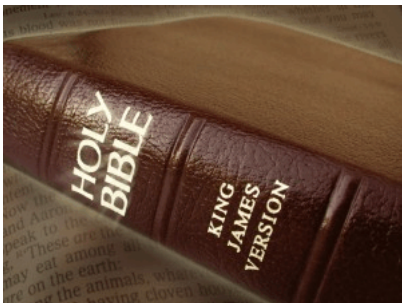


REMINDER

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King James Bible Turns 400 this Year

This year, 2011, marks the 400th anniversary of the release of the Authorized (King James) Version of the Holy Bible. No other single book has had a greater impact on the world than has the King James Version of the Bible. With this in mind, here follows some interesting, helpful, and encouraging words about the KJV for those of us who still believe it is the Word of God.

- Pastor Todd W. White

RONALD REAGAN ON THE KING JAMES VERSION

Radio address aired September 6, 1977



President Ronald Reagan

What would you say if someone decided Shakespeare's plays, Charles Dicken's novels, or the music of Beethoven could be rewritten & improved?

Writing in the journal "The Alternative", Richard Hanser, author of *The Law & the Prophets and Jesus: What Manner of Man Is This?*, has called attention to something that is more than a little mind boggling. It is my understanding that the Bible (both the Old & New Testaments) has been the best selling book in the entire history of printing.

Now another attempt has been made to improve it. I say another because there have been several fairly recent efforts to quote, "make the Bible more readable & understandable", unquote. But as Mr. Hanser so eloquently says, "*For more than 3 1/2 centuries, its language and its images, have penetrated more deeply into the general culture of the English speaking world, and been more dearly treasured, than anything else ever put on paper.*" He then quotes the irreverent H. L. Mencken, who spoke of it as purely a literary work and said it was, "*probably the most beautiful*

piece of writing in any language."

They were, of course, speaking of The Authorized Version, the one that came into being when the England of King James was scoured for translators & scholars. It was a time when the English language had reached it's peak of richness & beauty.

Now we are to have The Good News Bible which will be in, "the natural English of everyday adult conversation." I'm sure the scholars and clergymen supervised by the American Bible Society were sincerely imbued with the thought that they were taking religion to the people with their Good News Bible, but I can't help feeling we should instead be taking the people to religion and lifting them with the beauty of language that has outlived the centuries.

Mr. Hanser has quoted from both the St. James Version & the Good News Bible some well known passages for us to compare. A few thousand years ago Job said "How forcible are right words!" [Job 6:25] The new translators have him saying "Honest words

(continued inside)

are convincing.” That’s only for openers.

There is the passage [Ecc. 1:18], “***For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.***” Is it really an improvement to say instead, “*The wiser you are, the more worries you have; the more you know the more it hurts.*” ?

In the New Testament, in Mathew, we read “***The voice of the one crying in the wilderness. Prepare ye the way***” (Matthew 3:3). The Good News version translates that - “*Someone is shouting in the desert. Get the road ready.*”

It sounds like a straw boss announcing lunch hour is over.

The hauntingly beautiful 23rd Psalm is the same in both versions, for a few words, “The Lord is my shepherd” but instead of continuing “***I shall not want***” we are supposed to say “I have everything I need.”

The Christmas story has undergone some modernizing but one can hardly call it *improved*. The wondrous words “***Fear not: for; behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy***” has become, “*Don't be afraid! I am here with good news for you.*”

The sponsors of the Good News version boast that their Bible is as readable as the daily paper – and so it is. But do readers of the daily news find themselves moved to wonder “***at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth***”? Mr. Hanser suggests that sadly the “*tinkering & general horsing around with the sacred texts will no doubt continue*” as pious drudges try to get it right.

“It will not dawn on them that it has already been gotten right.”



The late Dr. Henry Morris

A Creationist's Defense of the King James Bible

*by the late Dr. Henry M. Morris
Founder - The Institute For Creation Research*

In this day of rapid change, when many Christians have suddenly started using one of the many modern English translations of the Bible (NASB, NIV, NEB, NRSV, NKJV, etc.), abandoning the long-used King James Version read and loved by English-speaking people of all ages and walks of life for over ten generations, it may be appropriate to review a few of the reasons why many creationists, including this writer, still prefer to use the latter.

The King James Translators

One reason is that all the fifty or more translators who developed the King James Bible were godly men who believed strongly in the inerrancy and full authority of Scripture and who, therefore, believed in the literal historicity of Genesis, with its record of six-day Creation and the worldwide flood. This has not been true of many who have been involved in producing the modern versions.

The spiritual motivations and convictions of the King James translators are indicated by their fascinating preface, entitled “The Translators to the Reader.” The flavor of this impassioned essay can be illustrated by the following brief excerpts

The Scriptures then being acknowledged to be so full and perfect, how can we excuse ourselves of negligence, if we do not study them, of curiosity, if we be not content with them? . . . It is not only an armor, but also a whole armory of weapons, both offensive and defensive; whereby we may save ourselves and put the enemy to flight. It is not an herb, but a tree, or rather a whole paradise of trees of life, which bring forth fruit every month, and the fruit thereof is for meat, and the leaves for medicine. . . . a fountain of most pure water springing up unto everlasting life, and what marvel? The original thereof being from heaven, not from earth; the author being God, not man; the Editor, the Holy Spirit, not the wit of the Apostles or Prophets; the Penmen such as were sanctified from the womb, and endued with a principal portion of God's Spirit; the matter, verity, piety, purity, uprightness; the form, God's word, God's testimony, God's oracles, the word of truth, the word of salvation, etc.; the effects, light of understanding, stableness of persuasion, repentance from dead works, newness of life, holiness, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost; lastly, the end and reward of the study thereof, fellowship with the saints, participation of the heavenly nature, fruition of an inheritance immortal, undefiled, and that shall never fade away; happy is the man that delighteth in the Scripture, and thrice happy that meditateth in it day and night.

Furthermore, the King James translators were also great scholars, every bit as proficient in the Biblical languages as any of those who have come after them. They were very familiar with the great body of manuscript evidence, as well as all the previous translations. They worked diligently on the project (assigned to them by King James) for over seven years, completing it in the year 1611.

The professional qualifications of the translators were all extremely high. There were 54 scholars originally assigned to the project by King James, though some died early in the project. There were evidently 47 who were active throughout the project, all of whom were exceptionally well qualified both academically and spiritually.

For example, John Bois, who kept the most complete account of the proceedings of the translators, was extremely skilled in both Hebrew and Greek. In fact, it is reported by his biographer that he was reading through the Hebrew Old Testament when he was only five years old. He was expert in all forms of Greek, including the Koine Greek of the New Testament, and compiled one of the largest Greek libraries ever. Dr. Bois became Dean of Canterbury in 1619.

Lancelot Andrews, a leader of the Old Testament translators, had been chaplain to Queen Elizabeth. He was fluent in fifteen modern languages, as well as Hebrew, Greek, and the cognate Biblical languages. He served as Dean of Westminster and later

as Bishop of Winchester.

Dr. William Bedwell was expert in Latin, Arabic, and Persian, preparing lexicons in these languages, as well as in the Biblical languages. Edward Lively, who died after only a year, had been Regius Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge and had an unequalled knowledge of the Oriental languages. Dr. John Harding was Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford. Miles Smith was a noted Orientalist who became Bishop of Gloucester in 1612. He was the last man to review the translation and was selected to write the Translators' Preface.

Dr. Andrew Downes spent forty years as Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford University and was on the final checking committee of the translation. George Abbott became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1611. Sir Henry Saville was Provost of Eton and was a scientist as well as Bible scholar. His works included an eight-volume edition of the works of Chrysostom. And on and on.

All of the translators were great scholars, deeply fluent in the Biblical languages, the cognate languages, the writings of the church fathers and other relevant materials, as well as accomplished writers in English. It is almost certain that no group of Bible scholars before or since has ever been as thoroughly fit for their task as was the King James Translation Team.

The result of their consecrated labor was that the so-called "Authorized" version eventually displaced all those that had gone before and then has withstood the test of wide usage in all English-speaking countries ever since. To suddenly abandon it in just one over-stressed, pseudo-intellectual, largely apostate generation may well prove to be a decision with sad and entropic consequences.

Which New Translation Could Replace It?

This is not a new question. As a matter of fact, there have been no less than 120 English translations of the complete Bible published since the King James, as well as over 200 New Testaments. Even in my own lifetime there have been at least 45 Bibles plus about 100 New Testaments, and I have tried to use at least 20 of them.

My wife and I were given an American Standard Version for a wedding present when we married in 1940, and I later bought a Berkeley Version, then a Williams, and a Phillips--each time thinking the latest might be the best. I was especially pleased when the Revised Standard Version was finally marketed in 1952 with great publicity. Each time I was disappointed, however, and soon went back to the KJV. Later came the Amplified and the Expanded and the Basic English and the Living Bible and many others. I even studied some of the older translations (Afford, Weymouth, Goodspeed, etc.).

Each of these provided interesting variations in wording, as well as updating the archaic expressions and old-style English, but something always seemed missing, so I continued using the King James in my writing and speaking, and God continued to bless its use, in spite of its Elizabethan-age English.

But other new translations kept on appearing. The New English Bible, Good News for Modern Man, the Anchor Bible, New American Standard, New International Version -- even the New King James Version. There were numerous others, most recently one called God's Word.

On one of these -- the New King James Version -- I was even a member of the North America Overview Committee, reviewing the proposed translation of Genesis in particular, even though I cannot read Hebrew. The men who worked on the NKJV were, so far as I know, all godly men committed to Biblical inerrancy, and many of them, at least, to literal creationism, and I do believe it is the best of the modern translations. Even so, after trying to use it and endorse it, I finally went back to the "old" King James, convinced that it is still the best, in terms of poetic majesty, spiritual power, and over-all clarity and reliability.

Therefore, even if one really feels keenly that he ought to switch to a modern translation, how does he decide which? With apologies to Judges 9:25, it seems today that "every man does that which is right in his own eyes," as far as selecting a Bible is concerned. But how can he decide which, if any, best preserved the inspired, authoritative Word of God? After all, God did say that His Word had been "for ever settled in heaven" (Psalm 119:89) and had given sober warning to any who would presume to supplement, delete, or distort any of the words of Scripture (Revelation 22:18,19; II Peter 3:16).

Is God the Author of Confusion?

For a long time, the "official" English version used in each Bible-believing church was the King James, with the others used occasionally for reference study by teachers and pastors. Now, however, confusion reigns. Congregational unison reading is no longer possible, and church members often don't even bring their Bibles to church. The pastor preaches from one version and the people in the congregation each have their own, so they can't follow the pastor anyway, and thus they just listen, and soon forget.

Scripture memorization, which has been an incalculable blessing in my own Christian life, is almost a lost art these days. I remember back in 1943 when Dawson Trotman, founder of the Navigators, first got me and others in our Gideon Camp back in Houston, to start memorizing Scripture, he used to stress that the verses should be quoted "word perfect," with their respective "addresses" cited fore and aft. But such meticulous attention to the very words of a Scripture verse becomes anomalous when even the supposed authorities all disagree on what it says, so why bother? In addition, the musical phrasing in the King James makes it easier to memorize than the more ponderous English of the modern versions.

And what becomes of our long-cherished belief in verbal inspiration? If it's only the "thought" that counts, then the words are flexible. Yes, but then the thoughts themselves easily become flexible also, and we can adjust the words to make them convey whatever thought we prefer. We forget that precise thoughts

require precise words.

Another fast-vanishing form of Bible study is that of comparative word studies, comparing the various usages and contexts of a given key word or phrase as it occurs throughout the Bible. This has been a highly fruitful means of obtaining many precious insights into the mind of the divine writer who inspired all of them. A given word may have been rendered in various ways by the King James translators, of course, but they have assured us (in their preface) that this was always done very carefully and in accord with context and the known range of meanings carried by the word itself. A Bible student may easily discern and compare all of these -- usually with real blessing to his mind and heart -- even without knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, simply by using one of the complete concordances based on the King James translation (Strong's or Young's). But this type of study is far more difficult, if not practically impossible, with most modern versions in which the translators have often either resorted to paraphrasing the supposed thought of the writer, or even to using their own interpretation of what they think he would have said if he were aware of our modern scientific knowledge of things.

One can only wonder -- and speculate -- about why our ecclesiastical leaders have felt it necessary to keep producing so many new English translations all the time. The Bible, of course, is the best selling book of all time, but surely publishing profits and translators' royalties don't have anything to do with it. Anyway, in spite of the rising popularity of many modern versions, there are still more King James Bibles and Testaments being printed and distributed today than any other.

Which Version Best Renders the Original Manuscripts?

Even many King James Bibles now have added footnotes referring to what are said to be "better manuscripts" which indicate that certain changes should be made in the King James text. The most famous such changes are the omission of the last twelve verses of Mark and the first eleven verses of John, chapter 8, but there are many other important omissions, as well as some additions and many word changes that have been incorporated in these new versions, with the implication that all these changes have been derived from these "better" ancient manuscripts.

But what are these better manuscripts, and are they really better?

The whole subject of New Testament criticism is too complex to discuss here (or for me to try to discuss anywhere!), but it is significant that almost all of the new versions of the New Testament are based on what is known as the Westcott-Hort Greek text, or some modification thereof (such as the Nestle-Aland text), whereas the King James is based largely on what is known as the Received Text (also called the Textus Receptus or the Byzantine Greek text). As far as the Hebrew text of the Old Testament is concerned, the King James is based on the Masoretic text, while the modern versions rely somewhat on the Masoretic but also on the Septuagint, the Latin Vulgate, the Dead

Sea Scrolls, and various others, especially the Kittel Hebrew reference text, *Biblia Hebraica*, in its "Stuttgart" edition.

The Masoretic text was compiled from the ancient manuscripts of the Old Testament by the Masoretes, who were groups of Hebrew scholars dedicated to guarding and standardizing the traditional Hebrew text as "handed down" (the basic meaning of "Masoretic") from the earlier Hebrew scribes, who had in turn meticulously copied the ancient Hebrew manuscripts, scrupulously guarding against error. There seems no good reason why the Masoretic text as preserved and codified in its present form by about 600 A.D., which has served as the basis for the King James translation, should not continue to be accepted as the most accurately preserved Old Testament portion of the Bible. Most scholars would agree that neither the Greek Septuagint nor the Latin Vulgate are comparable to the Masoretic Text in accuracy or reliability. As far as the Hebrew text changes proposed by Rudolf Kittel are concerned, it is worth noting that Kittel was a German rationalistic higher critic, rejecting Biblical inerrancy and firmly devoted to evolutionism. The Dead Sea Scrolls were produced by a heretical Jewish sect called the Essenes, but for the most part they do agree with the standard Masoretic Text.

The two men most responsible for modern alterations in the New Testament text were ***B.F. Westcott and F.J.A. Hort***, whose Greek New Testament text has largely replaced the traditional Textus Receptus in modern seminaries, especially as revised and updated by the Germans Eberhard Nestle and Kurt Aland. **All of these men were evolutionists.** Furthermore, Westcott and Hort, although they were Anglican officials and nominally orthodox in theology, both denied Biblical inerrancy and promoted spiritism and racism. Nestle and Aland, like Kittel, were German theological liberals.

Westcott and Hort were also the most influential members of the English revision committee that produced the English Revised Version of the Bible, published in 1881. The corresponding American revision committee which developed the American Standard Version of 1901 was headed by another liberal evolutionist, Philip Schaff. Most new versions since that time have adopted the same presuppositions as did those 19th century revisers. Schaff was twice tried for heresy by his denomination and taught at the very liberal Union Seminary. As chairman of the revision committee, Schaff not only was greatly influenced by Westcott and Hort, but also by the Unitarians Ezra Abbot and Joseph Thayer, of Harvard, as well as other liberals whom he placed on the committee.

Furthermore, the changes adopted by the Westcott-Hort (or Nestle-Aland) Greek texts were predominantly based on two old Greek manuscripts, the so-called **Sinaiticus** and **Vaticanus** texts, which were rediscovered and rescued from long (and well-deserved) obscurity in the 19th century. Since these are both supposedly older than the more than 5000 manuscripts that support the Textus Receptus, they were accepted as "better." This was in spite of the fact that they frequently disagreed with each

other as well as with the Textus Receptus, and also contained many serious and obvious omissions. The Vatican manuscript, for example, leaves out most of Genesis as well as all of Revelation, in addition to the pastoral epistles of Paul, 33 psalms, and over a third of Hebrews.

The fact that these two manuscripts are older obviously does not prove they are better. More likely it indicates that they were set aside and not used because of their numerous gross errors. Thus they would naturally last longer than the good manuscripts which were being used regularly and thus wore out sooner.

The Sinaitic manuscript was reportedly rescued from a wastebasket in a monastery on Mount Sinai by another German evolutionist theologian, Friedrich Tischendorf. The Orthodox monks evidently had long since decided that the numerous omissions and alterations in the manuscript had rendered it useless and had stored it away in some closet where it had remained unused for centuries. Yet Tischendorf promoted it widely and vigorously as representing a more accurate text than the thousands of manuscripts supporting the traditional Byzantine text. Furthermore, he assumed that it came from about the fourth century, but he never found any actual proof that it dated earlier than the 12th century.

A similar mystery applies to the famous Vatican manuscript, which had been kept in seclusion in the Vatican Library since 1480 or earlier, though no one seemingly knows for sure when it was originally written or how it was acquired by the Vatican. Again, it was only conjectured to date from around the fourth century. Tischendorf learned of its existence and again was instrumental in promoting its antiquity and superiority to the Textus Receptus.

There are a few other old manuscripts, even including fragmentary Greek papyri, whose textual character seems to conform more to the Sinaiticus and Vaticanus readings than to the Textus Receptus. These all have been traced, by liberal and conservative scholars alike, to a probable source in Alexandria, Egypt, in the second or third century. At that time, Alexandria was a great center of both philosophical and theological scholarship, including a relatively large population of both Jews and Christians.

The most influential man among the Christian community of Alexandria was the learned Origen, and it is believed by many that he was largely instrumental in developing the so-called "Alexandrian" text of the New Testament, of which the Vatican and Sinai manuscripts are representative, in contrast to the "Byzantine" text, from which the Textus Receptus has largely come. It is barely possible, some think, that Origen may also have been involved in developing the final form of the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament.

With all his immense learning and zeal, however, it is sad that Origen's views of theology and Biblical interpretation were heretical in respect to numerous key doctrines. Like modern theistic evolutionists, he felt constrained to harmonize

Christianity with pagan philosophy, especially that of Plato and the Stoics. This led him into excessive allegorization of Scripture, especially Genesis, and into denigrating the actual historical records of the Bible, even that of the bodily resurrection of Christ, as well as the literal creation of the world.

Whether or not Origen and his associates were first responsible for the differences in the Alexandrian text from the Byzantine, the fact remains that significant differences do exist, and that practically all modern English translations have been heavily influenced (via Westcott/Hort, etc.) in favor of the former, whereas the King James translation has its basis primarily in the latter.

In many cases, the differences are minor, but it is true that far too many do involve significant watering down of even such basic doctrines as Biblical inerrancy, the perfect divine/human nature of Christ, and the Trinity. On the other hand, they certainly do not eliminate these doctrines, so it is still happily possible to discern these doctrines and to find the true gospel and way of salvation in almost any of the new texts or translations.

In any case, one of the serious problems with almost all modern English translations is that they rely heavily on Hebrew and Greek manuscripts of the Bible developed by liberals, rationalists, and evolutionists, none of whom believed in the verbal inspiration of the Bible.

Are we to believe that God would entrust the preservation of His eternal Word to men such as these? Would He not more likely have used devout scholars who believed in the absolute inerrancy and authority of the Bible?

What About the Archaic Language in the King James?

The beautifully poetic prose of the King James is a great treasure which should not be lost or forgotten. It has been acclaimed widely as the greatest example of English literature ever written. Apart from a few archaic words or words whose meaning has changed, which can easily be clarified in footnotes, it is as easy to understand today as it was four hundred years ago. That is why the common people today, especially those without higher education, still use and love it. It is usually the "intelligentsia" who tend to favor the modern versions. These modern translations commonly tend to use long words and pedantic rhetoric, but the King James uses mostly one and two-syllable words. Formal studies have always shown its readability index to be 10th grade or lower. There is nothing hard to understand about John 3:16, for example, or Genesis 1:1, or the Ten Commandments, in the King James.

There are some sections of the Bible, of course, that are quite complex in the original language and thus a faithful translation should preserve that same complexity (after all God inspired it that way), but all the basic histories, doctrines, and precepts are easy to follow by anyone who can read at high school level. Many sections can easily be read by children as soon as they learn to read at all. In fact, in earlier times here in America, children were actually taught to read by means of the King James Bible.

It is also noteworthy that the King James was produced during the period when the English language and literature (as well as knowledge of other languages by English-speaking people) had reached their zenith of power and expressiveness. That was the age of Shakespeare, for example. Modern English, on the other hand, has become merely a decadent remnant of its former beauty and clarity.

This phenomenon seems to be a universal characteristic of languages—as well as people, cities, and institutions of all kinds. A period of youthful growth and vigor reaches a zenith and is then followed by a gradual decline and eventual death. Albert Baugh, in a widely used textbook on this theme has said:

The evolution of languages, at least within the historical period, is a story of progressive simplification.... Language may reintroduce previously lost complexity but over-all the superfluous and redundant aspects are systematically streamlined from the complex structure of language. (A History of the English Language New York. Appleton Century-Crofts, 1957. p. 10.)

This trend is exactly opposite to any evolutionary concept of language origins, but is analogous to the law of entropy in the physical realm.

With respect to the English language, the authors of a more recent study, companion to a PBS television series, note the literary accomplishments of the Elizabethan period in England as follows.

The achievements of these astonishing years [i.e., 1558-1625, the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I] are inescapably glorious. Elizabeth I came to the throne in 1558 at the age of twenty-five. William Shakespeare, her most famous subject, was born six years later in 1564. Her successor, James I, who gave his name to another famous masterpiece, the Authorized Version of the Bible, died in 1625. During their reigns, about seventy years, the English language achieved a richness and vitality of expression that even contemporaries marveled at. (Robert McCrum, William Cray and Robert MacNeil, *The Story of English* New York, Viking. 1986. p. 91.)

These writers call the King James Bible “probably the single most influential book ever published in the English language” (ibid., p. 109). They also make an important observation concerning the beautiful simplicity of the King James Language. The King James Bible was published in the year Shakespeare began work on his last play, *The Tempest*. Both the play and the Bible are masterpieces of English, but there is one crucial difference between them. Whereas Shakespeare ransacked the lexicon, the King James Bible employs a bare 8000 words—God’s teaching in homely English for every-man. From that day to this, the Shakespearean cornucopia and the Biblical iron rations represent, as it were, the North and South poles of the language, reference points for writers and speakers throughout the world, from the Shakespearean splendor of a Joyce or a Dickens to the Biblical rigor of a Bunyan or a Hemingway (ibid., p. 113).

It is no wonder that a Bible translation produced at that special time in history has (except for changes in spelling and letter form) endured for almost 400 years, meeting the needs and guiding the culture of over ten generations of English speaking peoples. In fact, it has been very instrumental in standardizing the language itself, providing a common bond among its millions of readers, and restraining what would otherwise have been a more rapid deterioration of the language.

We have abandoned today many fine points of English grammar commonly used in 1600. For example, we forget that “thee,” “thou,” and “thine” were used to express the second person singular, with “you,” “ye,” and “yours” reserved for second person plural. Today we use “you” indiscriminately for both singular and plural, thereby missing some of the precise meaning of many texts of Scripture. The same applies to the “th” and “st” endings on verbs associated with second-person pronouns; they also contribute significantly to the musical quality of the language, especially as used in the King James Bible.

The translators were not only Biblical scholars but accomplished writers, and one of the deliberate goals—in fact, a part of their assignment—was to produce a Bible that would “sing” with beauty and power, and would also retain literal faithfulness to the Greek and Hebrew texts, which had themselves been written with majestic musical beauty.

This they did accomplish, most admirably, and modern versions are without exception inferior to the King James Bible in this regard. The King James is also the most reliably accurate of all translations, seeking to translate the words of the original rather than “dynamically equivalent” thoughts. This aspect allows detailed word study and comparisons which are hardly possible in most other versions.

With all these factors in mind, do we not most honor the Lord and His revealed Word by having it read and used in that form of our language which was in use when the English language was at its best, instead of in our modern jargon? So what if it does not sound like a modern newspaper or novel? The fact is, it should not sound-like that, for God is speaking! His Word should be distinctly different from that in some current novel or newspaper.

Conclusion

I believe, therefore, after studying, teaching, and loving the Bible for over 55 years, that Christians -- especially creationists! -- need to hang on to their old King James Bibles as long as they live. God has uniquely blessed it in the history of England and America, in the great revivals, in the worldwide missionary movement, and in the personal lives of believers more than He has through all the rest of the versions put together.

The King James Bible is the most beautiful, the most powerful, and (I strongly believe) the most reliable of any that we have or ever will have, until Christ returns.

Postscript by Dr. Morris: This brief article is only a very inadequate introduction to a large and important subject. Many excellent books and journal articles have been written on this vital

theme and much of the discussion in this booklet is based on material covered in these other more authoritative publications. I have no training or experience personally with the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts and do not wish to argue the subject with any who disagree with my reasons.

Many other Bible-believing creationist Christians also prefer to use the King James, but we do not regard its use as a test of salvation or spirituality. This essay is intended merely to answer questions as to why I, as well as many others, will continue to use the time-tested King James Bible in our writing and speaking. ■



Textual Criticism Fact and Fiction

**A fresh look at Bible Inspiration
Preservation And Translation**

by Dr. Thomas Cassidy, Pastor - First Baptist
Church of Spring Valley, California
(continued from last week)

Section Three - Translation *(continued)*

The Greek manuscripts. There are at present about 5,255 manuscripts of the New Testament in existence, and approximately 90% of those manuscripts follow the Traditional text. Let's take a closer look at these manuscripts to see what they are.

1. The Papyrus Fragments are small pieces of papyrus, which is a type of paper made from the papyrus plant which grows in Egypt. This paper is very brittle, and crumbles easily when handled. Most of these fragments are broken pieces with a few verses on them. The oldest existing manuscripts are these papyrus fragments, or papyri. These manuscripts date from the second century (100-200) A. D., to the seventh century (600-700). Frequently the earliest papyri support the distinctive Traditional readings. These Traditional readings caused a problem for those who hold to the Critical text, providing a strong witness for the early existence of the Traditional text. One of the oldest, the fragment called P66, which dates to the second century (100-200) A. D., gives strong support for the Traditional text in over 25% of its readings, thus destroying the theory of the proponents of the Critical text that states the Traditional text did not originate until the mid- fourth century (350 A. D.). However, care should be taken not to overstate the evidence of the papyri as they will often side with the Critical text against the Traditional text.

2. The Uncials are Greek manuscripts that are written in all capital letters. These uncials or majuscules as they are sometimes called have no punctuation or spaces between the letters. As of this writing there are 274 uncials dating from between the third century (200-300 A. D.) to the tenth century (900-1000 A. D.). Over 85% of the readings from these uncials follow the Traditional text.

3. The Cursives, sometimes called **minuscules**, are Greek manuscripts written in what we would call "longhand", or cursive

writing. During the ninth century (800-900 A. D.) the scribes who were responsible for the copying of the New Testament abandoned the uncial (all capital letters) script in favor of the small-lettered cursive (minuscule) script. There are about 2800 of these cursive manuscripts, and the overwhelming majority of these (90%) side with the Traditional text.

The textual implication of this change of writing style has often been overlooked in the textual debate. Jakob van Braggen says: **"It is assumed that after this transliteration process the majuscule was taken out of circulation.... The import of this datum has not been taken into account enough in the present New Testament textual criticism, for it implies, that just the oldest, best, and most customary manuscripts come to us in the new uniform (cursive style)."** (From "The Ancient Text of the New Testament", pages 26, 27; as cited in "The Identity of the New Testament Text," Wilbur Pickering, Nelson Publishing Company, 1980, page 131.)

It seems only logical and reasonable to understand that the scribes of the ninth century would be in a better position to decide on what constitutes the "oldest and best" manuscripts than the textual critics of the twentieth century! Why, during this period of change-over from the uncial to cursive style, did the scribes decisively reject the Critical text in favor of the Traditional text, if they did not realize the Traditional text represented the best readings available. It becomes obvious to any honest researcher that the scribes of the ninth century knew the Traditional text was the inspired, inerrant, preserved text of the New Testament Scriptures!

4. The Lectionaries. The word lection means "to read," and the Lectionaries were portions of Scripture that were read in the churches on certain days. Of the 2,143 Lectionaries, every one attests to the Traditional text. 100% of the evidence from the Lectionaries supports the Traditional text as being the text used by the early churches. What about the other texts of the New Testament? It is generally agreed among textual critics that accept the "critical" viewpoint that there are four basic types of texts represented in the manuscript evidence.

However, upon closer careful examination, we find that the evidence for the existence of these so-called "text types" is very thin, if not non-existent! Although J. A. Hort claimed the results of his genealogical evidence proved to an absolute certainty that the manuscripts could be grouped into four basic "families" or "types," it is now clear to the careful researcher that Mr. Hort's "results" were either wishful thinking at best, or pure fabrication at worst.

How could there be a "result" if his method for gathering of genealogical evidence was never applied to the manuscripts? Yet, Hort's "results" have been accepted as fact by many of the so-called textual scholars of today, without the slightest thought being given to his rules of evidence, and the non-application of those rules to the manuscripts! M. M. Parvis, in his article "The Nature and Task of New Testament Textual Criticism," ("The Journal of Religion," XXXII, 1952, Page 173) states. "We have

reconstructed text-types and families and sub-families and in so doing have created things that never before existed on earth or in heaven. We have assumed that manuscripts reproduced themselves according to the Mendelian law. But when we have found that a particular manuscript would not fit into any of our nicely constructed schemes, we have thrown up our hands and said that it contained a 'mixed text'."

Bruce Metzger (no friend to the Traditional text) stated in his book "Chapters in the History of New Testament Textual Criticism," (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1963, page 67) the "Caesarean" text-type is disintegrating. By this he did not mean the material upon which the text was written was crumbling, but rather, the concept of a "Caesarean text-type" was itself now largely understood to have been a false assumption. He went on to ask: "Was there a fundamental flaw in the previous investigation which tolerated so erroneous a grouping?" The evidence says there is indeed a fundamental flaw in the theory concerning the existence of "text-types." Those men who have done the most extensive collating of manuscripts, as a rule, have not accepted the idea of such groups or families.

Let's look at the so-called "text-types" themselves and see what we can discover:

1. The Western Text is now generally agreed, even among the proponents of the Critical Text, to have been the result of the over-active imagination of Hermann von Soden, and did not, in fact, ever exist.

2. The Caesarean Text, as we have already seen, is now understood to have been based on less than ideal scholarship.

3. The Alexandrian Text. E. C. Colwell, in his article entitled "The Significance of Grouping of New Testament Manuscripts," (New Testament Studies IV," 1957-1958, pages 86, 88) stated, "After a careful study of all alleged Beta Text-type (Alexandrian) witnesses in the first chapter of Mark, six Greek manuscripts emerged as primary witnesses: Aleph, B, L, 33, 892, and 2427. Therefore, the weaker Beta manuscripts C, delta, 157, 517, 579, 1241, and 1342 were set aside. Then on the basis of the six primary witnesses an "average," or mean, text was reconstructed including all the readings supported by the majority of the primary witnesses. Even on this restricted basis the amount of variation recorded in the apparatus was dismaying. In this first chapter, each of the six witnesses differed from the "average" Beta Text-type as follows: L, nineteen times (Westcott and Hort twenty-one times); Aleph, twenty-six times; 2427, thirty-two times; 33, thirty-three times; B, thirty-four times; and 892, forty-one times. These results show convincingly any attempt to reconstruct an archetype of the Beta text-type on a quantitative basis is doomed to failure. The text thus reconstructed is not reconstructed but constructed; it is an artificial entity that never existed."

So then we now see that it is generally agreed, even among those who hold to the Critical text position, that the so-called "text-types" were (1) the result of over-active imaginations, (2)

the result of very poor scholarship, and (3) the result of constructing an artificial entity that never existed!

There are only two types of texts - the correct text, and the corrupt text!

The overwhelming majority of the evidence indicates the **correct text** is best represented by the **Traditional text** that has been preserved by God, **and all others represent the corrupt, heretical text that has been decimated by the attacks of Satan and his unbelieving hoards.**

The Guardians of the New Testament.

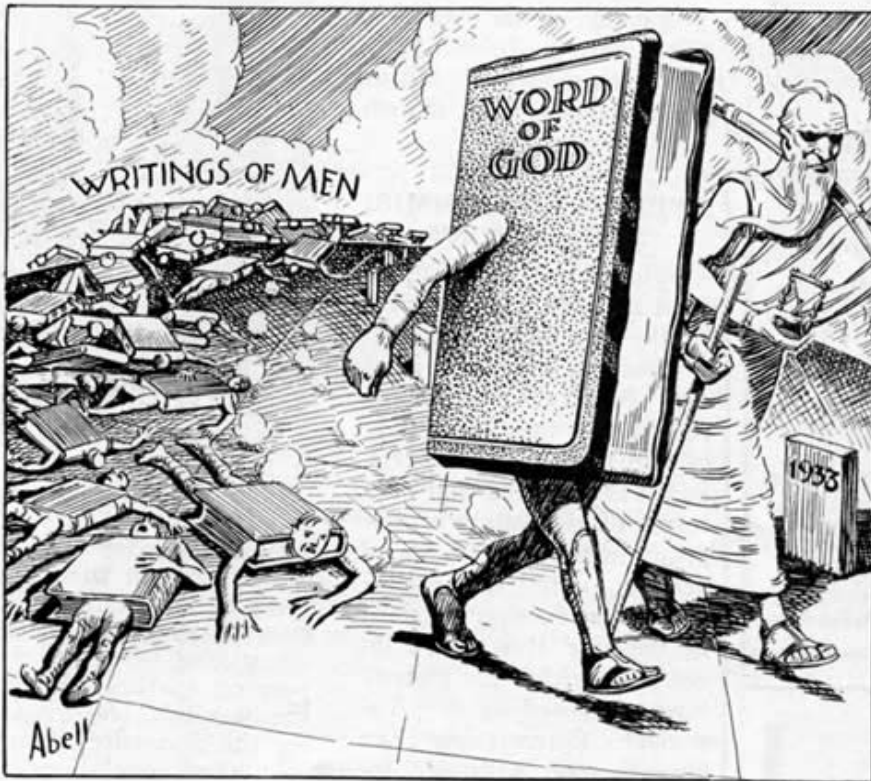
Just as God appointed the Jews to be the guardians of the Old Testament, so also He has appointed guardians of the New Testament. In I Timothy 3:14, 15, the Bible says, "***These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth***", and in John 17:17, the Lord Jesus Christ identifies what exactly that truth is - "***Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth.***"

The Bible clearly teaches that the local church is the pillar and ground of the truth, and that the truth is the Word of God. Therefore, the local church is the pillar and ground, the guardian, of the Word of God, the Bible. Unfortunately, in this modern age when even so-called fundamentalists have adopted the methodology of the New Evangelicals, and do not practice the primacy of the local church, the God-given guardianship of the Bible has passed by default to the so-called scholars in the Colleges and Seminaries that are not under the authority of the local church, or the leader of the local church, the God-called, God-gifted, and God-ordained pastor!

These men may be members of a good local church, but their work done in the schools is not under their pastor's authority and control, and these so-called scholars have usurped the responsibility and authority away from the God-ordained repository of the truth of His Word, the local church. When we look at the gifts that the Lord has given to the local church for the work of the ministry and the edifying of the body of Christ, we see in Ephesians 4:11-12, "***And he gave some, apostles; and some prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.***"

There are a couple of things I would like to point out here.

First, the gifts of these specially equipped men is given to the local church, for the work of the local church ministry, and for the building up of the local church. Nowhere is the so-called para-church organization, or College, or Seminary mentioned, and nowhere is the "Scholar" mentioned as a specially equipped man who has been given the guardianship of the oracles of God! Second, when you read the description of the last specially gifted man who is given to the local church for its benefit, you will see that man is called a pastor/teacher. There is no semicolon between



The Word of God shall stand forever—Isaiah 40:8

pastor and teacher, as there is between all of the other titles, because it is all one gift, vested in one man. Therefore the scholars may not usurp the title “teacher” in this context unless they are also bearers of the title and office of pastor. I am of the opinion that we must guard very carefully the office and title of pastor. I have heard camp directors and nursing home chaplains referred to as “pastor” so-and-so.

A pastor is a pastor only if he is the shepherd of a flock of born-again, baptized believers, organized, and assembled together, having the ordinances, and officers of a true New Testament Church. In reference to that term “scholar”, don't get me wrong, I have no problem with scholarly thinking. The men that I studied under, Dr. Richard V. Clearwaters, and Dr. George W. Dollar were, and still are, two of the most scholarly men who have ever lived. Dr. Dollar is, in my opinion, the worlds foremost expert on Church History, especially as it pertains to fundamentalism in America. However, both of these good and Godly men also held the office of pastor. Dr. Clearwaters was pastor of Fourth Baptist Church in Minneapolis for over forty years, and Dr. Dollar was co-pastor of that same great church during his entire tenure at Central Baptist Seminary. The “scholar” that I am referring to is the man who does not hold the

office of pastor, but usurps the duties of that office, and often looks down upon the mere pastor from the lofty heights of academia, thanking God he is not like other men, such as this lowly pastor! Getting back to our subject, we see that the preponderance of the evidence clearly points to the antiquity and superiority of the Traditional Hebrew and Greek texts. These Traditional texts are the only texts that have been in uninterrupted use from the time of the close of the canon of Scripture (about 100 A. D.) until the present, thus fulfilling the requirement of being “preserved” for every generation.

Why is it, then, that so many otherwise good pastors do not take the Traditional text position?

I believe there are two reasons for this.

The first is ignorance. Many pastors have been educated in the Critical text position in Bible College and Seminary, and almost every College and

Seminary in the country has been infected with the Modernist position that the Scriptures are somehow less than God says they are. Almost every school today has bowed the knee to a Modernistic Baal in the area of Manuscript Evidence, and joined hands with the enemy of our souls in his attempt to continue asking his lying question “***Yea, hath God said?***”

These deceived men have accepted all that they have been taught as if it were the Gospel itself. They may have heard of the other position, but have not given it any serious thought, nor have they investigated for themselves to find the truth. They have put their faith in their College and Seminary professors, and that is that! The second reason is less wide spread, but much worse. There are men who are aware of the other position, and even have much of the evidence available to them, but because of their pig-headed stubbornness and sinful pride they are incapable of admitting that they may have been wrong. There are none so blind as they who will not see. So, we may conclude, based upon the evidence, that any translation, in order to be a correct and accurate rendering of the inspired words of God must be based on the Traditional texts of the Old and New Testament, which brings me to my next point.

- continued next week

NURSERY MINISTRY WORKERS FOR THIS WEEK

10:50 a.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Kristi Hooper
 Cradle Roll 2: Andrea Hooper
 Lord's Supper Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Vicki Martin
 Cradle Roll 2: LeAnna White
 Wed. Evening Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Charity Crawford
 Cradle Roll 2: LeAnna White

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

Week of May 8, 2011

Sunday School ----- 22
 Sunday Morning Service ----- 48
 Sunday Evening Service ----- 26
 Wed. Evening, 05/11/11 Service ----- 15

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

Week of May 8, 2010

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 1,247.38
 Insurance Fund ----- \$ 27.00
Total Received for Week of 05/08/11: \$ 1,274.38

**Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed
 to operate the church EACH WEEK,
 as a minimum = \$ 1,400.00**

INSURANCE FUND REPORT FOR MAY:

Monthly Requirement ----- \$ 273.08
 Amount Received thusfar during May, 2011 ----- \$ 27.00
Amount Needed by June 5, 2011: \$ 246.08

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. **Admit that you are a sinner.**
2. **Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.**
3. **Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.**
4. **You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).**
5. **By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.**

Please Remember To Be Faithful to Give!



As with everything else, the costs of keeping a church going never go down - they always go **up**. Bills wait for no one, and churches are no exception to this. An extra, sacrificial gift today by everyone present would go a long way...

We encourage all of our membership to practice obedience to God by being faithful every payday to give back to Him His tithe (10%). *If every family in our church would practice this one simple discipline, we would never have weeks where we have to put off paying some bills until the following week!*

Everything is expensive, especially for a small church like ours, but ours is a BIG God, and He LOVES to bless His children when they are obedient to Him!

If you are already a tither, we thank you, and encourage you to also give offerings as well. If you're currently not tithing, won't you please start **today - OK?** Thank you.

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Todd W. White ----- Pastor
 Mickie Shatwell ----- Pianist
 Dickie Eberle ----- Greeter, Custodian
 Larry Mathews, Caryn Quinnelly, Todd W. White ----- S.S. Teachers
 Larry & Mary Byars, Brian & Charity Crawford,
 Dwayne English, Lou & Vicki Martin ----- Outreach
 Flowers ----- Hannah and Shirley White