

God's Holy Word The King James Bible

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February 27, 2020

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Chapter One

God's Holy Word

Of all the subjects there are to study there is none as essential to one's faith as the study of God's Word itself. For without God's Word, there would be no faith, as Romans 10.17 states:

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God".

The Bible is therefore essential for our faith, and how we perceive the Bible will affect our Christian growth and walk for the rest of our lives. So, let's dive right in.

The Bible consists of sixty-six books; thirty-nine in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New Testament. In those books, there are 1,189 chapters, 31,101 verses, and 628,652 words. All of this is considered in respect to the King James or Authorized version.

The Word Bible comes from the Greek word *biblion* which means a scroll or a little book. The word Testament comes from the Greek word *diatheke* (gk) which is translated covenant or agreement; it is a compound word that literally means:

dia - through

theke- a box

Thus, Christ came through the box, or the Ark of the Covenant, in which was contained the tablets of the law. Hence, Christ came to fulfill the law not to abolish it (Matthew 5.17).

There were more than thirty-five penmen who wrote the books of the Bible. Yet, there was only one author: God. The term penmen differs from the word author because an author thought of and seeks to convey his thoughts and principles in written form. In the case of the Bible, God has revealed Himself and His principles to

us in written form through the Bible. God used more than thirty-five different penmen, those who actually penned the letters, words and sentences to write it all down. This is referred to as inspiration and will be discussed in the next chapter.

The Old Testament was primarily written in Hebrew except for parts of Ezra, about six chapters of Daniel, one verse in Jeremiah, and two words in Genesis which were written in Aramaic. The New Testament was written in Koina Greek, the common language of the people. Later, when the common language of the people became Latin the Bible was translated into what is commonly called the Latin Vulgate and has now been translated into many different languages. In some languages though it has been translated many conflicting times.

The modern chapter and verse divisions first appeared in the Latin Vulgate (1555 AD) and in the English Geneva Bible (1560). Keep in mind that the Bible was originally written by hand in the form of letters without any divisions. Our modern divisions help us find parts of the text quickly but often interfere with the context of the message. Try to avoid the tendency to partition the text for it will often make more sense when it is kept together.

When the Bible was translated, there were occasions when words had to be added to the text in order to make the language more understandable. In many translations, there is no way for the average individual to identify these additions. However, the translators of the Authorized King James Version were very careful to place these additions in *italics* for easy identification.

Since our Bible was originally divided into numerous different books, when and how were they brought together? Basically, both the Old and New Testaments went through a process we call canonization; they were carefully scrutinized and tested to ensure that they were indeed God's Word before they were accepted into what we now call our Bible. Since the Old Testament was handed down to us, for the most part intact, we will focus in on the New Testament.

The first New Testament books to be assembled were the Epistles of Paul. Peter indicated that this collection had at least begun when he wrote:

*"And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, **as they do also the other Scriptures**, unto their own destruction." (2 Pet 3.15-16).*

This initial collection is known to have been completed by the beginning of the 2nd century (c. 100-150 AD). The exact date of the collection of the four Gospels is not known, but they were collected prior to 170 AD for this is when Tatian made his harmony of the Gospels. Before 200 AD the epistles of Paul, the Gospels, Acts, 1 Peter and 1 John were recognized as Scripture throughout Christianity. It was Tertullian who first applied the name New Testament to this collection of Apostolic writings. By the fourth century, few Christians questioned the right of the remaining books to be recognized as Holy Writ.

There were many other works that tried to make their way into the New Testament canon, but by the fourth century, the twenty-seven books we now have were, and have been, the only ones recognized by the Church. All others have been rejected.

Chapter Two

The Testimony of God

Often we leave out the most compelling and enlightening evidence of the purity of God's Word. What is this overwhelming evidence? It is the very Word of God itself. So, let's focus for a few minutes on what the Bible claims about Scripture.

First and foremost, we must understand the importance of a proper understanding, or perspective, of God's Word. Our stand on God's Word is so very important because it is the very source of our FAITH; as Romans 10.17 reveals:

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God".

If this Scripture is correct, then there can be no faith apart from God's Word. No wonder Peter wrote:

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby:" (1 Peter 2.2).

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Pet 1.20-21).

The first thing that a new Christian must grapple with is the fact that the Bible is indeed God's Word, and should be regarded as a final authority in every decision that he or she must make. The problem is that the churches of our day do such an effective job at convincing them that they really cannot trust this Bible at all, and these new born babes in Christ go without the nourishment they need in order to grow into the healthy Christians God wants them to be.

So, how can a new Christian know without a doubt that this Bible really is God's Word, final in its content, inerrant in its text, inspired in its writing, and fully able to be trusted down to its last letter? The most compelling reason is given in its very text.

God gave His Word to mankind through a process called in the Bible inspiration; this is declared in 2 Timothy 3.16,17:

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works".

The Greek word for inspired is *theopneustos* (gk) which is a compound word that literally means God inspired. It finds its root in the Greek word *pneo* (gk) meaning to breathe. Thus, we find that as the penmen were writing the Bible, God was breathing His Word out to them through the Holy Spirit. This pictures a boss dictating a letter to his secretary.

Some scholars fervently object to the idea of dictation when it comes to the Word of God. They say the individual styles of the different penmen is apparent in their writings, something that would not exist if dictation was involved. However, God is greater than a boss in that God knew the writing styles of each penman when He selected them. Therefore, it is possible and probable that God incorporated their writing styles in His text when He breathed it out to them.

Another Scripture that speaks of the way the Scriptures were given is 2 Peter 1.21, which states:

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost".

The Greek word for moved here is *pherumenoι* (gk) meaning to move or to bear or carry. It has been described by some scholars as a nautical term used to speak of a sailing ship at sea that has lost its helm, and though it is still afloat and still sailing, it is subject to the winds and currents for its actual direction. Thus, God moved the penmen of His Word to write as He desired that they write. It expresses that the Holy Spirit actually carried or moved the penmen of the Bible as they wrote so that, in essence, one could easily state that God wrote through them. Thus, God Himself claims this Bible to be His Holy Word.

This is all well and fine, but how do we know that what we have is indeed God's Word? How do we know that man has not changed or corrupted it? As far as the preservation of God's Word is concerned, He has said:

"For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven" (Ps 119.89).

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the Word of God shall stand forever" (Isa 40.8).

Jesus said "For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt 5.18).

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt 24.35).

"But the Word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the Word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pet 1.25).

How much clearer could God be. He intended for His Word to last throughout the ages. Now there are some that would say, "Sure He did, but then man got his hands on the document and man has corrupted God's Word." And my reply is simple: yes, man has indeed tried to corrupt God's Word in his attempts to make it better (many translations), however, God has kept His Word (the Greek Textus Receptus) pure through the ages and will continue to keep His Word pure.

There are only a few questions that need to be answered to prove this point. Is God able to keep His Word, if He desires to do so? Well, of course God is able; if He wasn't He wouldn't be God. And then, does God desire to keep His Word pure? According to the Scriptures given above, not only does He desire to keep His Word, but He literally promises to keep His Word perfect for every generation and into eternity.

Consider for a moment, if you will, that there has always been God's Word, and then there has been Satan's mutilation of God's Word. They have always coexisted, and will coexist until God finally judges this world we live in. Satan in the garden of Eden tempted Eve with a mutilation of God's Word. When Jesus was in the wilderness to be tempted, Satan tempted Him with the mutilation of God's Word. So, why are we so slow to recognize that Satan even now tempts us with his mutilation of God's Word. Don't be ignorant of our enemy, and his crafty works. Realize what the testimony of history is and what the testimony of God's Word is and react accordingly.

Chapter Three

Many Manuscripts

In respect to God's Word, the Holy Bible, there is no controversy as predominate as that surrounding the many versions of the Bible. Some claim that there is no inerrant, authoritative Word of God in the English language while others claim that there is indeed a Word of God providentially, omni-potently kept by God's divine influence and will. Others will use the words infallible and inerrant to describe God's Word, yet, when pressed, will have to admit that they are only speaking of the original autographs and will say that we do not have an accurate copy of those autographs today. I disagree! God said He would keep His Word, and I am convinced that He indeed has.

It will be the scope of the remainder of this text to diligently study the facts surrounding this controversy. This study, due to a lack of space and time, will not attempt to discuss all of the different versions in circulation today, but will focus on those that appear to be the most widely used at this time: the King James (Authorized) Bible, and the New International Version. For the sake of this study, we will focus primarily on the New Testament text with occasional comments on the Old Testament. For a more in-depth study of this subject, a book list will be included at the end of this study.

At the very core, or heart, of this subject there is the controversy over the available manuscripts that exist today. According to Prof. Kurt Aland, “Only **3 Unicals** (A 01, A 02, C 04) and **56 minuscules** (or 57, if 205^{abs} is counted separately) contain the whole of the New Testament.”¹ There are 3,112 manuscripts that survive today; most of them are fragmentary. Of these, there are 81 papyrus manuscripts, 267 majuscules (written in capital letters), and 2,764 minuscules (written in small letters). Of these manuscripts, 97 percent of them agree with the Greek text used to translate the King James Bible. Keep in mind that these numbers may be approximate. Of these manuscripts, approximately 3,000 are classified as Byzantine Texts, of which texts the Textus Receptus has been compiled.

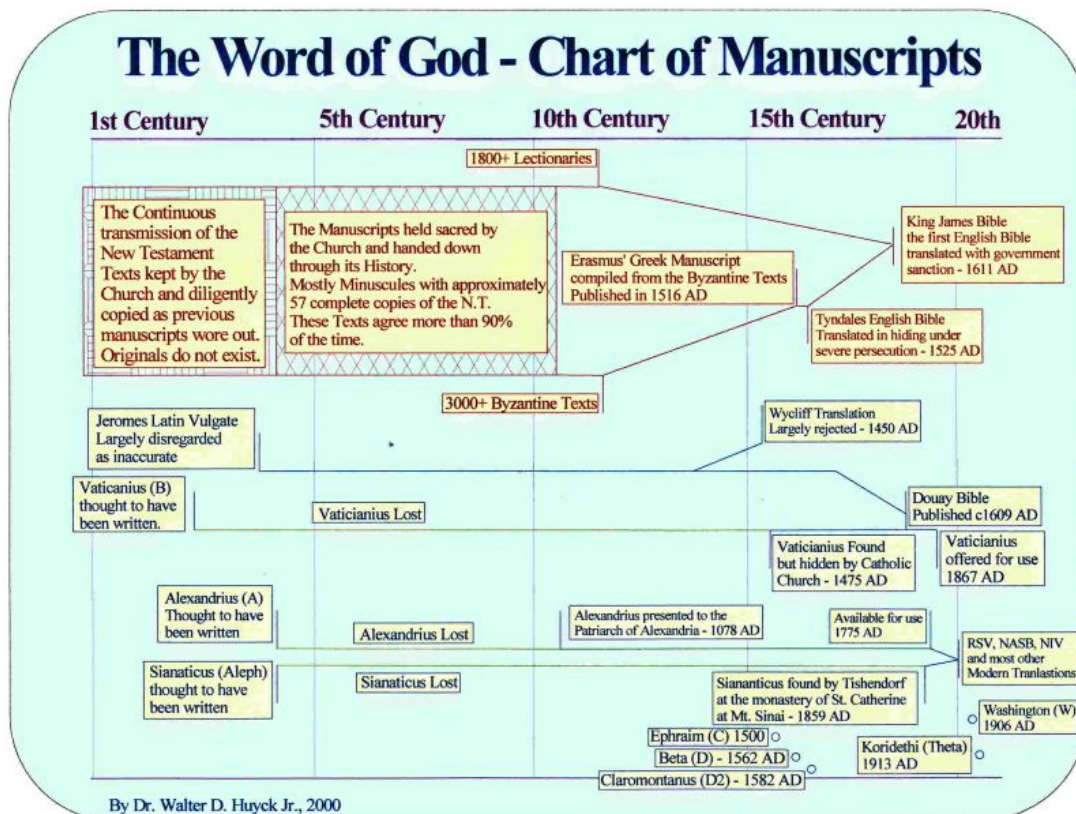
Of the manuscripts, other than those considered Byzantine, there are only three that are considered nearly complete and approximately eight to twelve partial manuscripts available. The Codex Vaticanus was written in approximately the 4th century and kept in the Vatican Library at Rome. Its first historical record was in 1475, and where it came from is not known. The Vatican had not allowed anyone outside of the Roman Church to even view the text until the near recent past (c. 1867). The Codex Sinaiticus was discovered by Tischendorf in 1859 at the Monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai. It was given to the Czar of Russia and then sold to a British Museum in 1933. It is said to have been written in the late 4th century. The Codex Alexandrinus was written in approximately the first part of the 5th century and was given to the King of England in 1627 by Cyril Lucar. Since 1775 it has been kept in a British Museum. An interesting aspect of these non-Byzantine texts is that **they almost never agree with one another.**

There is one other text that has been at the center of the scholarly debate since the debate began. It is called the Textus Receptus, but it is sometimes referred to as the Received Text, The Traditional Text, or the Majority Text. It is not a single Greek manuscript but is a compilation of the many texts that were available to the Church throughout its history. A large portion of this text is referred to as the Byzantine Text due to the fact that it was compiled from those manuscripts that survived the Byzantine period. Edward Hills dates this period between 312 and 1453 AD.² These texts are recognized as the only texts to have existed with the Church throughout its history and remain **available to the Churches today.** Of the Byzantine Texts, there are Fifty-Seven complete New Testament copies.³ Some of these manuscripts are said to be as old as the 4th or 5th century. One important aspect of the Byzantine manuscripts is that **they almost always agree** and where one manuscript may become obscure, there are a multitude that fully agree and give an accurate, supportive witness to the original text.

The Textus Receptus is the result of the diligent work of Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536), Robert Stephanus (1503-1559), John Calvin (1509-1564), Theodore Beza (1519-1605), and the Elzevir Family (c. 1600-1640). The second edition of the Greek New Testament published by the Elzevir family in 1633 was the first to use the term Textus Receptus in its preface.⁴ While there were various editions of this Greek New Testament throughout its compilation, the variations between these editions were minimal and could virtually be listed on two pages of this text, which is astounding when considered in light of the entire New Testament.

It is important at this point for Christians to realize that the three oldest manuscripts available to the Church today **have not always been available to the Church.** As a matter of historical fact, any one of these manuscripts were not available until 1475

AD at the earliest, but we know that the Roman Church did not allow access to their text. The next to it was not available, according to the historical record, until 1627 AD. However, the texts that compose the Majority Text were **always available and accepted by the Church**. Also, keep in mind that what are often called the oldest manuscripts available only out-date the Majority Text by less than one hundred years.



Textual Criticism

So, the question arises: when did the dispute over the manuscripts actually begin, and how did it start? All the way up to the mid 1800's the Majority Text was accepted as the undisputed Word of God by our Church fathers. In 1881, the New Testament in the Original Greek appeared in England. These volumes were the result of almost thirty years worth of work by two men: Brooke Foss Wescott and Fenton John Anthony Hort. The volumes represented what these two men thought was the most accurate and reliable New Testament text available. Their text was radically different from anything the Church had seen before. It departed from the manuscripts that had been accepted by the Church throughout its history and used the oldest and most

neglected manuscripts as its source: the Alexandrius and the Sinaiticus. Keep in mind that while these two texts are the oldest available to the Church, as far as the supposed date of their authorship is concerned, they also fell into oblivion in respect to the Church for over 1200 years. They were not made available to the Church for use until the 17th and 18th centuries (1600-1700 AD).

Wescott and Hort used as their primary argument that the Bible is like any other antiquated text and should be treated in its translation like any other ancient text. Thus, they pushed aside every other text (98% of the texts now available) and used what they considered to be the most reliable: the very oldest texts. Miller notes, "Such are the views of Westcott and Hort. Rejecting the great mass of authorities, they relied upon a relatively small group of early uncials and versions, with a few later manuscripts which have the same type of texts."⁵ Miller goes on to note that other scholars argued "That the 5 or 6 ancient manuscripts [used by Westcott and Hort] are in perpetual disagreement."⁶ Hence, Wescott and Hort pushed aside 98% of the existing manuscripts that agreed with each other 90 to 95% of the time in their content, to use 5 or 6 manuscripts that seemed to rarely agree with each other.

This would be like standing in a court of law under trial. When the witnesses are marched in, 100 in all, ninety-five of them almost agree word for word in their testimony, and only five have different stories that do not even agree with each other. The prosecutor argues that the five disagreeing witnesses should be trusted more than the other 95 for some incomprehensible reason. Who would you believe? Who would you hope the jury and judge would believe?

The difference here is that in the case of New Testament Manuscripts, there are over 3,000 texts represented in the form of the Textus Receptus. These texts almost always agree, of which there are 57 complete copies of the New Testament. These are placed in the balance with no more than six manuscripts, recently discovered, that rarely agree. These six are referred to in modern scholarship as the eclectic texts or the best texts.

Keep in mind that when the translators of our modern versions and editors of our study Bibles use the term eclectic to describe the manuscript they used, they are saying that they used the very best text available in their opinion. In almost every case, that indicates that they are pushing aside 98% of the manuscripts available and are classifying a couple of very old texts that were not available to the Church as a whole until 1600 or 1700 AD and almost never agree with each other as the very best. As a matter of fact, this modern theory pushes aside all but maybe three manuscripts that for all practical purposes never agree with each other. This was the view of Wescott and Hort and is the view that is being taught in most of our seminaries today.

Is The Oldest Best

So, the question arises: is the oldest really the best and should Scripture be treated like any other antiquated text? In their view, Wescott and Hort failed to recognize that Holy Writ is not the same as any other antiquated document and should not necessarily be treated the same. If one were to take almost any other ancient text and were to compare it to Scripture, here is how they would stack up:

- The History of Thucydides (c 400 B.C.) eight manuscripts available dated 900 AD, 1300 years after he wrote.
- Aristotle (c 343 BC) five manuscripts available, the earliest copy is dated 1100 AD, 1400 years after he wrote.
- Caesar's history on the Gallic Wars (c 58-50 BC) Ten manuscripts available, the earliest is dated 1000 years after his death.

Of our Bible, we literally have thousands of manuscripts and lectionaries available. This presents an overwhelming testimony to its veracity. But what about this idea of the oldest being the best or the Bible being just like any other ancient text? Consider that not one of these other ancient texts claims to be God's Holy Word, and none of them even attempt to instruct individuals in the basic principles of life and personal conduct. However, the most compelling argument against this modern textual criticism is that the largest majority of the texts available for the Bible claim a continuous, unbroken transmission through the hands of the Church throughout its history. This is the Majority Text. Only a small fraction of the texts available, while they claim to be the oldest, were hidden from mankind for better than a thousand years and now have reappeared to challenge the sacred Scriptures so essential to our faith.

Modern Translations

So, how do these Greek manuscripts affect our modern translations? Only three English translations utilized the Majority Text in their translation: The King James (Authorized) Bible, the Revised Standard Version and the American Standard Version. Two of these have been rejected through the process of time, though they are

still found in use in some very remote places: the Revised Standard Version and the American Standard Version. All of our most recent and most highly acclaimed translations have abandoned the Majority Text completely for **one of the three older manuscripts**, claiming them to be the best. It is interesting to note that for the Old Testament, they claim to leave the traditional texts for the texts commonly called the Dead Sea Scrolls. The problem is that the Dead Sea Scrolls do not in any way oppose the traditional Old Testament texts, yet there are changes that have been made.

Now, there are those who would claim that even though there are changes from one text to another, that those changes do not damage or hinder any of the major doctrines of the Church. This is indeed a ridiculous claim and, in a latter chapter, will be examined in brief detail. The fact is that God has promised to keep His Word for us, and our faith stands wholly upon His Holy Word; any change injects question into its reliability and attempts to destroy the foundation of one's faith.

The truth of the manuscripts is commonly unknown to the average Church member, and the true heart of the conflict is even less realized. It is the common acclamation of the proponents of these newer versions that there is **no inerrant Word of God**. They make comments like "the Scriptures are not inerrant in context, but are inerrant in spirit." They claim that since there are no original autographs remaining, that it would be ridiculous to think that man would not have corrupted the text.

However, there are some basic problems with their view. First, if there is no authoritative, inerrant Word of God available today, then where does one find his or her faith? Perhaps their definition of faith is not a Scriptural one. Next, if the manuscripts that have been found in recent years are more accurate than those of our forefathers, then the Church of our forefathers could not have had an authoritative Word. So, how could they find the overwhelming faith to bring this Church through the dark ages?

It becomes apparent that there are some compelling facts that challenge the modern study of Greek Manuscripts:

- The tendency today is to follow the example of Wescott and Hort which was to abandon the thousands of manuscripts, especially the fifty-seven complete copies of the Greek New Testament, for what they have classified as the oldest and best manuscripts (at the most 6).
- The Manuscripts supported by modern thinking actually outdate the oldest Byzantine Texts by no more than one century. Less than one hundred years. Hardly the vast difference that is inferred in many seminaries today.

- While the manuscripts classified as the most reliable by most textual critics today almost never agree, there are fifty-seven complete Byzantine Manuscripts, with the more than 2,700 fragments, and more than 1,800 Lectionaries that support them with almost complete agreement. **This support lends itself to only the Received Text.**
- The Traditional teaching in seminaries today lends itself more to the ability of man to corrupt God's Word and less to God's ability to preserve his Word. Almighty God is by far greater and more capable than mankind.

While this author realizes that the King James (Authorized) Bible is a translations itself, he also realizes that God is able to providentially keep His Word for the sake of His beloved Church. Our God is able and, even more importantly, has promised to keep His Word until the very day of His return. Having considered the historical facts that surround the various manuscripts, I am convinced that the Received Text is an accurate and providentially preserved copy of the original autographs. God has kept His Word, and we have a trustworthy Bible to place our faith upon.

Chapter Four

The Authorized Bible

The Translators

The King James Version was completed and issued in 1611 AD. It was translated in two and one-half years by fifty-four of the best scholars of their day. Forty-seven names have been preserved, and their credentials are uncontested. These scholars were divided into six companies: two in Westminster, two in Cambridge, and two in Oxford.

Advocates of the modern versions often assume that they are the product of scholarship far superior to that of the translators of the King James Version of 1611, but this assumption is not supported by the facts. The learned men who labored on our English Bible were men of exceptional ability, . . . To them it was "God's sacred Truth" and it demanded the exercise of their utmost care and fidelity in its translation.¹

Each company was given a section of Scripture to translate, and then sent their work to the other companies for evaluation and suggestions. After the Bible was completed, it then passed under the scrutiny of six to twelve of the leading scholars for revision.

As far as their materials were concerned, there was:

*A regulation providing that when an earlier English version-Tyndale's, Coverdale's, Matthew's, the Great Bible, or the Geneva Bible-agreed better than did the Bishop's Bible with the text, that version was to be followed. But in fact, besides these earlier English versions, the translators had before them a great many other versions, including, for instance, Luther's and Zwingli's German translations, Italian and Spanish translations, the Latin Vulgate, and several other Latin versions, **And besides the best Hebrew and Greek manuscripts available**, which provided the basis for the undertaking, the translators also used the Syriac New Testament and the Aramaic Targums. In respect of both equipment and method, therefore, the translation was made according to the highest standard of scholarship and the most advanced knowledge of the day.²*

All this was written of the authorized version by an author extremely hostile to the result of the text; even the foes of the authorized version, in honesty, must acknowledge the ability and resources of the translators.

The Scholarship

In order to understand the scholarship available to the authorized version, we must understand the scholars who translated it. Of these scholars we first approach Lancelot Andrews, Dean of Westminster he is attributed as being "*one of the foremost figures in the history of the English church. . . . an extremely accurate and painstaking scholar, the master of fifteen languages*"³. Of his linguistic capabilities, "*one of his contemporaries once declared he might have been 'Interpreter General at Babel'*"⁴. He represented the first group at Westminster. This group consisted of John Overall, Adrian Saravia, Richard Clarke, John Layfield, William (Richard) Tighe, Francis Burleigh, Geoffrey King, Richard Thompson and William Bedwell.

Of the members of this first group, it is interesting to note that Saravia was not a native Englishman; "*his value to the company of which he was a member lay less in his ability to turn the Bible into English than in his general linguistic skill, for which he was famous*"⁵. Bedwell is attributed with being the Father of Arabic studies in England. This first group was tasked with the Old Testament from Genesis to Kings.

The second company at Cambridge, assigned with the Old Testament from Chronicles to the Song of Solomon, consisted of Edward Liveley, John Richardson, Lawrence Chaderton, Francis Dillingham, Thomas Harrison, Rodger Andrews, Robert Spalding, and Andrew Byng: eight in all. All are attested to be Cambridge men.

Of this group, Edward Lively died in 1605 during the preliminaries of the translation; Spalding succeeded him. Chatterton was a puritan and the first head of Emmanuel College; it is said that he lived to the age of 103 in an amazing state of health, not even needing the use of spectacles to read his Greek New Testament. Dillingham was a Greek scholar and even debated in Greek, against the customs of the day. Harrison was another known Puritan, and Rodger Andrews was the brother of Lancelot.

The third company was responsible for translating the remainder of the Old Testament and met in Oxford. It consisted of John Harding, John Reynolds, Thomas Holland, Richard Kilbye, Miles Smith, Richard Brett, and Richard Fairclowe: seven in all. Reynolds, an extreme Calvinist, was probably responsible for the inspiration of the whole project when he commented on the need for a version acceptable to all parties. Reynolds never saw the end result of the project for he died in 1607 at the age of fifty-

eight. Holland also died soon after the translation was completed. Miles Smith was a Puritan and authored the translator's preface for the work.

The fourth company was entrusted with the translation of the Gospels, Acts, and the Revelation of John. It met at Oxford and consisted of Thomas Ravis, George Abbot, Richard Edes, Giles Thompson, Henry Saville, John Perin, Ralph Ravens, and John Harmer. When some of this company's members resigned, they were replaced with Leonard Hutton, and finally James Montague. Edes died in 1604 as did Ravis in 1609 after becoming the Archbishop of Canterbury. Thomson was a royal chaplain of the Most Noble Order of the Garter and is said to have been extremely diligent in translating the text. Abbot was attributed with being greatly responsible with the union of the English and Scottish churches. Savile was a Greek tutor to Queen Elizabeth and had established quite a reputation as a Greek Scholar.

The fifth company, tasked with translating the remainder of the New Testament, met at Westminster and consisted of William Barlow, Ralph Hutchinson, John Spencer, Roger Fenton, Michael Rabbett, Thomas Sanderdon, and William Dakins: seven in all. Barlow was the Bishop of Lincoln.

Although the Apocrypha is not contained as a part of the authorized version, the whole sixth company was tasked with its translation. This company met at Cambridge and consisted of John Duport, William Brainthwaite, Jeremiah Radcliffe, Samuel Ward, Andrews Downes, John Boys, and William Ward. Of these John Bois is reportedly the most extraordinary. He could read the Hebrew Bible at the age of six, and write the Hebrew alphabet with elegance when he was just a boy; he not only worked with the sixth company but also assisted the second and worked on the general revision.

After its completion, the resulting text is given this testimony:

The designation 'Authorized Version' does less than justice to the kind of authority this version did, indeed, eventually command, which springing rather from the fact that it gradually made its own way as a book whose excellence was admitted on all sides.⁶

Publication

Thus, the authorized version was issued in 1611. However, not without minor printing errors, even in the first two editions. The demand was so great for the new translation that even the largest printing office had trouble keeping up. These printing

errors were the cause of many editions which contained revisions designed to correct these errors; however, the text has for the largest part remained true to the original translation. In 1762, Thomas Paris prepared an edition that *"showed evidence of such diligent correction of the text, emendation and regularization of the text, that it came to be known as the Standard edition"*⁷. It is interesting, at this point, to notice that many would have a tendency to question which version of the Authorized Version one reads where, in reality, there are not different versions of this translation: only corrections for printing errors, and then emendation and regularization in 1762. Emendation and regularization was the act of preparing the text for American publication. The original 1611 old English version did not contain certain vowels that are present in our American English. There was also the fact that different publishers spelled the same word in different ways and that was all regularized for the sake of uniformity. Therefore, the text was emended and regularized for the sake of American readers. It is important to note that, in this process, no words were changed; their spelling was simply updated for the sake of the American readers.

Another fact that is often neglected when considering the translation of the Authorized Version is that these translators were not only amazing in their abilities, but their preparation was just as incredible. These men used the available and accepted Greek, Latin, and other materials commonly used in translational work. This was not simply a bunch of theological graduates coming together with a few years of study under their belts. **These men were veterans of the Word of God** not just in the language of their day, but in the languages of the available texts of their day.

This document does not have enough room or time to do these great men of God due justice. It supplies only a taste of the weight of their ability for the task they accomplished. After surveying these men and their credentials, it is this author's opinion that God indeed rose these men up for the sole purpose of translating God's Word into English, and by God's hand He has indeed kept His Word intact for us today: a standard for our faith.

As amazing as it may seem in our day, an American edition of this Bible was issued in 1782 after it had received congressional endorsement. Of the grandeur of the Authorized Version we have this testimony:

*Though men knew it was a translation . . . But such was the power of the Authorized Version that generations of English-speaking men and women have not even asked the question. To them it was as if God had spoken in English. Could the learned men who toiled over the technicalities of their task have foreseen the full fruit of their undertaking, they might well have exclaimed with the psalmist: 'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory.'*⁸

Chapter Five

The Other Versions

The primary focus of this chapter is to deal with some of the differences between the Authorized (Majority Text) Bible and most of our newer translations, which abandoned the majority of texts for the sake of a couple of older texts. For the purposes of this study, we will focus in on the New International Version in comparison to the Authorized Bible, since this is the most accepted translation of our day.

Most of these newer translations claim to have followed a similar approach in their translational process as that of the King James Bible. However, while their process seems to have been forth-coming and honest, there are some omitted facts that ominously hang over their translation as a mysterious cloud of secrecy. For example, the Authorized Bible was translated through the process of committees. Of these committees, an overwhelming amount of information is available. We know who was on each committee, we know each of these men's credentials, we know where the committees met and how often. We know the circumstances of each committees debate over their translational process. We know these things because everything was done publicly.

In comparison, the New International Version (NIV) claims to have been translated by a corps of scholars of various denominations brought together from around the world. However, no one can seem to name even one of these scholars. Who were they? What were their credentials? We don't know how many teams of scholars were used in the translational process. We don't know what translational process was used. Nothing appeared to be done publicly, so no one can scrutinize the actual debating process that was used. In the preface of the NIV itself, there is not even a clear indication of which manuscripts were used in the process of the translation; it just states that an eclectic text was used. By the way of reminder, eclectic simply means the best. But the best in whose opinion?

The questions go on and on. There is no doubt about the mystery that shrouds the NIV and almost every other modern translation available today. The New King James Version is deceptive to its very core. Its very name seems to imply that it finds its roots in the same text as the King James (Authorized) Bible. However, the fact is that its translators also abandoned the Majority Text and used the older Alexandrian Text. It is not an updated Authorized Version; it is a new translation from beginning to end.

Textual Changes

Let's consider some of the changes in the actual text that have been made. Keep in mind that the changes permeate the whole of the text, so, for the sake of this study, we will only address a few:

Consider 1 John 5.6-8. The NIV literally drops out the whole of verse seven and places it in a footnote with a disclaimer to the effect that this verse was not in the oldest manuscripts. Any scholar knows the controversy of this verse and also knows that the Church fathers found it credible and therefore endorsed it as Scripture. To drop this verse is a direct attack on the Godhead. For the average reader, the missing verse will never be noticed. They will read the passage in the NIV and never realize that one of the strongest verses lending support to the trinity is not even in their text.

Another series of Scripture that is directly attacked is that of Mark 16.9-20. While the passage is still displayed, there is a prominent note attached to the text which states "The most reliable early manuscripts and other ancient witnesses do not have Mark 16.9-20", which attacks the credibility of the passage. Some of the other modern versions just drop this passage altogether. This brings us to another viable and unanswered question: what are these other ancient witnesses? It should raise a question in your mind when a modern scholar will drop a whole passage of scripture on the authority of two manuscripts when there are fifty-seven complete New Testament manuscripts that present the passage in almost complete agreement.

Consider the passages that pertain to our Lord's prayer Matthew 6.9-15 and Luke 11. 2-4; there are dramatic changes to the text at this point. Other omissions and changes are numerous and often undetectable. For instance compare the differences in the following verses:

Matt 17.21; 23.14; Mark 7.16; 9.44-46; 11.26; 15.28; Luke 17.36; 23.17; John 5.4; Acts 8.37; 15.34; Rom 16.24.

These are just a few examples of textual corruption. Actually, the differences are in almost every passage throughout the Bible. If one were honestly interested in finding the differences, one could literally find and catalogue the differences in every passage.

Which Bible

One of the common lines that is heard among Church members these days is that they only read the newer translations because they have trouble understanding the King James (Authorized) Bible. Many even go as far as to say that they base their faith on the King James Bible and only used the newer versions for clarity, yet, they are almost never found carrying the King James (Authorized) Bible.

Just what is the importance of this whole debate? Could it possibly affect my beliefs? Won't the Holy Spirit keep me from going astray? Consider these facts. First, God has indeed promised to keep His Word until His coming; therefore, we know that God's Word is available. Since the beginning of time, Satan has challenged God's Word with a corrupt approximation of God's Word. When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, Satan tempted Him with Scripture (Matt 4.1-11). Eve was tempted with a corruption of God's Word all the way back in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3.1-5). Don't be deceived my friend; Satan has always presented a corruption of God's Word to this world, to this Church and even to God Himself in an attempt to misguide God's chosen people and to challenge God's purposes and plans.

According to Romans 10.17, your faith, the very foundation of your Christianity, hinges on God's Holy Word. That being the case, God would not allow His Word to be corrupted. God is greater than mankind and Satan and has indeed providentially kept His Word pure and trustworthy for your sake. If there are two books that both claim to be God's Word and they both say something different, even if its is only one Word that is different, then one of them must be wrong, and God is always right. Seek, find and trust only God's Word. Your Christianity hangs in the balance for the importance you place in God's Word will indeed manifest itself in your Christian walk and life for years to come.

Some would accuse me of just being too closed-minded and hard-lined. I am convinced that we have an accurate copy of the original manuscripts. It is presented in the "Received Text" of the Greek New Testament. God raised up over forty-eight amazing men to translate His Word into our language. Is it the ultimate translation of God's Word? The fact is that no translation could be as accurate as the original manuscript; hence, the answer must be no. However, the King James Version is the best possible English translation. Our modern scholars are sincere in their efforts, but

we must acknowledge that they just are not as qualified as those scholars that translated the King James Bible. It is equally as obvious that the materials being used are not as worthy as the texts that the Church has always possessed.

Translational Methods

Almost all modern translations use a translational method that is distinctly different than that followed by the translators of the King James Bible. The King James translators sought to translate the Bible **literally and word for word** from the original Greek language. They were so meticulous in their approach that when they had to add a word in order to present a grammatically proper sentence, they placed those added words in *italics* so the reader could readily identify the added words. **No other translation** follows this same meticulous method.

While some modern translations seek to be literal in their translation, many depart from a word-for-word format. The NIV seeks to translate the Bible at the level of the thought of a context. Hence, some sentences only remotely resemble the original Greek text. Other translations are paraphrases, like the living Bible and the Message, which endeavor to present the message of a whole passage as it is perceived in the minds of the translators. Whole pages of the Bible will remotely resemble the original Greek text in these cases.

While the intention of these translations seem noble, their result is very anti-theological. Why? Because God was clear about the level of integrity that should be maintained in regard to His written Word. Consider these passages:

Revelation 22:18-19 ¹⁸ *For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If **any man shall add unto these things**, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: ¹⁹ And if any man shall **take away from the words** of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

Deuteronomy 4:2 *Ye shall not add unto **the word** which I command you, neither shall ye **diminish ought from** it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.*

Matthew 5:18 *For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, **one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass** from the law, till all be fulfilled.*

It is apparent that God intended for every word in His revealed Word to remain intact. Jesus took the level of integrity in God's Word to the level of a cross on a "t" or the dot on an "i". God wanted His Word persevered with meticulous integrity. This extreme attention to detail has been the witness of Jewish scribes throughout the History of Israel. The transmission of God's Word was of the highest regard for Jewish scribes. They were meticulous that no error, not even the slightest one, would find its way into the Biblical text.

Why is this level of detail so important? **First**, Because the interpretation of God's Word is the work of the Holy Spirit within the heart of each individual believer. It is the Holy Spirit that reveals the deep things of God within us (1 Cor 2. 9-16). No other human being can enlighten the Word of God for us as dynamically as the Holy Spirit can. When one man, or a committee of men, presume to impose their opinions of the Word of God upon us by rewriting the Word of God, then they rob their readers of the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit.

Second, the Word of God consists of multiple levels of spiritual impact upon its readers. There is the **Milk of the Word**, and then there is the **Meat of the Word** (Heb 5.12-23). When any translator presumes that he or she can convey the thought presented by a particular scripture, are they conveying the milk or meat of the Word? For any mere mortal to think that they can convey both the milk and the meat of the Word in a single thought as effectively as Almighty-God must reveal the highest kind of pride and presumption.

It seems very clear that the only real means of translating the Word of God into any other language must be literal and word-for-word with clear indications of any mortal additions. This is what the King James translators did. Anything else should not be regarded as the Word of God and should not be referred to as the Bible. Instead, these should be identified as what they are: mere commentaries about the Bible. Unfortunately, in our day, this is not the case; they are presented and sold as the Word of God.

I look at the new translations as nothing more than your average commentary. Some of them are very corrupt and unreliable. Others are more trustworthy. I often wonder why faithful and sincere Christians would trust their spiritual well being to some commentary about God's Word, treating it as though it is God's Word while it is literally dropping verses and passages from its text. The translators place notes in the margin informing the reader of their omissions, but how many average readers really read the margins and footnotes in their Bibles? If you are truly interested in reading God's Word, then I will refer you to the Received Text in Greek and its most accurate translation in English, the King James Bible.

Conclusion

Therefore, having studied the inspiration, transmission and preservation of the Word of God. The conclusions drawn from this study are best presented in the following statements:

- The Bible is God's Word. It was written by God through those men He wrote through (penmen).
- The Bible has been providentially preserved by God in Greek manuscripts and is accurately presented in the Textus Receptus, which was compiled of those Greek resources that have always been available to God's People.
- The Bible was meticulously and literally translated into English in the King James Version, word-for-word, at a level of integrity that no other modern translation presents.
- The resources used by the translators, the attitude of the translators concerning God's Word and their skill in the various languages of the translational process are all important for the translation of God's Word. All of which are measurable and accountable in the translational process of the King James Bible.
- It is up to each individual as a Christian to diligently consider the various versions of the Bible and choose for themselves what they will hold and use as God's Revelation. This is a most important decision, affecting one's spiritual growth and well-being, that should not be lightly decided.

What is your choice?

Endnotes

All Scripture references are quoted from the Authorized Version.

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SUGGESTED READING MATERIALS

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