JOHN ALBERT BENDEL’S CHIASMUS ADVOCACY
IN ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF HIS Gnomon

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October 4, 2013

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Abstract

Translators of John Albert Bengel’s *Gnomon Novi Testamenti* (1742) from the original Latin into English made choices in the extent to which they adhered to Bengel’s original work, and as a result, they variously furthered or supplanted Bengel’s purposes and priorities. As an alternative to assembling potential exegetical views, Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687-1752) had adopted a historical-grammatical approach to exegesis in his *Gnomon Novi Testamenti* (1742). In several distinct ways, the commentary that Bengel included in this work emphasized the advantage to exeges of acknowledging chiasmus in the Greek New Testament. With the exception of Fausset’s (1858) translation, however, later English translations of Bengel’s work prevented readers from being fully aware of Bengel’s exegetical priority on identifying and utilizing chiasmus exegetically. Departures from Bengel’s priorities arose because translators adopted more pragmatic purposes in their editions; valued different aspects of Bengel’s work besides Bengel’s priorities; and used creative license to adapt Bengel’s methods to the Authorized English Version of the New Testament.
Around 1740 Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687-1752) urged New Testament exegetes to recognize the presence of chiasmus in New Testament texts and to interpret such passages according to the rhetorical function of their chiastic forms. A century later a variety of British and American New Testament scholars offered different translations of the work containing this advocacy, *Gnomon of the New Testament*, from Latin into English. As a commentary, Bengel’s *Gnomon* gained rapid and enduring popularity in the English-speaking scholarly community and among pastors and laymen, as is apparent from the variety of its English-language translations, some of which went through multiple editions or reprints for many decades. Yet Bengel’s advocacy for recognition and exegesis of New Testament chiasms, an advocacy prominently articulated in the *Gnomon*, had little impact on exegetes working in English until the mid-twentieth century. One reason among others why the *Gnomon* had little impact among exegetes after its translation into English was that some translators revised or eliminated portions of Bengel’s work in which he was outspoken or definitive on this issue, and the result was that exegetes were not even made aware of the chiastic emphasis in Bengel’s *Gnomon*.

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1 An earlier version of this paper, “John Albert Bengel’s *Gnomon* and ‘Chiasmus’,” was posted online at the Western Fellowship of Professors and Scholars, a page hosted by Manhattan Christian College, until circumstances no longer allowed. The present version attempts to correct some of the most obvious flaws of the earlier one.

2 Joannis Bengelii gnomon Novi Testamenti, in quo, ex nativa verborum vi, simplicitas, profunditas, concinmitas, et salubritas sensuum coelestium indicatur.

3 Johann Albrecht Bengel’s *Gnomon of the New Testament*, in which, from the natural force of the words, the simplicity, depth, harmony, and saving power of the heavenly meanings, is indicated.

John Bengel, a Lutheran Pietist educator and classicist, spent most of his career at the cloister school of Tübingen preparing future seminarians. Before completing the *Gnomon*, he had distinguished himself primarily by publishing a Greek New Testament shaped by his *Apparatus Criticus*. The scholarly acclaim given to this project was matched by that given to the *Gnomon* upon its publication in Latin in 1742. The *Gnomon* included Bengel’s reconsidered preferences for certain Greek textual variants in select biblical passages. Bengel thus provided an addendum to the *Apparatus*, yet, beyond its place as an addendum, the *Gnomon* easily stood out on its own merits as his *magnum opus*. Bengel’s singular use of the term “gnomon, pointer” signaled a different sort of commentary than the kind that was in vogue among German Pietists of his day. Such commentaries gathered side by side multiple interpretive views on portions of biblical text. John Bengel instead “pointed to” the meanings of important Greek words, phrases, and rhetorical forms in the New Testament text that should govern exegetical work, but Bengel himself did not intend to provide a systematic exegesis. Thus in his gnomons on specific texts he provided lexical, grammatical, or rhetorical insights that could well influence foundational approaches to translation, interpretation, and

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5 Andrew R. Fausset provides an intimate and extensive biography of John Bengel in his second preface to vol. 5 of his translation.
7 He is often considered the father of New Testament textual criticism.
8 Johann Albrecht Bengel, *Joannis Bengelii gnomon Novi Testamenti, in quo, ex nativa verborum vi, simplicitas, profunditas, concinnitas, et salubritas sensuum coelestium indicatur* (Tübingen, 1742).
9 The term “Gnomon” describes the whole work as well as each of Bengel’s comments on the Greek in discrete verses of the New Testament, as in “the Gnomon on Luke 9:51.”
hermeneutical treatment of the biblical text. Consequently the Gnomon proceeds structurally not by analysis of logical units such as episodes, arguments, or paragraphs, but by commentary (gnomons) on certain words, phrases, or sentences sequentially throughout the New Testament.

Bengel lays out his intentions for the work in his lengthy Author’s Preface. In dense Latin the “Praefatio Auctora” extends to 23 pages, divided into 27 sections, some of which run on for a few pages. Fausset gives a complete translation of the Author’s Preface, and in his English translation it extends to 61 pages. From our analysis of this Preface, Bengel’s intentions, or emphases, for the work can be summarized as follows, in descending order of prominence, on the basis of the space Bengel devotes to each:

1. To exegete an authoritative Greek text, with choices among textual variants made on the basis of a rigorous text-critical methodology. (Author’s Preface, especially Sections VIII, IX, and X, amounting to 30 pages of English text.)

2. To “exhibit the exact force of the language employed by any sacred writer,”11 including Greek modes of emphasis, Hebraisms, and rhetorical forms, among them chiasmus. (Author’s Preface, especially Sections IV, VII, XIV, XV, and XXIV.)

3. To put forward a specific interpretation of the Apocalypse, while deliberately avoiding other theological controversies. (Author’s Preface, especially Sections VI and XXII.)

This paper asks and answers a question related to Bengel’s second concern, that of pointing to rhetorical forms and Hebraisms, including chiasmus, in the Greek New Testament. In his Preface Bengel states that “Especial advantage, however, is obtained from a consideration of . . . the Hebrew style, and the χιασμός [chiasmus], which is of the greatest service in explaining the economy of the whole Epistle to the Hebrews.”

In the gnomon on Hebrews 1:4 he offers, “. . . [T]heir [Jewish] teachers greatly delight in this figure of speech in their writings. Therefore the [author] has adapted his style to the Hebrews . . . .” And in the Index of Technical Terms Bengel clarifies that “The diction of the New Testament is not pure Greek; and it imitates the Hebrew usage . . . in single words; . . . in forms of speech and phrases; . . . in grammatical figures; . . . in the universal [general] form of the Language.”

According to Bengel, chiasmus is a “figurative mode of speaking” involving the rhetorical arrangement of “two pairs of words or propositions” having either “direct” or “inverted” relationship between the pairs. Direct chiasmus, in modern notation, takes the form ABA’B’, and in more recent scholarship is called parallelism, not chiasmus, while inverted chiasmus takes the form ABB´A’, and is alone understood as chiasmus in most recent scholarship.

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12 For ease of reference, “Bengel” and the “Gnomon” will refer in what follows to passages in Fausset’s English translation of Bengel’s Gnomon, unless otherwise stated.
13 Bengel/Fausset, Gnomon, 1: 64.
14 Bengel/Fausset, Gnomon, 5:343.
15 Bengel/Fausset, Gnomon, 5:409.
16 Ibid., 411.
17 Bengel/Fausset, Gnomon, 5:396-97. In more modern discussions such as Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1942), viii-ix, and Dorsey, Literary Structure of the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 17f., only the second of these is considered chiasmus, yet this does not diminish the strength of Bengel’s advocacy of the form as it is known today. Some, such as John Breck (The Shape of Biblical
As a Hebraism, chiasmus received four kinds of emphasis in the *Gnomon*:

1. In Section XXIV of the author’s lengthy introduction, he highlights the “especial advantage” gained by the exegete in noticing chiasmus and in using it to explain the meaning of biblical texts.\(^1\)
2. Moreover, in the gnomons on many specific New Testament verses he highlights the presence of chiasmus, and sometimes shows how it can influence exegesis.
3. Most of these uses of “chiasmus” are footnoted; footnotes direct the reader to an Index of Technical Terms\(^2\) appended to volume five, in which the term ”chiasmus” receives three pages of explanation, including an exhortation to pay heed to this form in the hermeneutical process.
4. Finally, the Index of Subjects, Observations, and Authors includes the subject “chiasmus,” under which Bengel offers a list of occurrences. This list, however, does not comprehensively include all instances in which Bengel identified “chiasmus” in the body of the work. To remedy this, Appendix IV of this paper provides a new and exhaustive index of Bengel’s references to “Chiasmus,” along with instances in which he notes the form without applying this term to it. These four means of emphasis give practical expression to Johann Bengel’s second-level purpose, that of exhibiting “the exact force of the language” employed by the sacred writer, including chiastic rhetorical forms.\(^3\)

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\(^1\) Quoted above.
\(^2\) See Appendix I.
\(^3\) Bengel’s original Latin index of terminology, titled “Index terminorum technicorum,” was written by his brother-in-law, John Albert Burk, and was included with Bengel’s full approval. The index defined 103 rhetorical terms, one of the lengthiest definitions being that of chiasmus. In his Preface, the author twice points out to the reader the value of the “indexes” (Bengel/Fausset, *Gnomon*, 1:64, 65).
Among the scholars whose interest in John Bengel’s *Gnomon* led them to translate it into English were John Wesley (1703-1791), Andrew R. Fausset (1821-1910) and his collaborators, Charlton T. Lewis (1834-1904) with Marvin R. Vincent (1834-1922), and finally William L. Blackley (1830-1902) with James Hawes (dates unknown). We will discuss the Fausset translation first, using it as a baseline for comparison to the others because it is a complete translation (versus Wesley) and also because it remains completely faithful to Bengel’s Latin *Gnomon* (versus both Lewis-Vincent and Blackley-Hawes). We will comment on each translation in terms of the *Gnomon’s* four emphases on chiasmus (in Fausset’s translation) as listed above.

**THE FAUSSET TRANSLATION (1857-1858)**

Andrew R. Fausset’s five volume edition\(^{22}\) is the first complete English translation; it adheres most faithfully to Bengel’s project. Based on the second Latin edition (1759), edited by M. Ernst Bengel and supplemented with notes by J. C. F. Steudal in the 1830s, Fausset’s English edition came out in 1857-58 with the help of three other translators.\(^{23}\) Additionally, Fausset gleaned relevant remarks from John Bengel’s other theological writings and included them in the appropriate gnomon either in brackets or as footnotes. Six more editions of Bengel’s work\(^ {24}\) came out in England from 1859 to 1877; this fact implies the enduring and general popularity of the work.\(^ {25}\)

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\(^{22}\) See n. 11.

\(^{23}\) James Bandinel, James Bryce, and William Fletcher.

\(^{24}\) Even though it was generally accepted that Bengel’s theological treatment of the Apocalypse was deeply flawed, Fausset and his collaborators chose to translate the offending material faithfully, but added a special Introduction to the Apocalypse to reveal many of the limitations of this part of the *Gnomon*.

\(^{25}\) The publishers Wipf & Stock still offer a paperback reprint.
Fausset and his team of translators “executed the translation with all possible pains and accuracy,”\textsuperscript{26} excluding almost nothing from the Latin edition of 1759. Fausset’s edition alone provided that English scholars who read little or no Latin (or German) with access to Bengel’s full explanation of, and fourfold emphasis on, chiasmus in biblical text: (1) the Author’s Preface; (2) the gnomons on particular verses of the New Testament containing (in Bengel’s opinion) this rhetorical form; (3) the Index of Technical Terms with a lengthy entry explaining “Chiasmus;” and (4) the Index of Subjects, Observations, and Authors. Since this translation provides the complete text of Bengel’s \textit{Gnomon}, we have taken it as the standard of comparison for the other three English translations. We turn now to a much earlier translation.

\textbf{THE WESLEY TRANSLATION (1754)}

Already in 1754 John Wesley had provided for his Bible study groups and preachers a verse-by-verse commentary on the New Testament.\textsuperscript{27} In the author’s Preface, he described his source material:

\begin{quote}
I once designed to write down, barely what occurred to my mind, consulting none but the inspired writers. But no sooner was I acquainted with that great light of the Christian world (lately gone to his reward) Bengelius, than I entirely changed my design, being thoroughly convinced, it might be of service to the cause of religion, were I barely to translate his \textit{Gnomon Novi Testamenti}, than to write down many volumes upon it. Many of his excellent notes have I therefore
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{26} Bengel/Fausset, \textit{Gnomon}, 1:vi.

\textsuperscript{27} John Wesley, \textit{Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament} (London: Kelly, 1754).
translated. Many more have I abridged; omitting that part which was purely
critical, and giving the substance of the rest.”

Wesley’s *Explanatory Notes* enjoyed great popularity both in England and America, as
the work was issued in many editions until the late 1800s. Wesley put out a series of
“corrected” editions, but within decades antiquarian interests had publishers reissuing
the 1754 edition in England and America. This earliest edition can still be purchased in
modern reprints or seen for sale on the Internet.

John Wesley, however, in omitting “that part which was merely critical, and giving
the substance of the rest,” provided the reader no orientation to Bengel’s purpose,
scope, and uniqueness in the *Gnomon* (in other words, he omitted the Author’s Preface).
Wesley thereby missed the opportunity to introduce his readers to the presence and
value of chiasmus in the New Testament, which was one of Bengel’s priorities. Nor
were any of the *Gnomon’s* three indices included (Hebrew and Greek Words; Technical
Terms; Subjects, Observations, and Authors) because Wesley’s purpose was more
pragmatic, less academic. In the body of his *Explanatory Notes*, in the textual passages in
which John Bengel identified chiasmus, Wesley chose not to identify these
observations. Only in the passages in which his source had identified the most
extensive and most elegant examples of chiasmus did Wesley also point them out, but
Wesley provided only partial and rather vague translations and explanations.

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28 Wesley, *Notes*, v.
29 Basing his commentary on an English New Testament, Wesley avoided comment on Greek usage.
Wesley’s admittedly heavy dependence on the *Gnomon* in *Explanatory Notes* endeared John Bengel to Methodist exegetes for more than a century. These same exegetes, however (unless they studied the German or Latin *Gnomon*), had almost no introduction through Wesley to chiasmus in the New Testament or to Bengel’s advocacy of its value for exegetes.

THE LEWIS AND VINCENT TRANSLATION (1860)

On the other side of the Atlantic, two scholars at Troy University in New York, Charlton Lewis and Marvin Vincent, published in 1860 a somewhat different edition of Bengel. In his Introduction Charlton Lewis said, referring no doubt to Fausset’s edition published two years earlier,

A translation of Bengel’s Latin, without revision, would be of little value, save to scholars, who already have access to the original. For, not to speak of mere deficiencies, it contains too many acknowledged errors, both of criticism and of exposition, to be safely put in the hands of students. It was written one hundred and twenty years ago; and more mind and toil have been given to these subjects since, than in all time before. Their outlines, indeed, have only been drawn more clearly; but many lesser views have been changed, many discoveries made. These often supplement Bengel, sometimes contradict him. And although in his style of exposition, his profound anatomy of words and thoughts, he still stands unrivalled; though he anticipated the best general features of the latest

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commentaries; yet he could not anticipate the detailed results of a century’s research and discussion.\(^{31}\)

\ldots But one course remains for the editor of Bengel. He must translate Bengel’s text as it is, connecting with it such extracts from other writers as will guard the reader against views now refuted; and will further give some hints of the results of more modern criticism and exegesis. If less were done, the work would be very imperfect; if more were attempted, it would become rather a new book than an edition of Bengel.\(^{32}\)

Consequently, Lewis\(^{33}\) took the step of editing material out and editing material in on the basis of these “detailed results \ldots of research and discussion:”

The chief value of the Gnomon is in its exposition of Scripture. I have striven to increase its value, by adding, in the most condensed form, such of the most valuable remarks of the best modern commentators as the plan of the Gnomon admits; those which open the force of the words of Scripture.\(^{34}\)

Lewis therefore justified both changing a number of Bengel’s Greek textual preferences because of reliance upon other ancient manuscripts, as well as extensively revising and correcting Bengel’s treatment of the Apocalypse. Among the places in the body of the Gnomon where Bengel pointed out instances of chiasmus, Lewis dropped five of them in favor of more authoritative textual variants which did not supply all the words or

\(^{31}\)Bengel/Lewis, Gnomon, 1:5.
\(^{32}\)Bengel/Lewis, Gnomon, 1:6.
\(^{33}\)Charlton Lewis had editorial responsibility for additions and deletions; Marvin Vincent shared the translation duties with Lewis.
\(^{34}\)Ibid.
phrases that Bengel saw as constituting a chiasmus. And at Hebrews 12:18-24 Lewis simply disagreed with Bengel’s observations. Beyond these exceptions, however, Lewis retained all of Bengel’s frequent notices about the presence of chiasmus in the New Testament.

Lewis and Vincent did, however, shorten the “Index of Technical Terms,” in particular the article that defined the term “chiasmus.” The Latin entry lacked clarity due to its frequent shifts of focus between inverted examples of parallelism and non-inverted ones, both of which Bengel considered forms of “chiasmus.” These translators reorganized and simplified the entry, reducing the number of examples of inverted parallelism (chiasmus) from seven to two, one having four members and the other having ten members. Bengel’s two paragraphs of exhortation for exegetes to notice and exposit instances of chiasmus they entirely left out. The reader can compare these index articles from Fausset and Lewis in the appendices to this paper.

What Lewis and Vincent retained of Johann Bengel’s chiasmus advocacy was the Gnomon’s long Introduction, its Indexes (although in shortened form), and most of the gnomons on biblical text in which Bengel identified chiastic forms. What they eliminated of his chiasmus advocacy was his outspoken call for chiastic awareness in the “Index of Technical Terms.”

THE BLACKLEY AND HAWES TRANSLATION (1866)

Charlton Lewis had said in his preface to John Albert Bengel’s Gnomon of the New Testament that “This work will serve the English reader as a Critical New Testament.”\(^{37}\) Back in England in 1866, William L. Blackley and James Hawes brought out another translation entitled, perhaps borrowing wording from Lewis, “The Critical English Testament: Being an Adaptation of Bengel’s Gnomon, with Numerous Notes, Showing the Precise Results of Modern Criticism and Exegesis.”\(^{38}\) Even though this subtitle calls it an “Adaptation,” the work’s Preface, in listing its distinct features, offers the Critical English Testament as “An entirely new translation of the Gnomon itself . . . of the original Latin work.”\(^{39}\)

The Preface proceeds to identify ways in which the Gnomon is adapted to “general” English readers (thus the word “English” in its title): the Authorized English Version\(^ {40}\) replaces Bengel’s critical Greek New Testament as the basis of biblical word order; and various changes and additions are included to avoid certain arguments of Bengel that had been generally abandoned by theological scholars.\(^ {41}\) Given that John Bengel’s first two purposes as expressed in his Author’s Preface\(^ {42}\) were to provide learned commentary on an authoritative Greek text and to “exhibit the exact force of the language

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37 Bengel/Lewis, Gnomon, 1:7.
40 Popularly known in the United States as the King James Version.
41 See Appendix III for an 1867 review of the Critical English Testament in The United Presbyterian Magazine, a review that echoes the views of Blackley and Hawes. Another contemporaneous review may be found in the British Quarterly Review, 44:579.
42 Bengel/Fausset, Gnomon, 3.
employed by any sacred writer,”43 which was the Greek language, this work of Blackley
and Hawes invites the question as to whether their “translation” had become an
essentially different book than its basis. Blackley claims “to set forth to the public . . . a
Critical New Testament, so compiled as to enable the reader, unacquainted with Greek,
to ascertain the exact English force and meaning of the New Testament . . . .”44 Bengel’s
work explained the Greek biblical text; Blackley’s explained the English. Bengel
intended to explain the force and meaning of Greek words, syntax, and tropes, while
Blackley hoped for a less detailed but still powerful explanation of the Authorized
English Version. Perhaps Blackley’s “adaptation” is the right description after all, as
long as the modifier “loose” is added.

While granting the concessions above, with regard to Bengel’s concern to highlight
and exegete instances of chiasmus, one must conclude that the Critical English Testament
falls short of its claim to present the Gnomon “without any abridgement or omission,”
except for arguments based upon “readings since proved corrupt, and abandoned by
the general consent of theological scholars.”45 Instead it presents certain obstacles to
general English readers to noticing, understanding, and making exegetical use of
chiasmus, in ways that are outlined just below.

Blackley and Hawes provide no end matter at all in the Critical English Testament:
neither an index of subjects and authors nor an index of technical terms. In place of the
latter, attempts are made in the Critical English Testament to provide brief explanations

43 Ibid., 7
44 Blackley, Critical English Testament, viii.
45 Ibid.
of rhetorical terms as they arise in the body of the work. Where Bengel pointed out
chiasmus in his gnomons on the Greek biblical text,\textsuperscript{46} Blackley and Hawes provide
explanatory language that is either vague or inconsistent, or both; often they provide
none at all. The most complete and helpful explanation of an instance of chiasmus
occurs in the gnomon on 2 Corinthians 2:16: “If we put the antecedents and
consequences side by side in this verse, we find a \textit{chiasmus} [χιασμός means a cross
relation of words, or clauses, coupled together: taken from the shape of the X].”\textsuperscript{47}

For the vast majority of Bengel’s “pointers” to chiasmus in the Greek text, however,
the \textit{Critical English Testament} provides the following language as explanations of
chiasmus where the English biblical text still reveals its presence (listed from most
frequently used, 17 times, to least frequently used, one time):

- “cross reference”
- “chiasmus”
- [no explanatory terms]
- “cross reference of pairs of words or clauses”
- “cross reference of clauses”
- “retrograde order”
- “cross reference of pairs of words”
- “in inverse order”

\textsuperscript{46} In a few instances, like Lewis and Vincent, the \textit{Critical English Testament} disallows chiasmus based on older
textual readings following Tischendorf.

\textsuperscript{47} Blackley, \textit{Critical English Testament}, 507.
In other words, the general English reader of the Critical English Testament receives very little useful and consistent information about the “force and meaning”\textsuperscript{48} of instances of chiasmus in the New Testament: neither its nature, rhetorical force, nor exegetical usefulness.

THE FORCE OF REVISIONS

The translators of all four English versions of the Latin \textit{Gnomon} give Bengel high praise for his grasp of the language of the New Testament as well as due credit for Bengel’s incisive exegetical observations. Indeed, the \textit{Gnomon} has been translated internationally,\textsuperscript{49} widely relied upon, and frequently reprinted for over 250 years. Yet all of these translators advise the readers of at least one or two weaknesses of the \textit{Gnomon} that were widely acknowledged.

All translators but Wesley\textsuperscript{50} advised readers that the very field of scholarship for which Bengel was the “father,” textual criticism, had progressed so significantly that new discoveries by other scholars regarding the oldest and best Greek New Testament manuscripts weakened or even nullified some of Bengel’s choices among variant textual readings. Fausset was aware of these questions, but thought that Tischendorf’s edition of 1849, for example, had not “satisfactorily” disproved Bengel’s textual preferences.\textsuperscript{51} Consequently, Fausset made no revisions of Bengel’s scholarship, but instead adhered closely to the Latin \textit{Gnomon} in his translation. Both the Lewis-Vincent and the Blackley-Hawes translations, however, made emendations of Bengel’s gnomons in certain

\textsuperscript{49} Shantz, \textit{German Pietism}, 209.
\textsuperscript{50} Wesley lacked perspective due to being a near contemporary of Bengel.
\textsuperscript{51} Bengel/Fausset, \textit{Gnomon}, 1.ix, note.
biblical passages in which manuscript evidence advocated by Tischendorf and others would change the Greek text and also the commentary.\textsuperscript{52} Thus Bengel’s first purpose in writing the \textit{Gnomon}, that of providing an incisive tool for exegesis of the New Testament Greek text, met with some criticism of his text-critical choices, resulting in selective revisions of his work in two English translations. These revisions reduced the influence of Bengel’s chiasmus advocacy incrementally.

In contrast with the rest of the \textit{Gnomon}, Bengel had a theological agenda in his treatment of the final New Testament book: not only did he provide gnomons for much of it, but he also asserted and defended his historicist interpretation of the overall structure of the Apocalypse; the result was a chiliastic (or premillennial) scheme of interpretation which set the parousia of Christ for June 1836.

Following 1836, of course, his view was disproven. But what were the translators of this otherwise invaluable resource to do?\textsuperscript{53} While Fausset remained committed to a full and accurate translation of Bengel’s Latin, Lewis and Vincent abbreviated these argumentative sections and “freely used Alford’s Commentary in our additions to the \textit{Gnomon} . . . “;\textsuperscript{54} but Blackley and Hawes here completely distanced their translation from Bengel’s original:

This book, therefore, has been rewritten on the plan of the rest of the \textit{Gnomon}, and the labors of many writers in the special field of unfulfilled prophecy have

\textsuperscript{53} Even Newton, writing a century before Fausset, abridged Bengel’s comments on the Apocalypse, justifying this on practical considerations: “It did not suit my design to insert these: They are above the capacity of ordinary readers. Nor had I room to insert the entire translation of a book which contains near twelve hundred pages.” Wesley, \textit{Notes}, 650.
\textsuperscript{54} Bengel/Lewis, \textit{Gnomon}, 833.
been laid under contribution to make this part of the Critical New Testament accord in scope and utility with the rest, while avoiding the errors of too curious computation which disfigured the original.\textsuperscript{55}

Both Lewis-Vincent and Blackley-Hawes created practical ways to work around this anomaly, heavily revising, while Fausset did not, leaving the reader of gnomons on the Apocalypse in his translation to be as wary as one chose to be.

Bengel’s third purpose for the \textit{Gnomon}, that of asserting and defending a (later) disproven eschatological position, brought strong criticism and intensive revision to his treatment of the Apocalypse. Fausset’s complete English translation reflects the fact that Bengel had identified no chiastic forms in the Apocalypse (in volume five of the \textit{Gnomon}), so revision in that part of Bengel’s Gnomon did take away from this agenda. But another revising force came from different directions.

Public reaction apparently had a practical effect on the readers of the volume and on libraries which contained it: volume five of Fausset or Lewis, containing either all or part (Lewis-Vincent) of Bengel’s treatment of the Apocalypse, has so fallen out of favor, at least in the last few decades, that this volume has become difficult to find for sale in the second-hand book market accompanying volumes one through four. Even in today’s academic hard-copy library collections, volume five is frequently missing. It is uncertain when this scarcity began and how widespread it became earlier. Volume five of Fausset and Lewis contains both the Index of Technical Terms (in its complete form or in its abridged form) and the Index of Subjects, Observations, and Authors, both of

\textsuperscript{55} Blackley, \textit{Critical English Testament}, ix.
which prominently advocate chiastic awareness and are important for Bengel’s second purpose for the *Gnomon*. As a result, until the advent of access to electronic copies of Bengel, perhaps for 100 years or more, readers often had no easy access to these indexes.\(^{56}\)

The second purpose that Bengel had set out for the *Gnomon*, to exhibit the “force” of Greek modes of emphasis, Hebraisms, chiasmus and other rhetorical forms employed by the sacred writers, did not, on the contrary, attract overt criticism from any of the translators, *but nonetheless faced revision in translations*: to some degree in Lewis-Vincent and substantially in both Wesley and Blackley-Hawes. Fausset took an editorial position in his translation that could be called rigorously antiquarian, giving the full Bengel text, including all notices and explanations of rhetorical devices in the biblical text. Lewis and Vincent simplified Bengel in this regard, but did not much diminish his advocacy for the recognition of chiasmus. The others took a more pragmatic approach that was aimed at providing what they saw as a more useful tool to their intended readership. With regard to recognizing chiasmus in the biblical text as a basis for exegesis, both the Blackley-Hawes and the Wesley revisions resulted in substantially nullifying the second of three purposes that Bengel envisioned for his *Gnomon*.

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\(^{56}\) Electronic texts may easily be found at Google Books, Hathi Trust Digital Library, Princeton Theological Seminary Digital Initiatives and elsewhere.
CONCLUSION

John Bengel reports the existence of a critical mood in his time, or at least instances of overt criticism, toward his project to promote chiastic awareness among exegetes. The conclusion of the “chiasmus” article in his Index of Technical Terms states,

Chiasmus is altogether worthy of being observed diligently, and is such that we hope by the knowledge of it hermeneutical studies will be still further assisted. This hope truly can hardly be snatched from us by those who so despise the name and province of Chiasmus, both direct and inverted, as to deny that it has any weight in investigations of the text: nor even by those who endeavour to accuse of strange novelty the doctrine concerning this class of Figures.57

In England during the 1850s and 1860s, the time of the last three translations of the Gnomon, both proponents and critics of the presence and importance of symmetrical parallelism (chiasmus) in the New Testament made their views known.58 In effect, both the Fausset and Lewis-Vincent translations might have advanced Bengel’s agenda in the English-speaking world, since they retained all or most of his advocacy in the text of their translations. The Wesley and the Blackley-Hawes translations, however, while not expressing opposition to Bengel’s advocacy, minimized it (Wesley) or reduced and confused it (Blackley), on the basis of varied assessments of the needs, interests, and capabilities of their intended readership. These four translations carried John Bengel’s chiasmus advocacy into the English-speaking world quite unevenly.

57 Bengel/Fausset, Gnomon, 5:399.
58 Welch, “How Much Was Known?”
Appendix 1

THE “CHIASMUS” ENTRY FROM THE BENGEL/FAUSSET “INDEX OF TECHNICAL TERMS”

CHIASMUS, σχήμα χιαστόν, decausata oratio, ἀλληλόουχία, has its name from the Greek letter χ, which is as it were the type (mould), according to which the sentence or words seem to be arranged. It is a figurative mode of speaking, when two pairs of words or propositions are so arranged, as that the attentive reader may understand that a relation subsists between both words or propositions of the former pair, and both words or propositions of the latter pair.

I. CHIASMUS is observed as being either direct or inverted.

Direct CHIASMUS is, when the former word or proposition in the first pair ought to be referred to the former word or proposition in the second pair: and the latter word or proposition in the first pair is, to be referred to the latter word or proposition in the second pair.

Inverted CHIASMUS is, when the former word or proposition in the first pair ought to be referred to the latter word or proposition in the second pair: and the latter word or proposition in the first pair ought to be referred to the former word or proposition in the second pair.

In a word: Let there be two pairs: A and B, C and D. If the relation is of the A to the C, and of the B to the D, there is a direct Chiasmus. If the relation is of the A to the D, and of the B to the C, it is inverted Chiasmus. If the relation is of the A to the B, and of the C to the D, then there is NO Chiasmus, but the RELATION is IMMEDIATE. There are not found more than these three cases, which I will now make plain by as simple an Example as possible; In the Epistle to Philemon, ver. 5, we have an inverted Chiasmus (Comp. the Gnom.),— A) B) C) D)

. A) is connected with D), love—to all the saints: B) is connected with C), the faith which thou hast in the Lord Jesus.

Let us imagine the direct Chiasmus: A) B) C) D)

. A) is connected with C), and B) with D).

Now let the four members proceed in the order which is without Chiasmus:— A) B) C) D)

This is the order in which the apostle himself has made the words to proceed, in writing to the Ephesians, ch. i. 15 ; — — A) B) C) D)

. —— So A) is joined with B), and C) with D).

Another most clear example of inverted Chiasmus is Matt. xii. 22, A) τὸν τυφλὸν B) κωφὸν C) D)

II. Now let us see some other examples: Matt. v. 44, A) — — B) — — C) — — D)

. This is a direct Chiasmus; of which even a trace is still to be observed in ver. 46, 47, — (salute). Therefore the four members are arranged in two pairs, of which this is the mutual relation: A)

and C); then B) and D). That the Chiasmus in this passage is not a mere work of the imagination, the relation of Luke attests, which makes the four first members advance in this order: A) — B) — C) — προσεύχεσθε (the true order without Chiasmus).—Ch. vii. 27, 28; with which comp. ver. 32, etc.—John v. 21—27:

A) ver. 21. — — — —
B) ver. 22. — — — —
C) ver. 24. — — —
D) ver. 25. — —

There are four members: A) concerning quickening, B) concerning judging, C) concerning judgment or condemnation, D) concerning the resurrection. Therefore it is an instance of inverted Chiasmus. The Gnom. on the passage. Furthermore,

E) ver. 26 —
F) ver. 27 — —
G) ver. 28 — —
H) ver. 29 — —

Here again there are four members: E) concerning life, F) concerning judgment, G) concerning the resurrection, H) concerning judgment or condemnation. It is therefore a direct Chiasmus. Hence there results a double series pervading nine verses:

A—D—E—G, and B—C—F—H.

Acts xx. 21, διαμαρτυρόμενος A) Χριστόν B) διαφέρον μετάνοιαν, D) χριστόν. The relation is between A) and D) and between B) and C: Therefore it is an inverted Chiasmus, as above, Philem. ver. 5.—Rom. ix. 24, A) B) C) the clause concerning the Gentiles is treated of in ver. 25: — — D) that concerning the Jews is treated of in ver. 27, — —, It is an inverted Chiasmus: For the apostle names A) the Jews, B) the Gentiles; and then treats, in inverted order, C) concerning the Gentiles, D) concerning the Jews.—1 Cor. ix. 1, etc., is an inverted Chiasmus according to the view taken in the Gnomon on the passage. But the more received reading arranges the two members in the first verse that there results a direct Chiasmus. Let us see both:

A) ver. 1; B)
C) ver. 2, concerning the Apostleship: Χριστόν — —.
D) ver. 4, concerning his freedom: — — — —

The relation is between A) and C), and between B) and D); therefore it is a direct Chiasmus.

A) ; B)
C) Χριστόν — — D)

The relation is between A) and D), and between B) and C); therefore it is inverted Chiasmus.

III. CHIASMUS, taken in a wide sense, exists also in the case of members which exceed the number four: for instance,—Rom. ii. 17. 20,

A)
B)
C) ὀ θέλημα,
D) διαφέροντα,
E)
F) 
G) 
H) 
I) διδάσκαλον νηπίων,
K) 

This is a *direct Chiasmus* of ten members, arranged in twice five clauses. It is shown universally, 1) what the Jew assumes to himself: A, B, C, D, E; 2) what more he arrogates to himself in relation to others: F, G, H, I, K. A and F specially correspond; B and G; C and H; D and I; in fine, B and K, *which two at the same time denote* the cause of the antecedent members. See a passage almost the counterpart of this, ch. viii. 34, 38, 39; and Phil. iv. 8, 9. Comp the Gnom.—See an *inverted or retrograde* Chiasmus of six members in the Gnom. on 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

IV. Often there is the *greatest* use in the employment of this figure, and it is never without some use, viz., in perceiving the ornament, in observing the force of the language; in understanding the true and full sense; in making clear the sound Exegesis; in demonstrating the true and neat Analysis of the sacred text; as is everywhere shown in the Gnomon. See especially the Gnom. on Heb. i. 4, *by so much*, and Bengel’s Evang. Fingerzeig, Tom. vi. p. 2, Vorrede von dem Nutzen der gnomonischen Auslegungsart. § 196, 197.

CHIASMUS is altogether worthy of being observed diligently, and is such that we hope by the knowledge of it hermeneutical studies will be still further assisted. This hope truly can hardly be snatched from us by those who so despise the name and province of Chiasmus, both *direct* and *inverted* [both of which are taught by Bengel], as to deny that it has any weight in investigations of the text: nor even by those who endeavour to accuse of strange novelty the doctrine concerning this class of Figures. For that CHIASMUS, whether *inverted or direct*, was both acknowledged and approved of long ago by the learned, I could without difficulty make plain, by the testimonies of Bochart, Crusius, Flacius, Ickenius, Scapula, and others, were it not that I should thus have to transgress the brevity which I have thought desirable to impose on myself.
Appendix 2

THE “CHIASMUS” ENTRY FROM THE BENGEL/LEWIS “INDEX OF TECHNICAL TERMS” 60

CHIASMUS, so called from the Greek letter Χ, which is, as it were, the figure according to which words seem to be arranged. It is the arrangement of two pairs of words or propositions, so that a relation subsists between both words or propositions of the former pair, and both words or propositions of the latter pair.

I. CHIASMUS is either direct or inverted.

Direct CHIASMUS is, when the former word or proposition in the first pair must be referred to the former word or proposition in the second pair; and the latter word or proposition in the first pair to the latter word or proposition in the second pair. Matt. v. 44, But I say unto you: — (A) love—(B) bless, — (C) do good— (D) and pray. The relation is A and C, B and D.

Inverted CHIASMUS is, when the former word or proposition in the first pair must be referred to the latter word of proposition in the second pair; and the latter word or proposition in the first pair to the former word or proposition in the second pair. Philemon v. 5, Hearing of: — (A) thy love, (B) and faith, which thou hast—(C) toward the Lord Jesus, and, (D) toward all the saints. A is connected D, B is connected with C.

II. CHIASMUS, in a wide sense may also consist of more than four members: Rom. ii. 17, 20, And if [Eng. Ver., Behold] thou art called a Jew.

(A) and resteth in the law,
(B) and makest thy boast of God,
(C) and knowest his will,
(D) and approvest the things that are more excellent,
(E) being instructed out of the law,
(F) and art confident that thou thyself art a guide to the blind,
(G) a light to them which are in darkness,
(H) an instructor [sic] of the foolish,
(I) a teacher of babes,
(K) which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth of the law.

This is a direct Chiasmus of ten members, arranged in twice five clauses. It is shown generally, (1) what the Jew assumes to himself: A, B, C, D, E; (2) what more he arrogates to himself in others: F, G, H, I, K. A and F specially correspond; B and G; C and H; D and I; in fine, E and K, which two at the same time denote the cause of the antecedent members.

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60 Bengel/Lewis, Gnomon, 2: 938-39.
THE CRITICAL ENGLISH TESTAMENT; being an adaptation of Bengel's "Gnomon." With numerous notes, showing the results of modern Criticism and Exegesis. Edited by Rev. W. L. BLACKLEY, M. A., and Rev. JAMES HAWES, M.A. Vols. I. and II.


The immortal Bengel requires no commendation to any student of the Scriptures. Perhaps no name stands higher in the annals of biblical literature. He was a man as admirable for Christian piety as great in exegetical sagacity. He died in 1751, gently falling asleep with the words 'Lord Jesus, I am thine, living or dead,' on his lips. His Gnomon of the New Testament has been often reprinted, and its value has been acknowledged by scholars and theologians of every school. The notes are short, but often condense in a few words a whole paragraph of meaning, and by a single happy phrase dispense with the necessity of a minute exegesis. Written originally in Latin, it has been translated both into German and into English.

The Gnomon is the basis of the present work; but, as the editors remark, the fact that more than one hundred and twenty years have elapsed since the first publication of the Gnomon, and that, since that time, biblical criticism has made vast advances, naturally deteriorates from the value of Bengel's work, and the reliance which the student can place upon it. Some means required to be taken to supply the student with a reliable text, while setting before him a sound and concise commentary upon it. The plan has therefore been adopted of incorporating with Bengel's Gnomon the important results of modern textual criticism, more especially as represented by the works of Tischendorf, Alford, and others, which are inserted in brackets wherever required. Thus the aim of the work before us is to put into the English reader's hands, a lucid, concise, and reliable commentary on the teachings and text of the New Testament.

The translation of the Gnomon is an entirely new one. It is presented without abridgment or omission, except of arguments, based upon readings since Bengel's time proved to be corrupt, and abandoned by the general consent of theological scholars. But the omissions thus necessitated do not extend to as much as one page per cent, of the original Latin work. And the editors have incorporated many references both to Scripture and to critical writers, also occasional explanatory clauses, where a mere translation of the author's very terse Latinity would not enable the general reader to grasp his meaning, and some original notes.

It will be seen from the above short account that the work is a popular work for ministers, students, teachers, and Bible readers generally. The authorized English version is the basis of comparison throughout; and the work is so constructed as that the English reader, with that version in his hand, and without any knowledge of Greek, may understand the precise results of modern criticism in revising the text of the New Testament. Such is the plan of the work. The

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editors are men fully competent for the task; and, in our judgment, after considerable examination of the result of their labours in the two volumes now published, they have produced a work well worthy of a place on the minister's and student's table. A vast quantity of matter is condensed into small space; and the typography is admirably correct and tasteful.
### Appendix 4

**A NEW AND EXHAUSTIVE INDEX OF “CHIASMUS” IN FAUSSET’S TRANSLATION OF THE GNOMON**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Form:</th>
<th>Called &quot;chiasmus&quot; unless otherwise noted:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matt. 5:44</td>
<td>ABA'B'</td>
<td>&quot;direct chiasmus&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt. 12:22</td>
<td>ABB'A'</td>
<td>&quot;inverted chiasmus&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 1:14</td>
<td>ABB'A'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 5:21</td>
<td>ABA'B'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 7:37</td>
<td>ABA'B'</td>
<td>entertains, but rejects chiasmus here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 8:25</td>
<td>ABB'A'</td>
<td>&quot;inverse Chiasmus&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 10:3</td>
<td>Abb'A'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts 2:19</td>
<td>ABB'A'</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Acts 2:46</td>
<td>ABB'A'</td>
<td>not identified as &quot;chiasmus&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acts 20:21</td>
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<td>&quot;inverted Chiasmus&quot;</td>
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<td>Rom. 2:14</td>
<td>ABB'A'</td>
<td>not identified as &quot;chiasmus&quot;</td>
</tr>
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<td>ABCDEE'D'C'B'A'</td>
<td>not identified as &quot;chiasmus&quot;</td>
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<td>Rom. 6:12</td>
<td>ABB'A'</td>
<td>not identified as &quot;chiasmus&quot;</td>
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<td>Rom. 8:34-39</td>
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<td>not identified as &quot;chiasmus&quot;</td>
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<td>Rom. 11:33,34</td>
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<td>Rom. 13:13</td>
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<td>1 Cor. 9:1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 13:14</td>
<td>ABA'B'</td>
<td>adds &quot;retrograde&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 13:5</td>
<td>ABCC'B'A'</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2 Cor. 4:1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gal. 4:25,26</td>
<td>ABA'B'</td>
<td>not identified as &quot;chiasmus&quot;</td>
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<td>Eph. 3:16</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Eph. 3:18</td>
<td>ABA'B'</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eph. 4:12</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;all without a Chiasmus&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phil. 4:8</td>
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<td>adds &quot;a manifold and elegant Chiasmus&quot;</td>
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<td>ABA'B'</td>
<td>&quot;direct Chiasmus&quot;</td>
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<td>Col. 2:18</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1 Thess. 5:23</td>
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<td>&quot;There might be supposed an elegant Chiasmus&quot;</td>
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<td>Heb. 1:9</td>
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<td>Heb. 2:10-13</td>
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Heb. 3:8,9  ABA'B'
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Heb. 4:16  ABA'B'
Heb. 5:7  ABA'B'
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Heb. 10:19-21  ABB'A'
Heb 10:22-24  ABA'B'
Heb. 10:33-34  ABB'A'  adds "inverse order"
Heb. 10:38,39  ABB'A'  adds "a very suitable Chiasmus"
Heb. 11:1ff  ABB'A'
Heb. 11:32,33  ABCDEFGG'FE'D'C'B'A'  adds "retrograde order"
Heb. 12:18-24  ABCDEFGA'B'C'D'E'F'G'  "sevenfold opposition"
Heb. 12:22-24  ABA'B'
Heb. 13:10-16  ABB'A'
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