

**‘The Mass’ deceptions advocated by Peter Williams:
A review of the Revelation TV debate with Cecil.
Part 3 – ‘Does the Greek really mean that’?
An assessment by Rob Zins of <http://www.cwrc-rz.org/>**

In the second of my articles reviewing the debate that I took part in with Peter Williams on the subject of ‘**The Mass**’ on Tuesday 23 October 2012 (The video of the debate can be viewed on <http://youtu.be/QPL1JKOdWvc>) I wrote the following –

‘The next article reviewing my debate with Mr Williams will (DV) look at his ‘Greek claims’ and I have invited Rob Zins to respond to these important linguistic and grammatical issues’.

I am delighted to report that Rob who, unlike myself, is well qualified to comment on ‘things Greek’ has now written his article and it is reproduced herewith. I am deeply grateful to him for his help in exposing what I would believe were the sincere but misguided errors put forth by Mr Williams in the course of the debate.

Cecil Andrews – ‘Take Heed’ Ministries – 24 December 2012

A “Mass” of Confusion

Recently a debate was held between Cecil Andrews, the director of *Take Heed Ministries* of Northern Ireland, and a Roman Catholic apologist name Peter Williams. The debate is available through a link on the *Take Heed Ministry* home page.

Mr. Williams and Mr. Andrews squared off over the significance of the Roman Catholic Mass. Mr. Williams defended the Roman Catholic position that the Mass is a perpetual re-presentation of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on an unbloody Roman Catholic altar. He also defended the Roman Catholic contention that the blood of Christ must be perpetually re-presented in the Holy of Holies in Heaven for the benefits of Christ’s blood to be effectual for Christians. Mr. Williams tied in the Mass to the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation.

Mr. Andrews denied the necessity of both a perpetual re-presentation of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the requirement that the blood of Jesus be re-

presented in the Holy of Holies. Mr. Andrews also maintained that there is no such thing as transubstantiation taught in the Bible.

The battlefields within the Scriptures were primarily the synoptic accounts of the Last Supper (which Jesus took with His disciples) and the sixth chapter of the gospel of John. These passages along with several parts of the book of Hebrews and a smattering of other verses were brought up by both sides in the debate.

In reviewing the debate we have noticed that time and time again Mr. Williams appealed to the Greek text of the New Testament to prove his points. There were several statements made by Mr. Williams that were set forth as proof of his position from the Greek text. It is fair to say that Mr. Williams was convinced that if the Greek was consulted there would be no question that the Roman Catholic position was the right one and perfectly biblical. In his thinking the Greek text makes the Roman Catholic Mass as well as transubstantiation perfectly sound and abundantly clear.

Let us take a closer look at the assertions of Mr. Williams. In the first place Mr. Williams is convinced that the Greek word ***anamnesin*** means “memorial sacrifice”. This Greek word is found only four times in the New Testament (Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24, 25; Hebrews 10:3). In each case the word ***anamnesin*** carries its normal meaning of remember or bring to mind. **The word never means “memorial sacrifice”**. In Hebrews 10:3 the Old Testament sacrifices are said to be nothing more than a “**reminder-anamnesin**” of sin. Mr. Williams falters badly here. Jesus was not telling His disciples in Luke’s account of the Last Supper to “perform a memorial sacrifice”. Rather with reference to drinking from the cup and eating the bread Jesus was saying do the same in “**remembrance – anamnesin**” of Me. Paul repeats the command in 1 Corinthians 11:24,25 using the exact same term. **Christians are charged to drink from the cup and eat the bread in remembrance of the death of Jesus Christ and to proclaim that death until He comes.**

In defending the Roman Catholic teaching of transubstantiation Mr. Williams appeals once again to the Greek text. Matthew, Mark, and Luke record Jesus as saying, “**this is My Body**” in reference to the loaf of bread that Jesus distributed to His disciples at the Last Supper. Mr. Williams notes that the Greek demonstrative pronoun “**touto**” - English “**this**” - agrees in gender with the Greek word “**soma**” - English “**body**”. Hence when Jesus says “This is My Body” he must have meant that the bread actually became His Body because the pronoun “this” referring to the bread agrees in gender, number and case with the word “body” referring to His own Body.

Regardless of the agreement between the neuter “soma” - English “body” - in the Greek text the demonstrative pronoun (touto-this) must still reference the “loaf” or “bread” (Greek “arton”) that Jesus held in His hands. When Jesus says, “This is my body”, what else could the “this” refer?

One Roman Catholic writer maintains that “this is my body” refers to what he calls the “substance in the hands of Jesus” but then manages to argue that the “this substance” must be the transubstantiated body of Jesus and not the bread because the pronoun (this) is in agreement in gender, number and case with the word “*soma*” English “body” rather than the word “bread” which is the *reference point*.

Let us examine this sleight of hand and take a look at how the Greek text is used to “scare off” those who see clearly that Jesus is speaking figuratively of the bread as representing His body. Here is what this one Roman Catholic writer has to say.

“When the text is examined in relationship to Greek grammar employed in the passage, the meaning becomes very clear. Touto (this) is a neuter demonstrative adjective. It can’t modify or refer to bread, which is a masculine noun. Instead, it clearly refers to *soma* (body), which is a nominative neuter noun. Therefore the only possible translation in English is: “This (substance in my hands) is my body.”

We can see plainly that this Roman Catholic writer contradicts his own assertion. If the demonstrative pronoun cannot possibly refer to bread (as he states) then what would be the “substance in my hands” to which the pronoun refers? Even if we say that the substance in the hands of Jesus is transubstantiated bread it still refers to bread in an alleged transformed state! Regardless of the grammatical attraction of “this” to “body” in the clause **the reference point of the word “this” must always be the bread that Jesus held in His hands**. There is no magic in the Greek text that demands the *reference point* be changed or that the bread is somehow changed because the grammar does not agree in case, number and gender. Furthermore, it is completely contradictory to say that the bread is not the *reference point* due to grammar but then assert the “substance in His hand” becomes the *reference point* if it is now transubstantiated bread. Rome’s argument is self defeating as well as completely untrue!

Now let us see what kind of translation we would come up with if as suggested by Rome the demonstrative pronoun points to and refers to the word “*soma*” in the sentence: This is my body (*soma*). We would then translate it roughly “My body is this body”. We would then have to ask Jesus, “To what does the word “this” refer?” What conceivable answer would He give? He would in some way have to say that the “loaf” was now His body. He would then have to clarify what this could possibly mean. No matter how you translate the sentence we are left with the key word as “*estin*” English “is” and not the demonstrative pronoun “this”. Even if Jesus were saying, “My body is this body” it solves nothing. **What does “is” mean in light of the fact that Jesus is speaking in His own earthly body?**

We would agree with Mr. Williams that the Greek grammar of this sentence does signify that the bread is used in context as a figure to represent the body of Jesus Christ. **However the Greek grammar does not demand that the material bread has somehow been changed in essence to the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus.**

This is where the Greek text is used to bully those not familiar with the biblical use of figures of speech especially metaphors. The Greek cannot answer the question, "In what sense is this bread the body of Jesus?" If the evidence for a figure of speech is clearly in view then it is best to take it as a figure. **Jesus did not say, "This has become My Body".** Clearly Jesus is in His own body when He makes this statement. **There is no Greek grammar rule that demands that Jesus must have in view transubstantiation. Moreover the apostle Paul exhorts Christians to eat the bread and drink the cup. He does not exhort them to eat the Body and drink the Blood of Jesus.** Also the metaphor is in the word "**estin**" - English "**is**" - not in the word "this".

When in John six Jesus says, "This *is* the bread which came down from Heaven", He was not referring to Himself as literal bread at all. Rather He is revealing Himself as the "true bread" in contrast to the manna which had already come down from heaven and provided no eternal life for those who ate it.

There is nothing in the Greek text that demands anything other than that the bread Jesus gave to His disciples was a figure of speech. The loaf represented and signified His soon to be broken body on the cross. The cup He gave signified or represented His spilled blood on the cross. Both the bread and the cup stand for the New Covenant. Both stand for the atonement of Jesus as the true bread and drink given freely for eternal life.

Mr. Williams also tries to convince us that the Greek text in John six demands us to understand that Jesus was teaching His disciples that they must literally eat Him. His argument is that Jesus switches from the Greek word "**phagete**" - English "**eating**" - to the Greek word "**trogon**" - English "**gnaw, nibble, munch or eat.**" The claim is that the word "**trogon**" is an intensified form of eating that lends itself more clearly to a literal eating of Jesus Christ. The problem with this kind of logic is that "**trogon**" is used in two other places in the New Testament and in both places "**trogon**" means simply to eat or eating. We read later in John's gospel his use of the same word "**trogon**" with reference to Judas.

"I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth (**trogon**) bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me." John 13:18

Clearly there is no special intensification of the verb here. We would not wish to translate "**trogon**" as "He that gnaweth bread with me" etc. Likewise we would conclude the same for Matthew's use of the term in Matthew 24.

“For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating (**trogon**) and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,” Matthew 24:38

Even more convincing proof that the words “**phagete**” and “**trogon**” are used interchangeably may be found in the immediate context. Here is John 6:58:

“This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat (**ephagon**) manna, and are dead: he that eateth (**trogon**) of this bread shall live for ever.” John 6:58

Finally in an interesting twist of both the English and the Greek text Mr. Williams claims that because Jesus uses the Greek word “**sarx**” - English “**flesh**” - along with the Greek word “**alethes**” - English “**true**” - in John 6:55 that Jesus meant we are to eat Him literally. Mr. Williams maintains that this cannot be a figure of speech because of the word “**true**” used here to describe food and drink.

Let us take a look at the text.

"For My flesh (**sarx**) is true (**alethes**) food, and My blood is true (**alethes**) drink. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him." John 6:55-57

As can be seen clearly these two statements of Jesus are a reiteration of His main theme. The theme of John six is that the manna given to Israel from heaven was a provision of short duration and a type of the true manna. Jesus is the true manna. Those who ate the manna of the Old Testament died. But those who eat the bread of life shall live. The Greek terminology cannot tell us what Jesus meant by “true food” and “true drink”. Nor will the Greek tell us what Jesus meant throughout the context of John 6 when He said that His flesh must be eaten and His blood must be drunk.

There is nothing in the Greek text that demands a literal interpretation and we point out that Roman Catholics do not take this literally i.e., actual blood and actual eating of the flesh of Jesus. This would push the language too far. The assertion that the Greek text paves the way for the Roman Catholic invention of transubstantiation is foreign to any responsible Greek or English use of the text.

As far as the use of the word “**true**” - Greek “**alethes**” - is concerned there is no basis to build a case for Rome’s transubstantiation. Christians agree that the flesh and blood of Jesus is “true” food and “true” drink. And, **as stated by Jesus in context, to come is to never hunger and to believe is to never thirst.**

