

## **An innovational Interpretation Using Theomathological Hermeneutics: Centering on “ἐν” in John 14:20**

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### **Abstract**

In this world, there are billions of priests and worshippers. In other words, there are billions of people with religions. This number does not represent one single religion.

When it refers to Christians, their ultimate wish is to become one entity with God and enjoy eternal happiness. However, becoming ‘one entity’ means that God exists inside one, and vice versa; and hope to become one body with God eventually. This is gracious and fascinating, and perhaps sacred expression. In the Hebrew version of the Bible,

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it is being expressed as “èv”, and in the Latin and English versions of the Bible, it was translated as “in”, and in the Korean version, it was referred as “*An-eh-seo* (inside)”.

Yet, words in every languages have ‘nuance’ based on time and era, and have different meanings accordingly. The New Testament is a collection of letters written 1,500~2,000 years past. To understand the deeper meaning behind the Bible, it is essential to master literary, language, culture, social environment, etc. of the time. Futile hope derived out from wrongfully translated word has caused dissipation, and this thesis attempts to correct it by finding out true meaning of the word “èv” using theomathological method.

• Key Words:

“èv” “in” Theomathology, with, together

## I. Introduction

The contents of the New Testament commonly accessible are a translated work, because Jesus himself taught disciples in Aramaic. However, there are some parts where it is hard to understand, even though the book is composed with the words from the Son of God, Jesus Christ himself. When it comes to that part, the Church asks you to just 'believe' it. What is the reason why man cannot fully understand the words of Jesus? Jesus Christ is God, and he is omniscient. Considering that, Jesus probably explained his teachings with easy words. This is the basic motive of this study, and where this study started.

Using a method from the Theomathological hermeneutics, this study attempted to correct the misunderstanding caused by mistranslation from the original Greek word, "ἐν" from John 14:20. Concisely, man cannot go inside God. If man is to go inside God, then he will have to become one entity with God. If God and man become one, then a completeness and incompleteness have to be synchronized. This is not logical, nor possible. This study has proven it with a Theomathological hermeneutic method. However, Jesus Christ, who is the only son of God, is God himself, and the fact that 'Jesus and God is one entity' was also proven by using a Theomathological hermeneutic method.

Again, Jesus Christ is God. The New Testament is a record of his words and journey. Then the original record must be same as direct words from God. First of all, this original text must be understood completely. The language that Jesus used was close to a local dialect of Hebrew, Aramaic. It is widely presumed that Jesus probably did not know the Greek language, because there is no record of him spo-

ken in Greek. Jesus himself also did not leave any of his words in writings, and his Disciples wrote everything in Greek, not Aramaic, 30~40 years after the death of Jesus. There is also no record about Jesus or his Disciples wrote the teachings of Jesus while he was alive.

Let us observe an example regarding this study and translate a sentence “you are in my palms”, because this sentence is close to the subject of this study. The meaning of this sentence is not directly implying that ‘your body is inside my palms,’ but can be interpreted as;

- a) You have no choice but follow my words,
- b) You only have option to follow me,
- c) Your whole life is depending on me,
- d) You are admiring me, and assemble my thoughts and actions, and so on.

Same when translating “ἐν”. If the sentence, “ὕμεῖς ἐν ἐμοὶ (You are in Me)” is to be interpreted in Biblical ways, it probably is easier to translate it as ‘a state of investing effort to resemble and get closer to Jesus’. Also, “ἐγὼ ἐν ὑμῖν (I am in you)” can be translated as “Myself will be with you and protect you.” This study has proven how the translations should work with Theomathology.

There is no evidence that any of the Twelve Disciples wrote down all teachings of Jesus Christ; but they started to write in Greek to their faithful flocks 40-50 years after Jesus have spoken his words in Aramaic. Those texts were written either by the Disciples or people who were close to any one of the Disciples. All letters were in Greek. One of the serious questions is their bilingual capabilities and their power of memories: How fluent their bilingual skills, especially when they

interpret Aramaic to Greek.

Such questions are understandable in the New Testament; and It's good to keep studying the teachings by Jesus Christ.

Regarding many other foreign language versions of The New Testament, they all have complicated history regardless of language because every language has its own characteristics. It is almost impossible to translate completely one foreign language into any other language. For a better understanding of the Bible, it requires study of history, sociology of that era, linguistics, ethnology and other ancient languages. After that, it has to be translated into a modern language. Then there might be lesser translation mistakes.

Wishing this Theomathological hermeneutic method would help the Gospels to be spread out to the whole world vastly.

## 2. Main theme of the thesis on ἐν<sup>1</sup>

ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ μου καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν ὑμῖν.

I am in my Father; and you are in me, and I am in you<sup>2</sup>.

The major purpose of this thesis is to study “ἐν” in John 14:20.

Depend on how to translate this word into a foreign language, its meaning and connotation varies by translator. Accordingly, this thesis

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<sup>1</sup> *The NIV Theological Dictionary of New Testament Words*, ed. Verlyn Verbrugge (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), s.v. “ἐν”: Regarding to this subject, the most important is to make the proper and correct interpretation on the classic Greek, “ἐν”, because in classic Greek, “ἐν” takes the dative case in which something was situated. However, by the time of Hellenistic Greek, it was by far the most common preposition and served a wide variety of purpose. It encroached on the territory of such prepositions as *eis*, *dia* (both with genitive and accusative), meta-synonym and

clearly identifies the problem by applying Theomathological Hermeneutics.

## 2-1 Diachronic change of Vocabulary

Language changes over time, again and again. Either nuance of a word, or the phonemic system, or lexion, or grammatical rule keep changes continuously. It is very rare to see any word today that did not go through any changes. Because of this reason, it is important to observe the history of the nuance in vocabulary and then it becomes easier to understand sufficiently about what the writer intended to say. Especially, nuance of language is gradually changes and come to a quite different nuance as the time moves on.

For example, today we often say "*Woot-gin-da*(웃긴다)." in Korean, but its nuance is "nonsense" in English. Yet, its original meaning is to make a laughter. Comedians often use this connotation now. Suppose 3 centuries from now, such comedians joke would be translated into its original meaning, "to make a laughter", nobody would understands its real meaning, which is what comedians used it 3 centuries ago. Because of these reasons, it is most important to study both classics and history of nuance changes in languages. Especially, regarding the translation in Hebrew or old language of Hellenic in the Bible,

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kata. When I quote In the Septuagint it was the usual preposition used to translate Hebrew Babylonian Talmud which occurs more than 15,000 times. Because of the reason, John accordingly uses this formula, though he has a different nuance in his writings. He simply expresses the idea of personal coherence, ie, John 6:56, 14:20, 15:4-5; 1John 3:24, 4:13, 15, 16, patterned on the archetype of divine coherence (John 10:38, 14:10-11, 17:21, 23).

2 1John 4:13-16 is also referred in John 14:20.

change of nuance in vocabulary is the most important factor out of 3 factors of phoneme.

In order to help peoples to correctly understand what Jesus truly said 2,000 years ago, this thesis is focusing on “ἐν” in Old Hellenic in John 14:20 in the New Testament.

In prolonged period till now, the phrase “ὁμοῖς ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν ὑμῖν” in John 14:20 were all translated as “you are in me, and I am in you”. We have always believed its English translation with no doubt that these words are what Jesus said in 2000 years ago. Because when one is to become one entity with God, then the one can finally become God, as God is pure but human beings are impure. Then inevitably, God also becomes impure. It proves that the translations are inconsistent.

It results to replace the word “ἐν” in Old Hellenic with the word “in” in English. The nuance of the word “in” neither in English nor in Korean does not have the meaning of the word “with” or “together”. It encourages peoples to have good faith through the word “in” in English. The word “in” in English means ‘to become one entity with God’. The question here is that human being becomes God himself when he becomes one entity with God. However, human being cannot become God himself. On the other hand, The Son, of God, Jesus is one entity with The Father, of God. In this case, “ἐν” can be understood as to ‘become one entity’ in both in English and in Korean.

The thesis<sup>3</sup> by Prof. Taesik Park on John 10:22-31 and 1 John 4:13-16 sufficiently explains. In John 14:11, ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ὁ πατὴρ

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3 Taesik Park, “To become one entity with the God: John 10,22-31; 1 John 4,13-16,” *Theological Perspective* 122 (1998): 131-156.

ἐν ἐμοί, the most important point is that “ἐν” should be translated either as “in” or “with” in English. For an easier understanding, reading a thesis<sup>4</sup> regarding The Trinity and the Filioque Controversy is recommended.

Thus:

The Son is in The Father, and The Father is in the Son

Suppose: God The Father is denoted as F,

The Son, Jesus is denoted as S,

∴

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\infty}{1}S \subseteq / \supseteq \frac{\infty}{1}F \Rightarrow [\forall s^n \in S \Rightarrow s^n = \{n \mid \forall n=(1,2,3,\dots,\infty)\}, \\ \forall f^n \in F \Rightarrow f^n = \{n \mid \forall n=(1,2,3,\dots,\infty)\}] \end{aligned}$$

∴

$$S \equiv F \dots\dots\dots (2-1)$$

Accordingly,

The formula (201) is exceptionally valid.

One of the purposes of this thesis is to prove that the God and humans cannot be combined as one entity. It will be herewith proved by Thomathological Hermeneutic. However, one of careful matters has to be paid a careful attention, because every ἐν cannot be interpreted as English word “in.” There is an exception as per Formula (2-1). According to the thesis<sup>5</sup> by John Taesik Park, “we have to tackle if God gave us one part of his Soul; if not, he gave us his whole Soul,” because

4 Francis Jickhong Yun, “A Theomathological Approach to The Trinity & the Filioque Controversy,” *Madang: Journal of Contextual Theology* 25 (2016): 77-92.

5 Taesik Park, “I and the Father are one: John 10:22-30,” *Biblical Studies (For Preachers)* 42 (1998): 11.

God and humans cannot become one entity according to the computation of Theomathological Hermeneutics. In Professor Park's explanation on John 10, 22-31; 1 John 4: 13-16, he also sufficiently described.

## 2-2 The usage of “ἐν” in the Middle age.

Refer to NIV Theologicare Dictionary<sup>6</sup>, It encroached on the territory of such prepositions as *eis*, *dia* (both with genitive and accusative), meta synonym and kata. For example, suppose that I say "you are in my hand." No one would understand that your body is in my hand. It seems the same expression as “ὕμεῖς ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν ὑμῖν”. As long as the word “ὕμεῖς” means a human being, it must be interpreted as “You are with and I am with you,” instead “you are in me, and I am in you.”

### 3. ὕμεῖς ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν ὑμῖν

You are in me and I am in you.

## 3-1 You (human beings) are in Me.(The Father)

Axiom 1: Love of God is a infinite perfect set with scalar and downward vector.

Axiom 2 : Love of Human beings is a finite contaminated Imperfect set with scalar and upward vector<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> The NIV Theological Dictionary of New Testament Words, s.v. “ἐν.”

Question:

Hypothesis: ὑμεῖς ἐν ἐμοὶ (You are in Me,)

Conclusion: ἐγὼ εἰς ὑμεῖς (I am with you)

Proof:

If you are in me, it can be expressed as

$$Y \overset{n}{\uparrow} \subseteq \overset{\infty}{\downarrow} M$$

$$=[(\forall y^n \in Y) \Rightarrow (\forall y^n \in M)] \dots\dots\dots (2-2)$$

"y" is the element of You who are a human beings with the finite scalar with upward vector, and denoted as

$$y^n = \{n \mid \forall n = (1, 2, 3, \dots, n-1, n)\} \dots\dots\dots (2-3)$$

"m" is the element of 'me' who is God of infinite scalar with downward vector and denoted as

$$m^x = \{x \mid \forall x = (1, 2, 3, \dots, \infty)\} \dots\dots\dots (2-4)$$

But

$$Y \overset{\infty}{\downarrow} \not\subseteq \overset{\infty}{\downarrow} M \dots\dots\dots (2-5)$$

∴

First, a human being is the finite scalar with upward vector, while God is an infinite scalar with downward vector. Because of that, Y &

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7 Scalar is the measurement of a medium strictly in magnitude. Vector is a measurement that refers to both the magnitude of the medium as well as the direction of the movement the medium has taken. Scalar quantities, as stated above, are the measurements that strictly refer to the magnitude of the medium. There are absolutely no directional components in a scalar quantity -only the magnitude of the medium. Vector quantities, however, refer to both the direction of the medium's movement as well as the measurement of the scalar quantity. Read more at *Your Dictionary*, s.v. "Examples of Vector and Scalar Quantity in Physics," accessed April 10, 2017, <http://examples.yourdictionary.com/examples-vector-scalar-quantity-physics.html>.

M cannot be combined into one. Therefore, a finite scalar with upward vector Y is not able to include the infinite scalar with downward vector, M.

Secondly, suppose if

$$Y \overset{\eta}{\uparrow} \supset \overset{\infty}{\downarrow} M,$$

It will be illogical because if a human being is in God, God's divinity would be gone because God must be perfect as per Axiom 1. But if God allows imperfect human being to come into himself, God himself becomes a contaminated. On the other hand, a human being became the God because he lies in the same status with the God. If so, the Christianity must be changed to the polytheism.

Because of that,

If and only if

$$Y \overset{\eta}{\uparrow} \cup \overset{\infty}{\downarrow} M \text{ and } Y \overset{\eta}{\uparrow} \cap \overset{\infty}{\downarrow} M = \emptyset \dots\dots\dots(2-6)$$

∴

The formula (2-6) shows the downward Vector of M, which is continuous to the upward vector of Y. Thus it stands for either the word “with” or the word “together”.

∴

Y is with M and M is with Y  
q.e.d.

4. Some examples to be read the word “with” instead the word “in”. for the following biblical lectionary.

#### 4-1 With

John 14:20

ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ γνώσεσθε ὑμεῖς ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ μου καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν ὑμῖν.

In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you are with me, and I will be with you.

John 17:22

καὶ ἐγὼ τὴν δόξαν ἣν δέδωκάς μοι δέδωκα αὐτοῖς, ἵνα ὧσιν ἐν καθὼς ἡμεῖς ἓν.

The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one<sup>8</sup>,

1 John 2:5

ὃς δ' ἂν τηρῇ αὐτοῦ τὸν λόγον, ἀληθῶς ἐν τούτῳ ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ τετελείωται. ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκομεν ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐσμεν.

but whoever keeps his word, with him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may be sure that we are with him:

1 John 4:15

ὃς ἐὰν ὁμολογήσῃ ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, ὁ θεὸς ἐν αὐτῷ μένει καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν τῷ θεῷ.

Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides with him, and he with God.

1 John 4:16

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<sup>8</sup> adjective cardinal nominative neuter singular no degree.

καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐγνώκαμεν καὶ πεπιστεύκαμεν τὴν ἀγάπην  
ἣν ἔχει ὁ θεὸς ἐν ἡμῖν.

Ὁ θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν, καὶ ὁ μένων ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ ἐν τῷ  
θεῷ μένει καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐν αὐτῷ μένει.

So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has  
for us. God is love, and whoever abides with love, abides with  
God, and God abides with him.

#### 4-2 In

John 10:38

εἰ δὲ ποιῶ, καὶ ἐμοὶ μὴ πιστεύητε τοῖς ἔργοις πιστεύετε,  
ἵνα γνῶτε καὶ γινώσκητε ὅτι ἐν ἐμοὶ ὁ πατὴρ καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν  
τῷ πατρὶ.

but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the  
works that you may know and understand that the Father is in  
me and I am in the Father."

John 14:11

πιστεύτε μοι ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ὁ πατὴρ ἐν ἐμοί·  
εἰ δὲ μή, διὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτὰ πιστεύετε.

Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or  
else believe on account of the works themselves.

John 17:21

ἵνα πάντες ἐν ᾧσιν, καθὼς σύ, πάτερ, ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν  
σοί, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἡμῖν ᾧσιν, ἵνα ὁ κόσμος πιστεύῃ  
ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας.

that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I with

you, that they also may be with us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

Section 3 Nuance and languages are getting changes according to time.

Nuance of language is changing according to fashion of the time. Old aged people hardly understand some nuances used by teenagers. Because of that, this thesis focuses on cases which a word spells the same today and past, but the nuance from the past, now and future are all different based on the era of the word being used. This is why the study of nuance of words of the time when the original author or speaker is important. Especially, all letters from the New Testament were written more than 50-60 years after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. There is no writing written by Jesus Christ himself that is still remaining. Most of evangelists are the Apostle of Paul, or one of 12 disciples or some followers to the one of 12 disciples.

Jesus Christ himself spoke in Aram language, but all letters from the New Testament were written in Greek. This is very important points to contemporary scholars.

The 1st question:

Is it possible that all Bible scripters were perfect bi-lingual? Both in Aramaic and Greek?

The 2nd question:

Is it possible for all evangelists kept 100% memories of what Jesus Christ said to them, when they wrote letters to their churches 50-60 years after Jesus Christ Resurrection?

The 3rd question:

So far, there is no original script found. Are all copies of the letters from the Evangelists included in the New Testament are identical to the original contents?

The 4th question:

A lot of translations to other languages are identical contents to the Original letters by the Evangelists?

Total 4 questions were derived; however it is almost impossible for one scholar to study everything to analyze which one is closer to the Original words. Because it requires a studies of Bibliology, folklore study, ethnology study, studies of history, etc. It also requires a lot of man powers with long period of time.

## 5. Conclusion

This thesis deals with the question on how to translate “ἐν” from Old Greek to English. The interpretation of John 17:22 “ἐν” is a hard nut to crack: for example, when we say, “you are in my hand.” It means neither your body nor your soul is in my palm. Its real behind meaning is that “I can control you as myself.” Likewise, translation of the English word “in” is one of the most delicate words to interpret.

Because of that reason, as quoted in John 14:20, this thesis tried to approach to the original nuance of the word John 17:22 “ἐν” with Theomathological Analysis. This thesis focuses on John 17:22 “ἐν”. Owing to incorrect translation into other foreign languages, it misleads peoples to have false faith. Because human beings are not combined with God, himself, Truth is free from impurities. For example, The New Testament is composed with millions of words.

This thesis shows one example with the word “ἐν”. In order to closely study this field with Theomathology, it requires a lot of time and manpower with a lot of perseverance of junior scholars.

I have always strong confidence that the most of scientists do not fully understand Einstein's theory; likewise, it is not necessary for all theologians to understand the Theomathology. Someday when they need it, it will be better to study it a bit by bit.

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