

Sunday, March 23, 2025—Grace Life School of Theology—*From This Generation For Ever*
Lesson 259 Assessing the Printed History of the King James Text (Scrivener on The Italics)

Introduction

- In [Lesson 258](#) we began looking at what F.H.A. Scrivener had to say about the use of italics in the AV. The Lesson discussed contemporary scholarly views on the practice (Norton & Campbell) and began examining Scrivener's systematic analysis of the italics in the Authorized Version in his book *The Authorized Editon of the English Bible (1611)* from 1910.
- All told, Lesson 258 touched on the following points:
 - Scholarly debate regarding the continued usefulness of italics in modern editions of the KJB.
 - F.H.A. Scrivener's analyzing categories divide the use of italics in the AV into six classes.
 - The first class of italics use, identified by Scrivener, is to harmonize parallel passages.
- In this Lesson we want to continue our look at Scrivener's six classes.

Scrivener On The AV Italics

- In Appendix 2 of his recently published book *The Text of the King James Bible (2025)*, Dr. Laurence M. Vance deals with the subject matter of italics in the text of the AV. In the context, Vance is discussing the use of italics in I John 2:23 when he states that F.H.A. Scrivener is the only writer to offer a systematic analysis of the italics in the AV.
 - “The only detailed analysis of the italic type in the King James Bible is that of Scrivener in *The Authorized Editon of the English Bible (1611)*. He identified six reasons why the translators of the Authorized Version, and its subsequent editors, used italic type.” (Vance, 457)

Class 1

- Scrivener's 1st Class is stated as follows:
 - “When words quite or nearly necessary to complete the sense of the sacred writers have been introduced into the text from parallel places of Scripture.” (Scrivener, 64)
- To illustrate this Class, Scrivener provided pairs of verses from II Samuel and I Chroniclas respectively. Screenshots of these examples are provided in [Lesson 258](#).

- II Samuel 5:8—And David said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, *that are* hated of David's soul, he shall be chief and captain. Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.
 - I Chronicles 11:6—And David said, Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites first shall be chief and captain. So Joab the son of Zeruiah went first up, and was chief.
- II Samuel 6:6—And when they came to Nachon's threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it.
 - I Chronicles 13:9—And when they came unto the threshingfloor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled.
- II Samuel 8:4—And David took from him a thousand chariots, and seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: and David houghed all the chariot *horses*, but reserved of them *for* an hundred chariots.
 - I Chronicles 18:4—And David took from him a thousand chariots, and seven thousand horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: David also houghed all the chariot horses, but reserved of them an hundred chariots.
- II Samuel 8:18—And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over both the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were chief rulers.
 - I Chronicles 18:17—And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and the sons of David were chief about the king.
- II Samuel 21:19—And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines, where Elhanan the son of Jaareoregim, a Bethlehemite, slew the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.
 - I Chronicles 20:5—And there was war again with the Philistines; and Elhanan the son of Jair slew Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, whose spear staff was like a weaver's beam.
- II Samuel 23:8—These be the names of the mighty men whom David had: The Tachmonite that sat in the seat, chief among the captains; the same was Adino the Eznite: he lift up his spear against eight hundred, whom he slew at one time.
 - I Chronicles 11:11—And this is the number of the mighty men whom David had; Jashobeam, an Hachmonite, the chief of the captains: he lifted up his spear against three hundred slain by him at one time.

- Scrivener concludes his discussion of Class 1 with the following statement:
 - “This is the simplest case, for the words supplied in italics are doubtless lost in the one ancient text, while they are preserved in the other.” (Scrivener, 65)
- This is Scrivener’s opinion. One can observe the accuracy of Scrivener’s classification of Class 1 italics without agreeing with his interpretation.

Class 2

- Scrivener’s 2nd Class is described as follows:
 - “When the extreme compactness of the Hebrew language produces a form of expression intelligible enough to those who are well versed in it, yet hardly capable of being transformed into a modern tongue.” (Scrivener, 65)
- Scrivener used an example for *The Text Of The English Bible* (1833) by Bishop Thomas Turton to illustrate his point.
 - “One or two of Bp. Turton's (*Text, &c.* pp. 50, 51) examples will illustrate our meaning

Gen. xiii. 9. “Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if the right hand, then I will go to the left.”

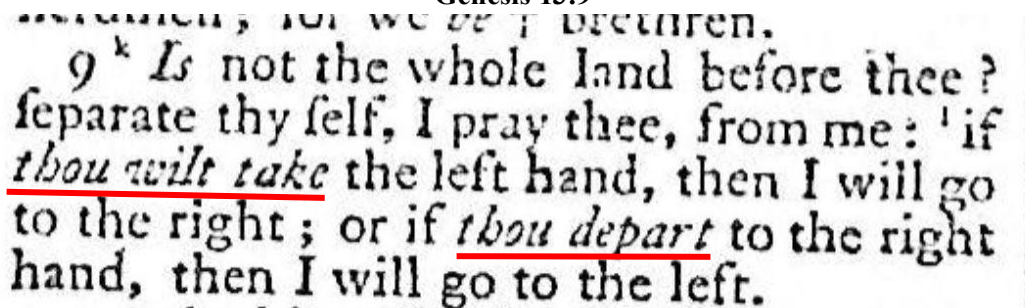
Ex. xiv. 20. “And it was a cloud and darkness, but it gave light by night.”” (Scrivener, 65)
- The two examples cited by Scrivener from Gen. 13:9 and Ex. 14:20 are being used in the context by Bishop Turton of what a woodenly literal reading of the Hebrew text would sound like in English.
 - “I shall now quote a few instances of texts, in none of which can the meaning be expressed in English, without words in addition to those which the Hebrew affords; while in some of them great care must have been requisite, to ascertain and unfold the signification of the Original. Although anxious not to extend this Essay beyond due limits, I shall venture occasionally to subjoin to the cited texts a few illustrative remarks. When the reader's attention is thus directed to the structure of the Hebrew Language, he will be surprised to find how much, that we require to be expressed in words, might be safely left to the imaginations of men, in the eastern regions of the world.” (Turton, 49)
- Scrivener goes on to state the following and provide examples of how he handled the two verses in question in his *Cambridge Paragraph Bible* (1873).
 - “Every one must feel that something is wanting to render these verses perspicuous; the latter indeed we should hardly understand, without looking closely to the context. It

seems quite right, therefore, that supplementary words should be inserted in such places, and equally fit that they should be indicated by some contrivance which may shew that they form no part of the Hebrew original.” (Scrivener, 65)

- The following are screenshots of how Genesis 13:9 appeared in the standard 1769 Blayney text. In the case of Genesis 13:9 Bishop Turton points out that the italics is unevenly marked in various editions of the AV. (Turton, 50)

1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

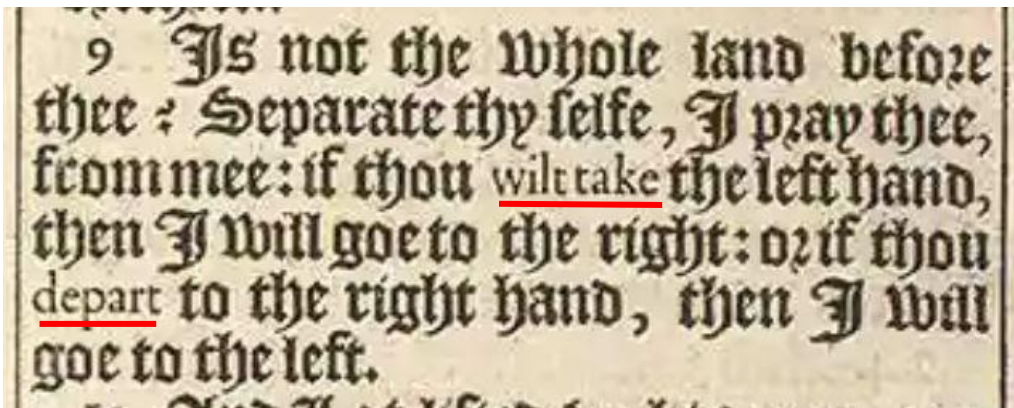
Genesis 13:9



9^k Is not the whole land before thee? separate thy self, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

1611 London Folio (H309)

Genesis 13:9



9 Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thy selfe, I pray thee, from mee: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will goe to the right: or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will goe to the left.

- Scrivener expands Class 2 with the following additional examples. Once again, I have annotated this quote to include screenshots of the relevant examples.
 - “To this class we may most conveniently refer the numerous cases wherein what grammarians call the *apodosis* (that is, the consequence resulting from a supposed act or condition) is implied rather than stated, yet in English requires something to be expressed more or less fully: such are the following texts

Gen. xxx. 27. “. . . If I have found favour in thine eyes, *tarry*.”

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27 And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, If I have found favour in thine eyes, *tarry*: for ^a I have learned by experience that the LORD hath blessed me ^b for thy sake.

2 Chr. ii. 3. “As thou didst deal with David my father, and didst send him cedars... *even so deal with me*.”

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3 ¶ And Solomon sent to ¶ Hiram the king of Tyre, saying, ‘ As thou didst deal with David my father, and didst send him cedars to build him an house to dwell therein, *even so deal with me*.

Dan. iii. 15. “If ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the comet, . . . ye fall down and worship the image which I have made, *well*.”

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15 Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; *well*: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; ^a and who *is* that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?

Luke xiii. 9. “And if it bear fruit, *well*. . .”

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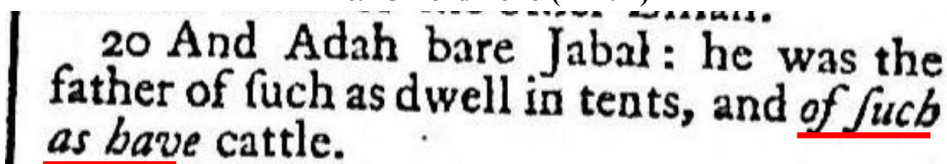
9 And if it bear fruit, *well*: and if not, *then* after that thou shalt cut it down.

Occasionally our Translators, with happy boldness, have suppressed the *apodosis* entirely, as in the original (Ex. xxxii, 32 ; Luke xix. 42). In some few passages the seeming necessity for such insertion arises from a misunderstanding either of the sense or the construction : such is probably the case in Neh. iv. 12, and unquestionably so in Matt. xv. 6; Mark vii. 1.” (Scrivener, 65-66)

Class 3

- Scrivener describes the 3rd Class of italics as follows:
 - “Just as little objection will probably be urged against the custom of our Translators in italicizing words supplied to clear up the use of the grammatical figure known as the *zeugma* [the use of a word to modify or govern two or more words usually in such a manner that it applies to each word in a different sense (as “opened” in “opened the door and her heart to the stray kitten”) or makes sense with only one word (as “rolling” in “rolling lightning and thunder”). (Merriam-Webster.com)], whereby, in the Hebrew no less than in the Greek and Latin languages, an expression which strictly belongs to but one member of a sentence, with some violation of strict propriety, is made to do duty in another.” (Scrivener, 66)
- This Class is illustrated by the following examples. Yet again, I have annotated this quote to include screenshots of the relevant examples.
 - “Gen. iv. 20. “And Adah bare Jabal : he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and cattle.” Supply, “*of such as have* cattle.”

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20 And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle.

Ex. iii. 16. “I have surely visited you, and that which is done to you in Egypt.” Our version here, with less necessity, inserts “*seen*” after “and.”

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16 Go, and ^a gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, ^b I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt :

Ex. xx. 18. "And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking." Here the order of the clauses renders it impossible to supply any single word which would not increase the awkwardness of the sentence: the passage is accordingly left as it stands in the original. Not so the sharper language of the parallel place:

1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

18 ¶ And ^a all the people ^a saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain ^b smoking: and when the people saw *it*, they removed, and stood afar off.

Deut. iv. 12. "Ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude, only a voice." After "only" insert with 1611 "*ye heard.*"

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12 ^a And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ^a ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; ^a † only *ye heard a voice.*

2 Kin. xi. 12 (so 2 Chr. xxiii. 11). "And he brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and the Testimony." Insert "*gave him*" before "the Testimony."

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12 And he brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, † ' God save the king.

Luke i. 64. "And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue," add "*loosed.*"

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64^k And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.

1 Cor. xiv. 34. "It is not permitted unto them to speak, but to be under obedience." After "but" insert "*they are commanded.*" So "*and commanding*" before "to abstain" in the exactly parallel passage, I Tim. iv. 3.

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34^{*} Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but ^{*} they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the ' law.

Conclusion

- In summation, Scrivener identified the following six classes for the use of italics in the AV.
 - Class 1—"When words quite or nearly necessary to complete the sense of the sacred writers have been introduced into the text from parallel places of Scripture." (Scrivener, 64)
 - Class 2—"When the extreme compactness of the Hebrew language produces a form of expression intelligible enough to those who are well versed in it, yet hardly capable of being transformed into a modern tongue." (Scrivener, 65)
 - Class 3—"Just as little objection will probably be urged against the custom of our Translators in italicizing words supplied to clear up the use of the grammatical figure known as the *zeugma*, whereby, in the Hebrew no less than in the Greek and Latin

languages, an expression which strictly belongs to but one member of a sentence, with some violation of strict propriety, is made to do duty in another.” (Scrivener, 66)

- In the next Lesson we will finish our look at Scrivener’s 6 classifications of the italics in the AV.

Works Cited

Scrivener, F.H.A. *The Authorized Editon of the English Bible (1611)*. Cambridge University Press, 1910.

Turton, Thomas. *The Text of the English Bible. As Now Printed by the Universities*. Cambridge University Press, 1833.

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“Zeugma.” Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/zeugma>. Accessed 27 Mar. 2025.