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Dr F.A. Gosling

O Judas! What have you done?

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Key words: New Testament; Judas; betrayal.

In much recent research on the life and career of Judas, a good deal of which has emanated from Germany,[1] there has been an attempt to re-evaluate the traditional understanding of Judas as the betrayer of Jesus.[2] This attempted re-evaluation is also to be found in the newest work on Judas:

W. Klassen, *Judas: Betrayer or Friend of Jesus?* (London: SCM, 1996).

Since the latter is the newest of these works and also takes into consideration the contributions of the former it seems best to concentrate on Klassen's analysis of the issues involved. Klassen's actual aim in writing his study is noted by him in the conclusion of his work:

> Our search for the historical Judas began with a particular goal: to listen to the sources and, above all, to look beneath the layer of literary tradition available to us to understand something of who he was. We are as much interested in what the early church made of Judas as we are about what we can learn about the historical Judas.[3]

In the course of his study Klassen has considered what the Gospel writers, historians, artists, and theologians have made of Judas and has further concluded that most of such efforts have obscured the

1 B. Dieckmann, *Judas als Sündenbock: Eine Verhängnisvolle Geschichte von Angst und Vergeltung* (Munich: Kösel 1991); H. Gollwitzer, 'Gute Botschaft für Judas Ischarioth', in. *Krummes Holz—aufrechter Gang: Zur Frage nach dem Sinn des Lebens* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser 1970), 271–296; H. Wagner, 'Judas: Das Geheimnis der Sünde, menschliche Freiheit und Gottes Heilsplan', in H. Wagner (ed.), *Judas Iskariot: Menschliches oder heilsgeschichtliches Drama?* (Frankfurt: Josef Knecht 1985), 11–38.

2 R.S. Anderson *The Gospel according to Judas* (Colorado Springs: Helmers & Howard, 1991).

3 W. Klassen, *Judas: Betrayer or Friend of Jesus?* (London: SCM Press, 1996), 202.

historical record. Accordingly, when Klassen has examined the historical record he concludes that:

> It is possible that we rest on solid ground when we accept Judas as a Jew who was a member of Jesus' inner circle. The name Judas Iscariot leads us nowhere in describing the kind of person he was, except that he was a Jew and one of the twelve, a disciple. Beyond that, we are told that he was even an apostle.[4]

This evaluation of the historical record now leads Klassen to make a further deduction about the actual career of Judas:

> There is no evidence that Judas did anything but function as a valued member of the Jesus community. He plays no discernible role in the community until the last week of Jesus life, when the sources unanimously report that he played the key role as the one 'who handed over' the Son of Man.[5]

It is the examination of the historical record, namely, the Gospels, which causes Klassen to state his most astounding discovery as follows:

> The most astounding result of our search was the discovery that the deed for which Judas is almost universally blamed—that of betraying Jesus—does not rest on linguistic grounds. The Greek verb παραδίδωμι, which virtually always has been translated *'betray'* in connection with Judas deed, does not mean *'betray'* in any classical text we were able to discover; never in Josephus and never in the New Testament. Every authority joined in the consensus on this point. More and more modern translators recognise this.[6]

Since the most astounding result of his research, namely, the translation of παραδίδωμι as *'hand over'* and not as *'betray'*, radically alters the evaluation of Judas career and ministry and is foundational to our understanding of his deed, it seems appropriate to spend the remainder of this article in a consideration of Klassen's evidence of how one should translate παραδίδωμι and of an appropriate response thereto.

In his work, Klassen examines the meaning of παραδίδωμι, *'hand over/betray'* under four different heads and it seems appropriate to adopt his system of examination.[7] The four areas of lexicographical examination are as follows:

I. The usage in classical Greek
II. The usage in the LXX
III. The usage in Josephus
IV. The usage in the New Testament

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4 W. Klassen, ibid, 202.

5 W. Klassen, ibid, 202.

6 W. Klassen, ibid, 202.

7 W. Klassen, ibid, 47–56.

I. The Usage in Classical Greek

According to the standard lexicon for classical Greek, Liddell & Scott, there are four basic meanings of the verb παραδίδωμι:

A. To give, hand over to another, transmit, such as virtues from teacher to students, documents, give up an argument, etc.

B. To give a city or a person into another's hands, esp. as a hostage or to an enemy; with the collational notion of 'treachery', betray.

C. To give oneself up to justice.

D. To hand over legends, opinions, doctrines.[8]

For our purposes here in the study of the actual nature of the act of Judas the most important meaning is B. In support of the meaning 'betray', which yields the collational notion of 'treachery', the lexicon cites the following texts: Pausanias 1.2.1; Xenophon, *Cyro.* 5.1.28 and the same text at 5.4.51, all of which are good classical texts. It is now proposed to examine each of these texts in detail.

(a) Pausanias 1.2.1: Θήσεως δὲ ἐρασθεῖσαν ᾿Αντιόπην—στρατεῦσαι γὰρ ἅμα ῾Ηρακλεῖ καὶ Θησέα—παραδοῦναι τὸ χωρίον ('but Antiope, falling in love with Theseus, who was aiding Heracles in his campaign, surrendered the stronghold').[9] While Jones is surely technically correct in rendering the infinitive παραδοῦναι by 'surrender', it does seem that the nuance of 'betrayal, treachery' is present, since the text makes clear that the stronghold was impregnable and could not be taken by Heracles or Theseus, but was betrayed or handed over by Antiope because of her love for Theseus.

(b) Xenophon, *Cyro.* 5.1.28: ἀνθρωπίνη δὲ γνώμη τίς ἂν ἢ φευγόντων πολεμίων ἀποτρέποιτο ἢ ὅπλα παραδιδόντων οὐκ ἂν λαμβάνοι; ('For, in all common sense, who would turn away from the enemy when they are in flight, or refuse to take their arms when they surrender them?').[10] Once again the correct translation of the participle παραδιδόντων has surely been yielded by Miller, but it does appear that the collational nuance of 'betrayal, treachery' is present, since if an army which is in flight surrenders its weapons it certainly betrays their deadly impact into the forces of a foreign power.

(c) Xenophon, *Cyro.* 5.4.51: τὼ δὲ δύο φρουρίω φοβῶν μὲν Κῦρος, πείθων δὲ Γαδάτας ἔπεισε παραδοῦναι τοὺς φυλάττοντας. ('of the other two, Cyrus, by intimidation, brought the garrison of the one to surrender, and Gadatas, by persuasion, that of the other').[11] In this text Xenophon makes clear that the two remaining Syrian garrisons were conquered by Cyrus and Gadatas. While the former used intimidation,

8 H.G. Liddell & R. Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon* (9th. Edition. Oxford, 1968), 1308.

9 W.H.S. Jones, *Pausanias, description of Greece* (LCL. Harvard/London, 1992), 8–9.

10 W. Miller, *Xenophon, Cyropaedia* (LCL. Harvard/London, 1989), Vol 2, 18–19.

11 W. Miller, ibid, 92–93.

the latter used persuasion and the collective impact of their efforts was that they persuaded those who guarded the garrisons to surrender them. However, it does appear that the collational nuance of 'betrayal, treachery' is once again present, since the guards by surrendering their respective garrisons have betrayed their occupants into the hands of the conquering power.

From this cursory examination of the classical Greek texts it does seem that Klassen has not detected the nuances of 'betrayal and treachery' which are clearly to be found in these texts, since he has simply asserted his position without justifying his position on the basis of the linguistic evidence which was available to him.

II. The Usage in the LXX

In the text of the Greek Old Testament, which is usually called the LXX, the verb παραδίδωμι occurs some 251 times and is used to render some 23 Hebrew terms. Klassen has noted that, often the idea of handing over someone or something to the enemy occurs.[12] Thus, it is regularly used to render the Hebrew verb *natan*, 'give'. After his examination of the texts in which παραδίδωμι occurs, Klassen concludes that it does not convey a negative connection in the Greek Bible.[13] Such a negative connection is, of course, denoted in the text of the Hebrew Bible by the verb *ramah* when it occurs in its *piel* conjugation. However, according to Klassen the LXX renders this verb absolutely by the term παραλογίζω, 'deceive, lead astray'; the only exception to this rule is that of Pr. 26:19 which uses the term ἐνεδρεύω, 'plot, ambush'.[14] For our purposes it is of first importance to note that Koehler-Baumgartner now define the *piel* of *ramah* as: 1. 'desert, abandon' (with acc.) Lam. 1:19. 2. 'betray' (with acc. of the person) Gn. 29:25; Jos. 9:22; 1 Sa. 19:17; 28:12; 2 Sa. 19:27; Pr. 26:19. 3. with acc. and * l̄* of the person, 'betray someone to' 1 Ch. 12:18.[15] This is all the more interesting, since the German 3rd edition had used the verb *betrügen* which clearly means 'deceive', and not betray, the latter nuance being rendered by *verraten*. Nevertheless, the last instance enumerated by Koehler-Baumgartner is of fundamental importance for our purposes, since it breaks Klassen's rule referred to above. The text in question is that of 1 Ch. 12:17 (Mt. 12:18): καὶ εἰ τοῦ παραδοῦναί με τοῖς ἐχθροῖς μου οὐκ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ χειρός, ἴδοι ὁ θεὸς τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν καὶ ἐλέγξαιτο, which is appropriately

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12 W. Klassen, ibid, 48.

13 W. Klassen, ibid, 48.

14 W. Klassen, ibid, 48.

15 L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), Vol 3, 1240.

rendered 'if you betray me to my enemies unfaithfully, may the God of our fathers see it and reprove it'. In this text the *piel* of *ramah* is rendered by the aorist infinitive of παραδίδωμι, namely παραδοῦναι, which can only be translated 'betray', since, according to Koehler-Baumgartner, that is precisely what the Hebrew term denotes. Further, according to Hatch and Redpath this is the only instance in the LXX where παραδίδωμι is used to render the *piel* of *ramah*.[16] Of course it could be argued that παραδοῦναι nai should be translated by its normal sense of 'hand over, deliver', but that is unlikely since it is not rendering *natan* 'give', but the *piel* of *ramah*, which as noted above, denotes the negative act of betrayal. Accordingly, it seems appropriate to conclude this section of the usage in the LXX by reaffirming this discovery that παραδίδωμι does convey a negative connotation in the Greek Bible, albeit only once. Once again, the examination of the texts has revealed that Klassen has not considered the linguistic evidence available to him in an appropriate manner, since he has omitted altogether the use of παραδίδωμι in the LXX of 1 Ch. 12:17 and has mistakenly suggested that the LXX has rendered the Hebrew text by the form παραλογίζω, 'deceive, lead astray'.

III. The Usage in Josephus

In the Greek texts of Josephus the term παραδίδωμι occurs some 242 times, but by contrast he only uses the classical term προδίδωμι, 'betray', some 26 times and its cognate noun προδότης, 'traitor', some 22 times. These statistics have been collated from the standard concordance to the works of Josephus which in a limited way acts as a dictionary of the Greek terms used therein.[17] Rengstorf has defined the meanings of παραδίδωμι as follows:

> 'to hand over, deliver, present; to assign (someone) to anothers charge; to hand over, surrender (to the enemy); to surrender (oneself); to give up, expose, sacrifice (to an adversary); to hand over, consign (to punishment, execution)—to hand over, delegate, entrust (for implementation, care, administration, or for any purpose); to perpetuate; to think no longer of; to murder, kill; to hold back, conceal–to hand down, pass on, transmit, deliver (to posterity); to transmit, make known, to record (as a historian).'[18]

When these varied meanings are examined it can easily be seen that the nuance of 'betrayal, treachery' is not among them, although other

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16 E. Hatch and H.A. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint* (Oxford, 1897), Vol 2, 1058.

17 K.H. Rengstorf, *Concordance to Josephus* (Leiden: Brill, 1979), Vol 3, 285–288; 521–522.

18 K.H. Rengstorf, ibid, 285.

similar nuances are. It is, therefore, proposed to examine all 242 occurrences of παραδίδωμι to see if any occurrences of 'betrayal, treachery' could be detected either in an absolute sense, or in a collational notional sense which was the case with the classical Greek. The fruits of the examination just referred to do reveal that, contrary to Klassen, the following texts exhibit either absolutely (rarely), or from a collational notional sense the nuances of 'betrayal, treachery': *Jewish War* 1:143, 167, 269, 322; 2:41, 358, 450, 486; 4:518, 523, 525, 553; 5:361, 392, 397, 450, 499, 537; 6:104, 350, 366, 387, 388, 389, 391, 433; 7:47, 48, 209. *Antiquities* 2:20, 242, 253, 326, 327; 5:131; 6:345; 7:296; 8:261; 10:123, 230; 12:122; 13:4, 180, 246, 388; 18:175; 20:200; *Apion* 2:131. In examining many of the above the English definition of betray as 'give up treacherously (a person or thing, to an enemy)' has had to be borne in mind.[19] Since there are two texts, in which the translator has rendered παραδίδωμι by 'betray', it seems appropriate to consider these first. The texts referred to are *Antiquities* 5:131 and Jewish War 4:523.525.

(a) *Antiquities* 5:131: ἔπειτα συλλαβόντες τινὰ τῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει προελθόντα ἐπὶ κομιδῇ τῶν ἀναγκαίων πίστεις ἔδοσαν αὐτῷ παραδόντι τὴν πόλιν σώσειν αὐτόν τε καὶ τοῦ συγγενεῖς αὐτοῦ. ('Afterwards, having caught one of the inhabitants of the town who had gone out in search of provisions, they gave him their word that, if he would betray the city, they would spare the lives of him and his kin').[20] The context of this particular text is the conquest of Bethel by Ephraim narrated in the Biblical text in Jg. 1:22, although it should be noted that the Biblical text makes no mention of the betrayal of the city by one of its inhabitants. This particular citation is of great importance to us since, the rendering of παραδόντι by 'betray' may be justified on the basis that later on the same verse the individual in question assures the Ephraimites that on the basis of his own personal safety he will 'deliver' the city into their hands. To render this concept Josephus has not used παραδίδωμι, which can mean 'deliver, surrender', but ἐγχειρίζω, which means 'put or deliver into one's hands'. It would, therefore, seem that Josephus is here using παραδίδωμι in a negative sense, since the act of delivering over the city is denoted by ἐγχειρίζω, a fact which is not commented upon by Klassen.

(b) *Jewish War* 4:523.525: καὶ πρώτην αὐτῷ παραδώσειν συντίθεται τὴν αὐτοῦ πατρίδα, λαβὼν ὅρκους ὡς ἀεὶ τίμιος ὢν διατελέσει, συνεργήσειν δὲ ὑπέσχετο καὶ περί τῆς ὅλης Ἰδουμαίας. ἔπειτα δεξιούμενος τούς τε ἡγεμόνας καὶ κατ᾽ ὀλίγους πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος ἐνῆγεν ὥστε δέξασθαι τὸν Σίμωνα καὶ παραδοῦναι δίχα μάχης αὐτῷ τὴν τῶν ὅλων ἀρχήν.

19　L. Brown (ed.), *New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford, 1993), 220.
20　H. St J. Thackeray & R. Marcus, *Josephus, Jewish Antiquities* (LCL. Harvard/London, 1934), Vol 5, 60–61.

('With him he made a compact, first to betray his own native place, after receiving an assurance on oath that he should always hold some post of honour; he further undertook to assist in the subjugation of the whole of Idumea. then, by giving receptions to the officers and to the whole rank and file, in small parties, he instigated them to receive Simon and to surrender to him, without a struggle, the whole direction of affairs').[21] The context of this text is that of the invasion of Idumaea by Simon, who was the commander of the brigands of Masada. The Idumaeans were greatly alarmed by the latter's strength and so sought to ascertain the exact strength of Simon's army. One of their number, a certain James, duly volunteered for this role and by so doing he sought to betray his country to Simon. This action is noted in the text by the construction προδοσίαν ἐνθυμούμενος, which is rendered by Thackeray as 'meditating treachery'.[22] What is of great interest to the scholar in this text is that the fulfillment of the contemplated betrayal (προδοσίαν) is not reported by the cognate verb προδίδωμι but by the verb παραδίδωμι. The text clearly narrates that James betrayed his own country to Simon by the verb παραδίδωμι not only once, but twice, so that this is also a clear example from the writings of Josephus where the verb παραδίδωμι expresses the nuance of 'betrayal/treachery'. Klassen dismisses this example claiming that the translation 'betray' is an error;[23] however, the only conclusion that one can come to is that the text has been correctly translated by Thackeray, and this is supported independently by Spicq who has drawn attention to this text in his lexicon.[24]

There is clearly not space within the scope of this article to examine all the occurrences of the verb παραδίδωμι as used by Josephus; however, attention may be drawn to the references above which do display the nuances of 'betrayal, treachery.'

IV. The Usage in the New Testament

According to the concordance of Moulton and Geden the verb παραδίδωμι occurs in the New Testament some 119 times.[25] Of these, some 40 are directly associated with the betrayal of Jesus by Judas and are so rendered in the English translations of the New Testament. Of

21 H. St J. Thackeray, *Josephus, Jewish War* (LCL. Harvard/London 1928), Vol 3, 156–157.
22 H. St J. Thackeray, ibid, 154–155.
23 W. Klassen, ibid, 250.
24 C. Spicq, *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), Vol 3, 22.
25 W.F. Moulton & A.S. Geden, *A Concordance to the Greek Testament* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1978), 754–756.

course it is true to note that the verb παραδίδωμι is a verb which in common with its usage in classical Greek, the LXX and Josephus has more meanings than 'betray', and it is important that these should be noted. Accordingly, the standard lexicon of New Testament Greek by Walter Bauer defines the meanings of παραδίδωμι thus:

1a. hand over, give (over), deliver, entrust.

1b. hand over, turn over, give up a person; especially of betrayal of Jesus by Judas, with acc. and dat. Mt. 26:15; cf. Mk. 14:10; Lk. 22:4.6; Jn. 19:11; deliver someone into someone's hands.

2. give over, commend, commit with dat.

3. hand down, pass on, transmit, relate.

4. allow, permit.[26]

It is of great importance for this quest that one of the older lexicons when defining παραδίδωμι as 'give up, or deliver up, with collational idea of treachery' notes that in this usage παραδίδωμι = προδίδωμι[27] In this equation the verb προδίδωμι is of course the verb which is regularly used in classical Greek to denote the nuance of 'betrayal'. It is so used in Josephus, but the verb only occurs some 5 times in the LXX, while the cognate noun προδότης, 'traitor' only occurs 3 times in the LXX. As far as the New Testament is concerned the noun προδότης, 'traitor', only occurs once at Lk. 6:16 where Judas is expressly designated as the one who betrayed Jesus and it replaces the construction ὁ παραδίδους, 'the one who handed over, i.e. betrayed'. When the usage of the verb is considered, it should be noted that it occurs with the meaning 'give in advance' only at Rom. 11:35, which itself is a quotation from the LXX of Is. 40:14. What is not generally noted by Klassen is that the verb προδίδωμι does occur with the meaning of 'betray' in the D text of Mk. 14:10 where it is used in place of παραδίδωμι.[28] It does seem that this usage has a bearing on the way that παραδίδωμι is rendered and understood.

On the basis of the above mentioned facts how is the translator to render the verb παραδίδωμι? In the above paragraphs it has been perfectly demonstrated that the verb παραδίδωμι carries through all the strata of the language referred to a negative nuance which may be translated 'betray, hand over'. That the verb carries other nuances apart from this negative one is not in any doubt whatsoever. Therefore, one must conclude that since it carries the nuance of 'to betray' in classical Greek, the LXX and Josephus there is no lexical reason that it

26 W. Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (adapted by F.W. Gingrich and F.W. Danker. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1979), 614–615.

27 G. Abbott-Smith, *A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1921), 339.

28 H. Balz & G. Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993), Vol 3, 154.

should not carry such a nuance in New Testament Greek also. Indeed, the evidence provided by both Luke and D is that they both considered παραδίδωμι to have the same meaning as προδίδωμι/προδότης. Accordingly, the only proviso one can make is on the actual meaning of 'betrayal'. Balz and Schneider have noted that the actual meaning in this context of παραδίδωμι is that of 'deliver, surrender', and so 'to betray a person'.[29] This in itself accords well with the English meaning of 'betray' already noted above. Thus, one must conclude this study by asserting that, as Büchsel has noted:

> the reference in 1 Cor. 11:23b is undoubtedly to Judas' treachery. For Jesus was betrayed 'in the night' only by Judas.[30]

Abstract

The article seeks to consider the contribution of recent research to our understanding of who Judas was and seeks to consider the work of W. Klassen who has published recently on this topic. In particular it seeks to evaluate his contention that the Greek verb παραδίδωμι does not carry the negative nuance of *'betray'*, but rather simply *'hand over, deliver'*. In so doing it seeks to evaluate the use of παραδίδωμι through Classical, LXX, Josephus and NT Greek. Having conducted this survey the study seeks to conclude that the rendering 'betray' is one that can be found in all strata of the Greek language, so that there is no reason why it should not carry such a meaning there also.

29 H. Balz & G. Schneider, ibid, 18.
30 G. Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), Vol 2, 169.