

SHORT NOTES

GLEANINGS FROM THE GOSPELS IN MALTESE

u, mingħajr ma għarafha, wildet iben. Matt. 1, 25.

This is not a literal rendering. The literal rendering would be: *u ma għarafhiex sakemm wildet iben*, which would seem to imply that Joseph had carnal relations with Mary after the birth of Jesus. This, however, is not the sense necessarily conveyed by the Greek conjunction *heos* or Hebrew-Aramaic *ghad* (sakemm). Sometimes the conjunction *ghad* denotes a point of time inclusive of further duration. Thus in Ps. 110, 1 we read: "Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool". This does not mean that the Messiah was to depart from the right of the Lord when the enemies had been subjected to him. So also in Matt. 1, 25 the conjunction *ghad, heos, sakemm* does not necessarily exclude further duration of the action expressed by the verb *ma għarafhiex*. That this further duration must necessarily be included is proved by other theological arguments, not by the context. I have preferred a free rendering expressing exactly the sense in order to avoid any possible misunderstanding. The same rendering is given by P. Joüon (*L'Evangile de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ*), *La Sacra Bibbia a cura del Pontificio Istituto Biblico*, P. Benoit (*L'Evangile selon Saint Matthieu in Bible de Jerusalem*).

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SCANDALUM.

The Greek word *scandalum* occurs only in the Septuagint and in the New Testament. In the New Testament it is always used in a religious and moral sense, 'occasion of fall, action or person inducing one to sin'. In Maltese I have retained the original meaning 'tfixkil' as far as possible, but in some cases where the rendering 'tfixkil' was not clear enough, I have translated 'skandlu', cp. Matt. 18, 7; Luke 17, 1, or 'tigrif' cp. Matt. 18, 8. 9; Mk. 9, 43. 45.

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INCREPARE.

This Latin verb generally means 'to reproach, to rebuke', in Maltese '(anfar'. But the underlying Hebrew verb *gaghar* or its Aramaic equivalent means 'to address a person with a loud voice', hence 'to command with a loud voice'. The idea of 'a loud voice' inherent in the Hebrew verb is best reproduced in Maltese by the verb 'għajjat ma'. But the verb 'increpare' does not always reproduce the exact meaning intended by the Evangelist. In Matt.

* *Cont. from vol. VIII, 1, p. 40.42.*

17, 17 'increpavit illum Jesus' = *amar Gesù a-xitan bil-herra*; so also Luke 4, 35; 9, 42; 8, 24 *amar bil-qawwa*; 9.22 *amarhom shih*. But in some cases the meaning 'canfar, ghajjat ma' suits the context better, so Matt. 19, 13; 20, 31; Luke 18, 15. 39; 19, 39.

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EVANGELIUM

This word is generally used in the Gospels in its etymological meaning 'good tidings'. The meaning of 'written documents containing the good tidings' does not occur in the Gospels but in later literature. Hence I have always translated 'bxara', except in Marc 8, 35 and 10, 29 where the word 'Evangelju' seems to sound better. The verb 'evangelizare' is accordingly rendered 'xandar il-bxara' or by a similar expression.

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porro unum est necessarium. Luke. 10. 41.

This is the Vulgate reading supported by the majority of the Latin texts. But the best Greek authorities have: 'few things are needed, or only one'. This is the reading adopted in the Maltese version.

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