

-23-

## What is the Correct Translation of v. 20b?

The passage that we will be considering in this chapter is the one translated in the ESV as,

*“and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus,”*

As has been pointed out several times in this book, this passage forms the second half of v. 20 in translations based on NA27, but because of a difference in the way the verses are divided up, it forms the entirety of v. 20 in translations based on the Received Text.

There are two textual differences between the Textus Receptus (the text which we will be following) and NA27 which is the basis for most modern translations. NA27 has “Christ Jesus” instead of “Jesus Christ” and has the participle *prokecheirismenon* (the having-been-appointed-One) instead of *prokekerugmenon* (the before-proclaimed-One). We will here follow the TR which reads:

*kai aposteile ton prokekerugmenon humin Iesoun Christon*  
and He may send the before-proclaimed-One to you Jesus Christ

In this chapter, I wish to discuss whether the Greek word *humin* (to/for you) in v. 20b should actually be linked with the verb “send” rather than with the participle “previously proclaimed”.

Looking at the Greek, text it is not clear whether God sends the before-proclaimed-to-you-One, or whether He sends to you the before-proclaimed-One. (The grammatical issues are similar with the NA27 text, except and both types of translation occur in current English Bible translations using NA27, although the translation “He may send the One-previously-appointed-for-you” occurs much more frequently than “He may send the previously-appointed-One to you”.)

The KJV translates the passage as,

*“And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:”*

However, in this chapter, I will be tentatively suggesting that we should associate the “to you” with the sending rather than with the proclamation, i.e. that we should translate as follows:

*“And He may send the previously proclaimed One to you, Jesus Christ.”*

One argument in favour of seeing the “sending” as being “to you” in v. 20b is that in v. 26, which is structurally linked to vs. 19-20, the sending is unambiguously “to you” (even though there are a number of words intervening between the “sending” verb and the phrase “to you” in that verse) and this suggests that the same meaning may be intended here also.

When we look at the two translations grammatically, the translation “He may send the before-proclaimed-One to you” is actually very straightforward. The word for “before-proclaimed-One”, *prokekerugmenon*, is an adjectival participle (a participle which functions as an adjective) based on the verb *kerusso*—to proclaim—and so means “before-proclaimed”. However, as is well known, adjectives can, as here, function as nouns, and so the expression *ton prokekerugmenon* can mean “the before-proclaimed One” where the word One is in capitals because we are speaking of Jesus, and it is in the accusative case because it is the direct object of “He may send”, just as *humin*, “to you” is the indirect object.

However, when we come to the second possibility—namely that we do not have an indirect object, but rather just an “extended” direct object—the “One-before-proclaimed-to-you”, then I think the grammatical situation is harder to explain.

In this case, it is required that the adjectival expression “before-proclaimed-to-you” can function as a noun—“the before-proclaimed-to-you-One”. But, whilst it is known that adjectives on their own can function as nouns, as in the first translation possibility, the question arises whether an expression functioning as an adjective can be treated as a noun. My knowledge of Greek is insufficient to answer this question, but I have never, so far as I know, come across any instances of this, apart from (possibly!) the present case. If anyone can help me here I would be most grateful! In the meantime, I will provisionally opt for what is clear and usual, rather than what is less clear and less usual, and provisionally translate v. 20b as,

*“And He may send the previously proclaimed One to you, Jesus Christ.”*



