΟΙ ΑΚΟΥΟΝΤΕΣ ΤΟΥΣ  
ΛΟΓΟΥΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΕΙΑΣ  
ΚΑΙ ΤΗΡΟΥΝΤΕΣ ΤΑ ΕΝ ΑΥΤΗ  
ΓΕΓΡΑΜΜΕΝΑ.

REV. 1:3



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# **PREFACE**

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# Introduction to this Translation

## On translating ancient texts

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Translations of the New Testament are plentiful — indeed, the vast majority of translations one can attain nowadays are much more professionally made and have had dozens of people working for hundreds upon hundreds of hours perfecting them. Therefore, it may come as a surprise to some that I — someone who has written what you are about to read in his free-time and who has never “professionally” studied Ancient Greek — would take it upon myself to write my own translation of one of the books of the New Testament.

Thus, in order for you to understand why this particular translation exists and how it differs from other translations, I decided to write this introduction, detailing not only the philosophy behind the manner in which I translate texts, but also the recommended ways of reading my translation.

**Textual basis** As I do not have access to a large amount of funds, I was required to use a textual basis published in the public domain. Thankfully, a substantial amount of editions of the Greek New Testament are now available in the public domain, which means that there is not a shortage of texts to utilise; finding

a digital edition of such a public domain text — that is itself in the public domain — was, however, a slightly more complicated task to accomplish.

As luck would have it, however, a very kind man going by the name of Diego Santos has digitised the 1904 edition of Eberhard Nestle’s *Novum Testamentum Graece* and published it on his website (<https://sites.google.com/site/nestle1904/home>) in the public domain.

Without the tremendous amount of effort he put into the digitisation of Nestle’s 1904 edition, I would not have been able to produce this book. And whilst there have been a great number of revised editions of his work (as of Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, the most recent one is NA28, i. e. the 28<sup>th</sup> edition), the changes are minor enough for me to look past them.

**Cultural issues** Translating texts from another language is never as straight-forward as some people might believe; one cannot simply pick up a dictionary, start translating and expect to have a coherent result thereafter. I have met a number of people who sincerely believe that they will be able to study a language by solely learning vocabulary and leaving the acquisition of grammatical concepts to “intuition”.

Such approaches are — in my opinion — bound to fail, unless it is one’s goal to part-take in a spelling contest in another language (as some people have, indeed, previously done).

Instead, translating a text requires not only an at least somewhat firm grasp of the language’s grammatical concepts — and how they might be translated properly without distorting their meaning too considerably —, but also an understanding of the source text and the cultural background of the people who speak the language being translated from.

Of the above-mentioned skills, however, only two can be harnessed

with relative ease, namely the attaining of a firm understanding of the grammatical concepts of the language and of the text being translated; the latter skill — (somewhat) extensive knowledge of the cultural background of the people who spoke the language — is slightly more difficult.

For, indeed, we are unable to take a time-machine and live with the ancient Greeks — or, in this particular instance, those living at around 200 AD. It is, therefore, much more difficult to get an adequate understanding of the cultural background; yet it is still quite possible to get a decent understanding of it through reading history books and reading original texts from that time.

Another aspect that needs considering is the fact that the general populace is most likely unaware of many of the cultural aspects of the people who lived during the time of the events of the New Testament; it is, therefore, imperative to assume that whoever is reading one's translation is oblivious to many of the cultural terms used in the text.

The translator must, therefore, consider which terms are to be explained to the reader and which are not; for explaining every single “strange” term one encounters could lead to the text containing too much of one's personal opinions and viewpoints.

Personally, I explain terms which a modern reader might be confused by (such as the Ancient Greek word *δηνάριον*, which is the equivalent of the modern-day penny), but do not generally explain those terms that might leave the “uninitiated” slightly mystified, but which make sense when one knows the basics of the Biblical story.

**Linguistic issues** Despite my having written that the obtaining of a decent understanding of the grammatical concepts of a language is relatively simple, it is, by no means, truly *simple* — indeed, the word “relatively” is of great import in this sentence. This is especially true when it concerns the translating of a text, particularly

one that — as you shall see in the chapter hereafter — contains a not insignificant amount of strange linguistic features.

As the translator, I am forced to consider whether to translate what the original author wrote verbatim, or whether to change its meaning in English to abide by the rules of regular English prose. Frequently, I opt to present the reader with the literal translation and an alternative interpretation (in brackets); a matter I will more fully explain in the *How to read this translation* section later on.

Indeed, I try staying as close as I possibly can to the base text, as I do not want to “disturb” the original æsthetics of the prose. Yet, there are times where a literal translation would yield something so bizarre and utterly incomprehensible that a modern English speaker would be greatly mystified by it — and in such instances, I do take the liberty of slightly rephrasing the original sentence, all the while keeping the meaning intact as best I can.

My particular approach to translation is a more literal one; this is especially true — and, in my opinion, important — when it concerns important documents such as, in this case, a religious text. The wrong translation — or, indeed, interpretation — may lead to an entirely different outcome; and as religious texts are abound in symbolism that is, frequently, open to interpretation, it is my goal to present the reader not with my own, personal world-view, but rather with an undiluted — but still pleasant-to-read — version of the base text in a language he can understand.

Balancing the “pleasant-to-read” aspect of my translation with linguistic accuracy is a rather delicate task, however, and I generally prefer to err on the side of linguistic accuracy. Frequently, some authors of the New Testament books re-use the same phrases, expressions and words in close proximity, which is a practice frowned upon by most English speakers when reading prose; and even though I often

have the ability to choose a slightly different word for the sake of diversity, I choose to, instead, — in the vast majority of instances, at any rate — use the same repetition as the original does too.

**How to read the translation** This translation differs substantially from others you might be used to, for it contains a not insignificant amount of notes within parentheses. This approach might be somewhat perplexing to those who are not used to it and I would, therefore, like to explain how to properly read parenthesised text.

Indeed, there are, in actuality, several different types of parenthesised text, all fulfilling slightly different functions. In general, it can, however, be said that the text within parentheses contains my own opinions and interpretations that cannot be found in the base text; and as I do not wish to impose my world-view upon the reader — as mentioned earlier —, these personal viewpoints have been placed in brackets to clearly separate them from the base text.

Should you wish to learn more about the various categories of notes, I shall herein explain them to you. We will begin by covering the “explanatory type”; this particular category is used to explain strange or unusual text passages or words. An example of this would be the aforementioned “denarius” which is followed by an explanatory parenthesis clarifying its modern-day equivalent meaning (i. e. penny / cent).

Another very frequently-used variety is the “supplementary type”. This particular variety of parenthesised text is used whenever the author implies a certain meaning, but does not explicitly write it out; or where an additional phrase makes the sentence sound more natural in English. An example of this can be found in my translation of the Apocalypse in II:4-5, where the addition of “I know” (“[...] and (I know) that you cannot [...]”) clarifies the meaning of the sentence.



The next category of parenthesised text that we shall explore is the “alternative reading type”. Anyone who has ever studied a second language for any length of time will be aware of the fact that words can – depending on context – be translated in a variety of ways. Therefore, whenever I felt that a word or phrase could be translated in a different manner, I add that alternative reading in parentheses behind the word or phrase it is referring to.

Within the alternative reading type, there exists a subset I am unsure what to call – perhaps “uncertain alternative reading type” would be an adequate description. Whenever I suspect there could be a possible alternative reading but I am not entirely certain it actually *could* be an alternative reading, I place the alternative text within parentheses and place a question mark thereafter.

It should now have become evident that there exist a rather large number of notes to be found within parentheses immediately following the sentence, word or expression they are referring to. I have taken great inspiration from, what I would most certainly deem, the most accurate and simply the best German translation of the Bible – The Mengebibel. For, indeed, that particular translation of the – in this particular instance entire – Bible follows a similar style; and as I have found it to be a great pleasure to read, I decided to write something similar in English.

I highly recommend *always* reading the parenthesised text, as it not only provides the reader with alternative readings and explains terms that might be unknown to him, but it also adds words and phrases that makes the reading much more fluid and pleasant; the translation should, however, be perfectly readable when skipping the parenthesised text, though knowledge of the underlying Greek idioms might be needed in order to properly understand certain passages.

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## Author's Note

### On obtaining a copy, compilation and license information

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As this book is not “copyrighted” in the traditional sense, I thought it prudent to write a short informational text here, explaining how you may legally attain your own (free) copy of my work, how you may use it and how to support me.

First and foremost, it is important to note that I am not making a non-watermarked PDF file of this book freely available; you may, however, at any time, download its source-code and compile it into any format that you wish — this is made possible through my having written this book in  $\LaTeX$ . This compilation process requires a full  $\LaTeX$  installation and a  $\LaTeX$  compiler compatible with my book, preferably  $X\LaTeX$  or  $\text{Lua}\LaTeX$ ; I would, however, strongly advise against the usage of  $\text{pdf}\LaTeX$ , as the Greek text appears to trouble it greatly and prevents it from working properly — or indeed, at all. If you wish to receive more information regarding the installation of a  $\TeX$  environment on your particular system and the compilation of documents, please refer to the official  $\LaTeX$  website (<https://www.latex-project.org/>) — installation is, generally, pretty straight-forward (at least on the systems that I use, i. e. macOS Big Sur and various Linux distributions).

An important thing to note would be the fact that the root docu-

ment file — from which all other parts of the document, such as the various chapters and the front matter, are loaded — is titled *revelation.tex*; compiling the book can, therefore, be accomplished by simply typing “`xelatex revelation.tex`” (or the equivalent command for another compiler) in the project’s main folder.

After compilation, you may use the book — and your compiled document — in accordance with the Creative Commons BY-NC-ND 4.0 International license; feel free to share your compiled version with your colleagues and friends, but do not attempt to sell it without my prior approval. Additionally, should you wish to use my work for a purpose that is generally forbidden by the license, I encourage you to contact me — I am fairly certain we can come to an agreement.

If you wish to obtain an official copy of my book — either digitally or in print —, then I highly encourage you to check out my website for always up-to-date information regarding the availability of various editions; you can find this, and some additional information, by following the following link: <https://ancient-greek.net/books/revelation.php>. This webpage also contains downloads for both a watermarked PDF preview and the archived (usually a regular ZIP file)  $\LaTeX$  source code of the book; furthermore, you may find the source code on this book’s GitHub repository: <https://github.com/mjohanning99/Revelation-Translation>.

At any rate, however, I hope that you enjoy my translation; and should you find things that could be improved or that need to be correct, I would love to hear from you! You can find my email at the beginning of the book.

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## About the Author

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My name is Marvin Johanning, I am 22 years old and currently reside in Bielefeld, a city in the north-west of Germany. I am currently attending an apprenticeship as an IT systems technician (*IT-Systemelektroniker*) that I hope to finish by mid-2023.

I am the maintainer of *ancient-greek.net*, a website containing lots of information on Ancient Greek, including book reviews and translations of various texts – amongst the latter are various portions of the New Testament and Herodotus' Histories.

I have also written another book, namely "The Intricacies of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphics". It can be found under the following ISBN: 978-3-752952-49-0. Please note, however, that it can currently only be bought from Germany.



# **THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**



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**CHAPTER I**

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# John on the Isle of Patmos


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**T**HE Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants what must soon happen; and He made it known through the sending of His messenger to His servant John, who confirms everything that he saw, namely the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Blessed is the reader and the people who listen to the words of the prophecy and (blessed is) the one who heeds what is written in it (the prophecy), for the time is near.



## Κεφάλαιον Ι

## Ἰωάννης ἐν τῇ Πάτμῳ

ποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἣν ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ ὁ Θεός, δεῖξαι τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐν τάχει, καὶ ἐσήμανεν ἀποστείλας διὰ τοῦ ἀγγέλου αὐτοῦ, τῷ δούλῳ αὐτοῦ Ἰωάνη, ὃς ἐμαρτύρησεν τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅσα εἶδεν. Μακάριος ὁ ἀναγινώσκων καὶ οἱ ἀκούοντες τοὺς λόγους τῆς προφητείας καὶ τηροῦντες τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ γεγραμμένα· ὁ γὰρ καιρὸς ἐγγύς.

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*“[...] and when I turned around I saw seven golden lamp-stands; and in the midst of the lamp-stands was someone like the Son of Man.”*

“MENSCHENSOHN” — GEBHARD FUGEL, 1933



# **APPENDIX**



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# The Greek Alphabet

## From Alpha to Omega

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As this edition of John's Apocalypse contains not only my own translation but also the original Greek text, I believed it to be helpful to include herein a small overview of the various letters of the Greek alphabet and their equivalent transliteration in English.

As this is merely supposed to be a short guideline for the slightly-above-casual reader unaccustomed to the Greek alphabet — or, perhaps, having rudimentary knowledge thereof —, I decided against fully-fledged explanations of the various breathings and accents, and I also decided against describing their pronunciations; for, indeed, there exist such a large number of varying ways of pronouncing the Ancient Greek language that showcasing them all herein would not be possible.

Instead, I recommend this table to be used simply as a quick reference guide for those who wish to read a handful of words in the Greek text — but are, due to their never having learnt the alphabet, unable to do so on their own —, or for those who have begun studying Greek only recently and still require help in reading the glyphs.

Greek Letter	Transliteration
A, α	a
B, β	b
Γ, γ	g
Δ, δ	d
E, ε	e
Z, ζ	z
H, η	ē
Θ, θ	th
I, ι	i
K, κ	k
Λ, λ	l
M, μ	m
N, ν	n
Ξ, ξ	x
O, ο	o
Π, π	p
P, ρ	r
Σ, σ, ς	s, z
T, τ	t
Υ, υ	u, y
Φ, φ	f, ph
X, χ	kh, ch
Ψ, ψ	ps
Ω, ω	ō

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# Further Reading

## Whereto Now?

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If this book has fuelled your desire to learn not only more about the Apocalypse of John and the Bible in general, but also the Ancient Greek language, I believe the following section might be of interest to you. For I have, over the course of my studying Ancient Greek, made good use of a rather large repertoire of various resources and would like to showcase those I believe to be most helpful.

First and foremost, I highly recommend JACT's "Reading Greek" series for commencing your study of the Ancient Greek language. In this series, as opposed to more traditional grammar books, you learn the language by reading as much as possible as soon as possible — as, indeed, the name should have revealed. If you do decide to get yourself a copy of the *Reading Greek* series, I also highly recommend the Italian edition of "Athenaze", as it contains a very large amount of beginner-friendly prose. I cannot, however, recommend *Athenaze* as one's only method of learning the language, as it does contain a not insignificant amount of Italian — thus, unless you speak Italian reasonably well, I can only recommend this book as a pairing to the aforementioned *Reading Greek* series.

If you wish to continue reading the New Testament in its original



language, my personal favourite is “The Greek New Testament: A Reader’s Edition”. It contains not only the entirety of the Greek New Testament and an Greek-English dictionary at the back, but also parsed vocabulary at the bottom of the page; that way, the reader is required to learn only those words that occur thirty times or more in the New Testament — the remaining ones can be found at the bottom of the page. Additionally, all vocabulary is parsed, so that the reader can immediately identify what the conjugation of a particular verb or irregular noun is. Its ISBN is 978-3-438-05168-4.

There also exists a reader’s edition of the Greek Old Testament — which is also known as the “Septuagint(a)” — in a similar style as the above-mentioned New Testament reader; it is called “Septuaginta: A Reader’s Edition”. In this rather extensive work — comprised not of one, but two volumes with over 1000 pages each —, you find the entirety of the Old Testament — including a handful of apocrypha —, a Greek-English dictionary and parsed vocabulary at the bottom of each page. It is a rather hefty investment, but the exceptional quality makes it, in my opinion, worthwhile. Its ISBN is 978-3-438-05190-5.

But there exist not only books that may aid you in your journey of studying the Greek Bible — and Greek in general —, but there also exists a rather considerable repository of resources that you can find on the Web. My own website, for example, *ancient-greek.net* contains a lot of information on Ancient Greek, how to study it and lots of reviews of various resources I use for learning the language. I highly recommend taking a look at it, as you can not only find aforesaid information thereon, but also links to a myriad of other helpful sites.

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## Afterword

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I thank you greatly for having read through the entirety of the book and hope that you enjoyed yourself whilst doing so. I have, to the best of my abilities, tried doing the original work justice, so that not only the unique and colourful manner in which John wrote his Revelation is translated properly, but also so that it becomes accessible and enjoyable for as many people as possible.

ΑΥΤΩ Η ΔΟΞΑ ΚΑΙ ΤΟ  
ΚΡΑΤΟΣ ΕΙΣ ΤΟΥΣ ΑΙΩΝΑΣ  
ΤΩΝ ΑΙΩΝΩΝ· ΑΜΗΝ.

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Rev. 1:6