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# Some Notes on the Passages in Matthew in the Authorized Version of the Bible

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## 0 Introduction

The Authorized Version of the Bible was printed in 1611, which is the oldest of the Bibles translated into English and commonly used today. There are some differences between the text of the AV and other Bibles which have recently been translated into present-day English.

The Wycliffi Bible is a well-known Bible which was translated from Latin into English. Although it is also supposed to be one of the translations that the Authorized Version is derived from, the Tyndale Version is the most effective translation that the AV is based on.

I will examine two examples of the differences in Matthew and, in this short essay, show that one can be traced back to the *Old English Gospels* beyond Wiclif and Tyndale, and that the other can be traced back to the Tyndale Version of the Bible.

It will be argued that the Authorized Version of the Bible has been supposed to be made under the influence of the Tyndale Version, as many preceding studies argued, however partially, which contains some parts not corresponding to the Vulgate.

## 1 The Authorized Version of the Bible

There are two passages in Matthew which are quite different expressions in the between one in the Authorized Version of the Bible (AV) and the other in the Revised English Bible (REB).

Let's compare passages (1) and (2) below, in the Authorized Version of the Bible (1611), and then compare passages (3) and (4) in the Revised English Bible (1989) as follows:

- (1) But I say vnto you, Loue your enemies, blesse them that curse you, doe good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully vse you, and persecute you:  
(Matthew 5:44; AV )
- (2) But what I tell you is this: Love your enemies and pray for your persecutors;  
(Matthew 5:44; REB)
- (3) And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet, They parted my garments among them, and vpon my vesture did they cast lots.  
(Matthew 27:35; AV)
- (4) When they had crucified him they shared out his clothes by casting lots,  
(Matthew 27:35; REB)

For Matthew 5:44, the passage in the REB does not completely correspond to the passage in the AV ('blesse them that curse you' is omitted). Similarly, in Matthew 27:35 in the REB does not completely correspond to the passage in the AV ('that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet' is omitted).

## **2 Some Bibles Preceding the Authorized Version in the Mediaeval and Early Modern English Periods**

In this section, I will collate some passages from Bibles preceding the Authorized Version in the Mediaeval and Early Modern English periods in relation to the passages in Matthew 5:44 and 27:35.

### **2.1 Wycliffe (1384, 1395)**

First let's take a look at the passages in Matthew 5:44:

- (5) But Y say to 3ou, loue 3ee 3oure enmyes, do 3ee wel to hem that

Some Notes on the Passages in Matthew in the Authorized Version of the Bible

haten 3ou, and preye 3ee for men pursuynge, and falsly chaleyngge 3ou;

*(Wycliffe Earlier Version, c.1384)*

- (6) But Y seie to 3ou, loue 3e 3oure enemyes, do 3e wel to hem that hatiden 3ou, and preye 3e for hem that pursuen, and sclaudren 3ou;  
*(Wycliffe Later Version, c.1395)*

The phrases ‘blesse them that curse you’ in the AV is not contained in either version of the Wycliffe Bible, which was translated from the Latin Vulgate. It is not found in the Greek Bible, either.

Let’s next take a look at Matthew 27:35 in the Wycliffe Bible:

- (7) Sothely after that thei hadden crucified hym, thei departiden his clothis, sendynge lot, that it shulde be fulfilled, that is seid by the prophete, seyinge, Thei departiden to hem my clothis, and on my cloth thei senten lot.

*(Wycliffe ; EV)*

- (8) And aftir that thei hadden crucified hym, thei departiden to hem my clothis, and on my cloth thei kesten lotte, to fulfillle that is seid bi the prophete, seyinge, Thei partiden to hem my clothis, and on my clooth thei kesten lott.

*(Wycliffe ; LV)*

The phrase ‘that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet’ is found in both the Wycliffe Bible and the AV.

## **2.2 Tyndale (1534)**

First let’s take a look at Matthew 5:44 in Tyndale:

- (9) But I saye vnto you, love youre enimies. Blesse them that course you. Do good to them that hate you. Praye for them which doo you wrong and presecute you,

Unlike the Wyclif Bible, the AV includes the phrase ‘blesse them that curse you.’

Next, let’s take a look at Matthew 27:35 in Tyndale:

(10) When they had crucified him, they parted his garmentes, and did cast lottes: to fulfill that was spoken by the prophet. They deuyled my garmentes amonge them: and apon my vesture did cast loottes.

The Wycliffe Bible, Tyndale Bible, and the AV all include the phrase ‘that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet.’

### 2.3 The Douay-Rheim Version

The Douay-Rheim Version of the New Testament of the Bible was translated from the Latin Vulgate into English in 1582. First let’s take a look at Matthew 5:44 in the Douay-Rheim Version:

(11) But I say to you, Love your enemies: do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you:

There is the corresponding passage to the passage in the AV ; ‘that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet,’ as in the two versions of Wycliffite Bible.

Then let’s take a look at Matthew 27:35 in the Douay-Rheim Version, as follows:

(12) And after they had crucified him, they divided his garments, casting lots; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: *They divided my garments among them; and upon my vesture they cast lots.*

The Douay-Rheim Version and the AV include the phrase ‘that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet.’ However, this phrase isn’t included in the Vulgate:

- (13) Postquam autem crucifixerunt eum diviserunt vestimenta  
 after crucified him divided clothes  
 eius sortem mittentes.  
 his lots cast

Nor does the Vulgate contain the phrases in Matthew 27:35 which allude to Psalm 22:18.

### 3 The *Old English Gospels*

The *Old English Gospels* were translated into Old English from Latin, in the Vulgate in the second half of the tenth century in the Wessex District.

I will gloss the passages in Matthew 5:44 and 27:35 for reading convenience in (14) and (15) below.

We will first examine Matthew 5:44 in the *Old English Gospels*.

- (14) Soþlice ic secge eow lufiað eower fynd.  
 adv. pron 1ns v. pr.1s pron 2dp v.imp. pl pron.gp. map  
 truly I say you love your enemy
- and doþ wel þam ðe eow yfel doð and  
 conj. v. imp. pl. adv. pron.3dp rel. pron. 2dp n.as v.pr.3p conj.  
 and do well them who you evil do and
- gebiddað for eower ehteras and tælendum eow.  
 v.imp.pl. prep pron. 2gp apm conj. pr.p. dpm pron.2ap  
 pray for your persecutor and slandering you  
 (Matthew 5: 44, Liuzza 1994: 11)

This passage is not included in Matthew 5:44, translated in the AV as ‘blesse them that curse you’ in the *Old English Gospels* as well as in the two versions of the Wycliffe Bible, and the Douay-Rheim Version.

We will first examine Matthew 27:35 in the *Old English Gospels*.

(15) *Soplice æfter þam þe hig hyne on rode*  
 adv. conj. pron. dsn. pron. np. pron. asm prep. w. acc. n. f. as.  
 truly after they him on cross

*ahengon, hig todældon hys reaf and*  
 v. pret. 3p. pron. np. v. pret. 3p pron. gsn. n. n. ap. conj.  
 crucified they divided his garments and

*wurpon hlot þærofer, þæt wære gefylled*  
 v. pret. 3p n. n. as. adv. pron. nsn v(beon). subj. 3s. v. pp.  
 threw lots over that (it) was filled

*þæt ðe gecweden wæs þurh*  
 nsn.rel. pron. rel. pat. v. pp. v(beon). pret. 3s. prep. w. acc.  
 that which (=what) spoken was through

*ðone witegan and þus cwæð: ‘Hig todældon heom*  
 art.asm. n. m. as. conj. adv. v. pret. 3s. pron. np. v. pret. 3p. pron. dp.  
 the prophet and thus (he) spoke they divided to them

*mine reaf hig wurpon hlot’.*  
 poss. adj. asm. n. n. ap. pron. np. v. pret. 3p. n. n.ap.  
 my garments they threw lots

(Matthew 27: 35, Liuzza 1994: 59)

The same phrase is included in both the *Old English Gospels* and in the AV : ‘that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet.’ However, this phrase is not included in the Vulgate. It can be supposed that this phrase was inserted in the Anglo-Saxon period and has been adopted from that period in Britain.

#### 4 Psalms

The reason why the passages which are not contained in the Vulgate

were added to the *Old English Gospels* can be conjectured. The phrase added to Matthew 27:35 is the quotation from Psalm 21:19. Magennis (2011: 87) says, 'The earliest prose translations of the Bible we have are the version of the first fifty psalms widely attributed to King Alfred and the translated passages from the Old Testament incorporated into Alfredian Laws.' Thus Psalms were being read in Old English by the late ninth century.

The translations of Psalms into Old English became widespread in Britain before the Old and the New Testament were translated into Old English. Magennis (2011:91) says, 'About a hundred years after the Alfredian translation of the psalms we arrive at what must be regarded as one of the most remarkable periods of Bible translation in the whole history of English.' It is significant that the quotation from Psalms was added to Matthew 27:35 in the *Old English Gospels* in the tenth century, even though this seems contrary to the fact that the *Old English Gospels* were translated from the Latin Vulgate into Old English for the most part.

## 5 Conclusion

The passage quoted from Psalms in Matthew 27:35 can be traced back to Wycliffe, prior Tyndale. However, it can be traced back even further to the *Old English Gospels*. The phrase in Matthew 5:44, which is not included in the Vulgate can be traced back to the Tyndale Version.

The Tyndale Version is the oldest Bible which includes both of the two phrases found in the AV, as many preceding studies on translation of the Bible into English have shown. However, the phrase in Matthew 27:35 can be traced back to the *Old English Gospels*. It can be conjectured that this passage was quoted from Psalms translated into English as an annotation, since Psalms in Latin had already been translated into Old English one century earlier than the *Old English Gospels* and become widespread by that time.

## Note

1. This does not mean that Tyndale followed Wycliffe in his translation of Matthew 27:35, because there is some evidence that he consulted Erasmus's Latin translation in connection with this passage. Norton (2011:9) says that "For the NT [Tyndale] had Erasmus's Greek text and Latin translation ...". Erasmus's Latin translation is shown below in English translation:

... so that what the prophecy had said should be fulfilled: 'They divided my garments among them and for my clothing they cast lots' (Sider ed. and Simpson Trans. 2008:369)

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Some Notes on the Passages in Matthew in the Authorized Version of the Bible

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