

πρωτοτοκος (Revelation 1:5)

I. Introduction:

In the King James Version (KJV) πρωτοτοκος, an adjective, is translated as "first begotten."

"First" according to the modern dictionary, "the one coming, occurring, or ranking before or above all others."¹

"Begotten" according to that dictionary is a past participle of beget, "to father...to cause to exist or occur; produce."²

Some possible English meanings for the phrase "ο πρωτοτοκος εκ των νεκρων" are the following: the one coming to exist before all other dead, the one coming from the dead before all others, the one exists who is ranking above all other dead, the one produced in occurrence before all dead.

II. Possible Meanings of the Word:

The most commonly given translation for πρωτοτοκος is "first-born." The word πρωτοτοκος fits into two cognate groups. It is a cognate of the preposition προ meaning "before, in front of, at, above."³ And πρωτοτοκος is in the cognate group of the noun τεκνον

¹ The American Heritage College Dictionary, (Boston, New York.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1997), 123.

² Ibid., 513.

³ Warren Trenchard, The Student's Complete Vocabulary Guide to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 95.

meaning a "child."⁴ While these two meanings together imply the before child or the above child, logically meaning either in order or by eminence. Vine gives the break-up of πρωτοτοκος as coming from πρωτος meaning "first" and from τικτω meaning "to beget," "bear, give birth(to)."⁵ This break-up seems to imply more of a stress on the fact of being born before all other children than it does on a child being more eminent than the rest.

In Classical Greek πρωτοτοκος seems have a form of πρατοτοκος having the meaning of "bearing or having borne her first-born."⁶ This form was used in the Doric dialect by the third century B.C. poet, Theocritus.⁷ Aristoteles and by Plato use a similar form in their writings.⁸

The word πρωτοτοκος according to Balz and Schneider, "occurs about 130 times in the" Septuagint mostly translating $\gamma\iota\omicron\gamma\epsilon\tau\epsilon$ as or $\gamma\epsilon\tau\epsilon$ meaning "first born."⁹ Genesis 25:13 uses $\gamma\epsilon\tau\epsilon$ which is translated as πρωτοτοκος Ισμαηλ which is translated in

⁴ Robert Van Voorst, Building your New Testament Greek Vocabulary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990), ?.

⁵ W.A. Vine, An Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985), 240; F. Wilbur Gingrich, Shorter Lexicon of the Greek New Testament (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 200.

⁶ Henry Liddell and Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon (Oxford.: The Bath Press, 1996), 1545.

⁷ Ibid. ; American Heritage Dictionary, 1406.

⁸ Liddell and Scott., 1545.

⁹ Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider, Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament: Volume III (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994), 190.

our English(KJV) Bible as "firstborn of Ishmael."¹⁰ This has similar meaning in Judges 8:20 which is translated as τῷ πρωτοτοκῷ αὐτοῦ which is translated into our KJV as "his firstborn."¹¹ This word is also used in II Kings 3:27, and is translated as "eldest son." Many times a related word, πρωτογεννημα is used in the Septuagint to signify "first production," such as in Exodus 22:18 or Deuteronomy 15:19.¹²

In non-Koine, πρωτοτοκος holds the same idea of first-born. A fifth century B.C. Jewish sepulcher bears the word πρωτοτοκος which is used to mean "firstborn child."¹³ This use has a specific meaning of being the first born physically and not first born in eminence. Another sepulcher bears the words, "ιρευς γαρ ειμι πρωτοτοκων εκ τελεθ[ων?]" which means, "for I am a priest by the rites of the first born."¹⁴ The second example seems to indicate that it could be that the first born is referring either to eminence or to actual physical birth(or both). According to Balz and Schneider, πρωτοτοκος is used much in non-Koine Greek in reference to animals.¹⁵

¹⁰ Edwin Hatch and Henry Redpath, A Concordance to the Septuagint: and the Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament: Volume II (Verlagsanstalt, Graz.: Clarendon Press, 1975), 1232.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Balz and Schneider: Volume III, 190.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ James Moulton and George Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1949), 557.

¹⁵ Balz and Schneider: Volume III, 190.

In the New Testament *πρωτοτοκος* shows up several times, first in Luke 2:7 where it is used to speak of order of birth physically.¹⁶ Colossians 1:18 uses the word to "assert that Christ is 'the beginning' of a new series."¹⁷ Balz and Schneider comments on the passage at hand (Rev 1:5), *πρωτοτοκος* "is asserting a unique position of precedence for the resurrected Christ."¹⁸ The KJV in Hebrews 12:23, the terms used are "church of the firstborn." This term "refers to all those who through the blood of the mediator of the new covenant have already attained access to God."¹⁹ In the New Testament, therefore, it is seen that *their* is more variety of meanings than in the Septuagint. The most general overall meaning would be "the beginning of a new series."

III. Specific Meaning:

The phrase at hand is "*ο πρωτοτοκος εκ των νεκρων*." Literally translated according to common usage it is, *the firstborn out of the dead*. The KJV translates it as *the first begotten of the dead*. "The first begotten" is a reference to Christ. Therefore Christ is "the first begotten," that is the first out of the dead. Christ as stated as earlier, therefore had a "unique

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., 191.

position" because of his "precedence."²⁰ Therefore in conclusion to this matter, Christ is in more than one sense made the firstborn. He is firstborn of the dead to be glorified, and His the most important of the risen dead (for He quickens). So he is both in order and in eminence.

III. Possible Meanings of the Word

The most common given translation for *survax* is pierce. It can also have other meanings such as "pierce through," "prick," "put out." The verb *survax* fits into the cognate group of verbs. The noun *survax* has the meanings of "the sting of an animal," "a goad," "a pointed stick." Vine indicates that the word *survax* can be broken down into two parts, *sur* meaning "out" and *vax* meaning "to prick." The two meanings can come together to mean "to pierce through" or "to put out."

²⁰ The *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Volume 1, 1976, 123.

²¹ *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Volume 1, 1976, 123.

²² Ibid., 190.

ἐξεκέντησαν (Revelation 1:7)

I. Introduction:

This verb is the 1st aorist active, third plural of ἐκκεντεω, which is translated as "pierced" in the KJV.

"Pierce" according to the modern dictionary has the meaning of "to cut or pass through with or as if with a sharp instrument...to make a hole or opening in...to make a way thorough."²¹

So "pierce" has the idea of a deep movement into a substance.

II. Possible Meanings of the Word:

The most common given translation for ἐκκεντεω is pierce. It can also have other meanings such as "pierce through," "prick out, put out."²² The verb ἐκκεντεω fits into the cognate group of κεντρον.²³ The noun κεντρον has the meanings of "the sting of an animal,..., a goad, a pointed stick."²⁴ Vine indicates that the word ἐκκεντεω can be broken down into two pieces, "εκ" meaning "out" and "κεντεω" meaning "to prick."²⁵ So the two meanings can come together to mean to prick out. A meaning that can gather

²¹ The American Heritage College Dictionary, (Boston, New York.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1997), 1035.

²² Balz and Schneider: Volume I, 410.; Liddell and Scott, 508.

²³ Trenchard, 55.

²⁴ Gingrich, 107-108.

²⁵ Vine, 471

from these definitions is such as a pointed object which goes into the flesh.

In Classical Greek it seems to have been used in the literature of Aristoteles and in the literature of Polybius.²⁶ The use of *εκκεντεω* in this literature has a very similar translation to the modern translation of Koine Greek. The word *εκκεντεω* is translated as "pierce," and "stab."²⁷

In the Septuagint, there are various forms of *εκκεντεω*. Hatch and Redpath seem to base all their references on the idea that *εκκεντειν* is the root and not the verb form, *εκκεντεω*. They give several Septuagint references. Numbers 22:29 is translated as "ηδη αν εξεκεντησα σε" and is found in the KJV to be translated from the Hebrew as "for now would I kill thee."²⁸ The Septuagint in this case did well with their translation showing the idea that the sword(which is a pointed object) would do a piercing of the object of frustration(the donkey). Other instances include, Judges 9:54(our translation, "thrust him through"), and Isaiah 14:19(our translation, "thrust through with a sword").²⁹ According to Moulton and Geden there is a passage in the Septuagint that uses *εκκεντεω*, Zechariah 12:10.³⁰ This is one of the best examples of the use of the word in relation to the

²⁶ Liddell and Scott, 508.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Hatch and Redpath, 432.

²⁹ Ibid. ; KJV.

original context of Revelation 1:7. Not only is the word "pierced" used, but it shows a prophetic prediction of that Christ that would come. The Septuagint use clearly indicates that *εκεντεω* is used when a sharp weapon like object is put through someone or something else.

There does not seem like there is a wealth of non-Koine use with *εκεντεω*.

This verb, *εκεντεω* appears only twice in the New Testament. Both times it is found as "*εξεκεντησαν*" in the aorist active, third, plural.³¹ The first use is in John 19:37, "*οφονται εις ον εκεκεντησαν*," translated as "they shall look on him whom they pierced" (quoting Zechariah 12:10).³² Thus the primary definition is thrown back to what was meant in the original Hebrew scriptures. The idea then is left to the thrusting through.

III. Specific Meaning:

The only other New Testament use of *εξεκεντησαν* (*εκεντεω*) is found in Revelation 1:7. The passage "*οιτινες αυτον εκεκεντησαν*," is translated "they also which pierced him."³³ Again, with the prophecy that exists and connects between Zechariah 12:10 and John 19:37, there is a clear picture painted of what the use is.

³⁰ W.F. Moulton and A.S. Geden, A Concordance to the Greek Testament (Edinburgh.: Page Brothers LTD., 1978), 316.

³¹ Balz and Schneider: Volume I, 410. ; Trenchard, 248.

³² Moulton and Geden, 316. ; KJV.

³³ Ibid.

Especialy since there is a clear indication of what caused the piercing how that Jesus was crucified with nails(Jn 20:25). The nails must have gone completely through the hands of Christ, or else what would be the purpose of using them. So the New Testament use of this word is similar to Old Testament but, the New testament helps clarify slightly. The "piercing" is the action of a sharp object going all the way through the object of affliction.

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παντοκρατωρ (Revelation 1:8)

I. Introduction

This noun is translated as "Almighty" in the KJV.

"Almighty" as an adjective has the meaning according to the modern dictionary of "having absolute power." As a noun it is another name for God.³⁴

II. Possible Meanings of the Word:

The most commonly given translation for παντοκρατωρ is "Almighty." Other translations include, "All-Powerful, Omnipotent(One)," and "ruler over all."³⁵ The noun παντοκρατωρ is listed as being under two different cognates. First, it is under πας, πασα, παν meaning "all, every."³⁶ Secondly, παντοκρατωρ is under κρατος, which means "power, might, mighty deed, sovereignty, rule." These two meanings together do imply an all-power, or all mighty, or all sovereignty, or all-rule idea.

In Classical Greek παντοκρατωρ, is used in a reference to Hermes, a Greek god, in an Greek epigram.³⁷ The usage here is translated "almighty."³⁸ Besides this example, there is an example from Delos who uses παντοκρατωρ in the forms of

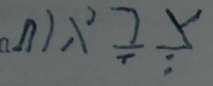
³⁴ The American Heritage College Dictionary, (Boston, New York.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1997), 38.

³⁵ Gingrich, 147.; Balz and Schneider: Volume III, 11.

³⁶ Van Voorst, 21.

³⁷ Liddell and Scott, 1300.

"κρατουντι," and "κρατουση," which designate the "omnipotence" of the gods of the Phrygians and Syrians.³⁹ In the Classical Greek, it can be concluded that παντοκρατωρ has an idea of super power, if not the New Testament meaning of all powerful.

In the Septuagint, παντοκρατωρ is used in such places as II Samuel 5:10 ("Lord of hosts"), Job 5:17 ("Almighty"), Hosea 12:5 ("God of hosts").⁴⁰ Usually παντοκρατωρ is being translated from . This is the word used in Amos 4:13 ("The God of hosts").⁴¹ The word translated παντοκρατωρ, in the Hebrew has a root meaning, "army, war, warfare."⁴² The Hebrew literally says God (of) war, or perhaps it could be translated God (of the) army.⁴³ Therefore the Lord is being pictured as One being over all powerful armies, of both heaven and earth. The words seem to be usually translated as "Lord of hosts." (Which still does hold that idea.) There is at least one instance (Amos 5:8) of the Septuagint writers translating the Hebrew into παντοκρατωρ. But when the translators of the KJV came, they cut left it out of the English. It may have been put there by the writers of the Septuagint to emphasize the overall strength of the verse, which does imply a presence of a powerful creator. One must examine the

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Moulton and Milligan, 478.

⁴⁰ Hatch and Redpath, 1053.; KJV.

⁴¹ Balz and Schneider: Volume III, 11.

⁴² Francis Brown, The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 2000), 838-839.

⁴³ Ibid.

context. The conclusion from the Septuagint is that παντοκρατωρ most always means as is seen by English translations, (God) over-all.

Outside of the Scriptural Greek, there is seemingly not so much non-Koine use, but there are writings and inscriptions found on "papyri", "a prayer," and "an amulet."⁴⁴ The papyri makes reference to God, therefore strengthening the notion that παντοκρατωρ is an attribute of a god, if not God. The prayer, makes the clear statement of who is being prayed to, "ο θ(εο)ς ο παντοκρατωρ ο αγιος ο αληθινος."⁴⁵ The prayer is to the Almighty, holy, true, God.⁴⁶ The inscription on the amulet also makes a clear statement about who it is to, "δησποτα...παντοκρατωρ ο πατη[p] του κ(υριου)."⁴⁷ The inscription is to the Lord, almighty, the Father of Lord.⁴⁸ Therefore from these is seen a clear picture, connected to its cognates that παντοκρατωρ means, all mighty, the one who is over all in all things.

In the New Testament, παντοκρατωρ occurs ten times.⁴⁹ Nine out of ten times it occurs in Revelation, the other one time occurs in II Corinthians 6:18, "λεγει Κυριος παντοκρατωρ."⁵⁰ The KJV translates that phrase as, "saith the Lord Almighty." All

⁴⁴ Moulton and Milligan, 478.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Gingrich, 8.

⁴⁷ Moulton and Milligan, 478.

⁴⁸ Gingrich, 44.

⁴⁹ Van Voorst, 21.

other nine are in reference to God. Another example is Revelation 19:15, "την ληνον του οινου του θυμου και της οργης του θεου του παντοκρατος."⁵¹ The KJV translates that phrase as, "the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." The uses do not necessarily narrow down the meaning, but clearly it is seen that all of God's people know that "Almighty" is and was only to be applied to Him.

III. Specific Meaning:

The phrase at hand is "λεγει Κυριος ο θεος. . . ο παντοκρατωρ."⁵² It is translated in the KJV as, "saith the Lord, . . . the Almighty." Therefore, of a surety it can be said that παντοκρατωρ means "Almighty," and is an attribute of God. The specific meaning is gathered from its cognates of an All-Sovereign One. God is therefore above all, all armies, all nations. The words which are said beforehand in verse eight are in red. Then the word *Almighty* is associated to the One who spoke those same red words(Christ). Thus Christ is equal with God, because there is only One Almighty. There is a perfect unity and a perfect trinity of our Almighty God.

⁵⁰ Moulton and Geden, 749.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

συγκοινωνος (Revelation 1:9)

I. Introduction:

This noun is translated as "companion" in the KJV.

"Companion" according to a modern dictionary is "a person who accompanies or associates with another. . . a person employed to assist, live with, or travel with another."⁵³

II. Possible Meanings of the Word:

The most commonly given translations for συγκοινωνος is "participant," and "partner." Other meanings include, "sharer" and "partaking jointly of."⁵⁴ The word συγκοινωνος fits into the cognate group of κοινος which means "common, ordinary, profane, unclean."⁵⁵ But συγκοινωνος is more closely associated with another word that falls into the same cognate group, κοινωνος, meaning, "companion, partner, sharer."⁵⁶ Yet, even the cognate root has a significant linkage to συγκοινωνος. Anything that is shared or used "jointly" can be considered "common," or "ordinary." Trench gives one of the synonyms of the cognate κοινος as being βεβηλος.⁵⁷ βεβηλος means "profane, worldly,

⁵³ The American Heritage College Dictionary, (Boston, New York.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1997), 283.

⁵⁴ Trenchard, 58.; Liddell and Scott, 1666.

⁵⁵ Trenchard, 58.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Richard Trench, Synonyms of the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1953), 374.

godless."⁵⁸ One can see the overlapping between the two words, but the idea of "common" and "ordinary" is lacking from βεβηλος.

The verb form, συγκοινωνεω according to Bauer has various meanings such as, "participate in with someone, be connected."⁵⁹ This verb form also carries the idea of "have a joint share of" and to "participate/take part in together."⁶⁰ Even the verb form of the cognate, κοινοω, carries a similar meaning as "I make common, defile..."⁶¹ Another related cognate of κοινοω has an even better meaning, κοινωνεω, which means "I share, participate, give a share."⁶²

In the Classical Greek, συγκοινωνος was used by Stephanus Byzantius in the same form in which it is seen in the Koine.⁶³ The verb form was used of Hermes and by Hippocrates in the meaning of being "connected."⁶⁴ The verb form was also used by Demosthenes in the same respect.⁶⁵ Alexis used it, "συγκοινωνεω τιμι τινος," translated as "go shares with one in a thing."⁶⁶ So the Classical resembles the Koine in meaning of the word.

⁵⁸ Gingrich, 34.

⁵⁹ Walter Bauer, William Arndt, and Felix Gingrich, A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature (London.: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 774.

⁶⁰ Liddell and Scott, 1666.; Balz and Schneider: Volume III, 283.

⁶¹ Trenchard, 58.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Bauer, 774.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Liddell and Scott, 1666.

In the Septuagint, the word συγκοινωνός, itself does not occur. However the cognate, κοινος does appear as in such verses as Proverbs 1:14, and Proverbs 12:9.⁶⁷ The meaning, however is not directly very clear. Proverbs 1:14 is one of the clearer verses, seeming the idea being "among," sharing in the casting of lots. So the Septuagint does have that vague idea of sharing, or sharing in something with someone else.

There actually seems to be more references to the Classical Greek than to Koine. One example that does exist is that of Maspero who uses the form, συγκοινωνοι in reference "of business partners."⁶⁸ In non-Koine, it seems that there is the same meaning as there is in Classical and Koine.

This word συγκοινωνός, occurs four times in the New Testament.⁶⁹ The noun συγκοινωνός is used in Romans 11:17(translated, "partakest") and Philipians 1:7("partakers").⁷⁰ The third use is in I Corinthians 9:23, which is, "ἵνα συγκοινωνός αὐτοῦ γενώμαι," which means, "that I might be partaker thereof with you."⁷¹ So the primary translation in the New Testament is "partaker." This definition does not directly imply that the partakers are sharers, but the context does imply a sharing idea.

⁶⁷ Hatch and Redpath, 775.

⁶⁸ Bauer, 774.

⁶⁹ Trenchard, 58.

⁷⁰ Balz and Schneider: Volume III, 283.

⁷¹ Ibid.; KJV

III. Specific meaning:

The phrase at hand is "ο και αδελφος υμων και συγκοινωνος εν θλιψει. . ." According to the KJV it is translated, "who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation. . ." This translation of συγκοινωνος is the only one that is translated as "companion." It must have then been a superior idea in the minds of the KJV translators that συγκοινωνος was a stronger concept of sharing than the other three passages. So what the passage is saying is that the believers "share" in the tribulation with other believers. The primary meaning of this word is a partaking of the same, and experiencing the same (together).

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