



How Did We Get *the* Bible?

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PREFACE

As I type these words, I consider how many things have changed since the last lectureship. Our beloved sister Irene Taylor has just recently passed away, and she will be dearly missed. She spoke to ladies many times on this lectureship, and she was a blessing to all who knew her. I am also writing this from Florida, as we have moved closer to family.

While many things are changing, many things are still the same. My love for the church of Christ at Nesbit remains the same, God's Word remains the same, and God Himself remains the same. We all still have the same hope of being together forever in Heaven, and we thank God for this and all blessings.

This year's theme is an excellent one, and Trey Bledsoe deserves credit for this idea and for actually assembling the lectureship books this year. This theme is one that seems to be rarely studied or discussed, and we hope this material will be informative and assuring regarding the Bible we know and love today.

Jason Hilburn
Editor

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Original Scriptures and Manuscript Copies

Keith A. Mosher, Sr.

INTRODUCTION:

1. The basic problem for students as to the autographs (the original manuscripts, of which none exist today) and the understanding of the worth of the Bible is that of approach.
 - A. Is the text just a human product?
 - B. The disadvantage of treating the text as a mere human product is that such an approach denies what the Bible says about itself.
2. It is the case that only the biblical religion has survived from that ancient period, and those who deny that the Bible came from a higher source than man need to account for the latter fact.
3. The autographs were verbally inspired of God (2 Tim. 3:16; KJV).

DISCUSSION:

I. THE AUTOGRAPHS WERE VERBALLY INSPIRED BY GOD.*

- A. Please note Romans 10:17 and the term, "word."
- B. Then note Ephesians 6:17 and the term, "word."
 1. The term, "word," is "rama" in both of the above verses.
 2. The Greek word, "rama," according to Bauer, has the sense of "teaching or divine understanding" or contextually, "prophecy" (735). In other words, "rama" is an inspired idea, and God's Word is inspired or *breathed out* by Him (2 Tim. 3:16).
 3. God's "breathed out" Word is the only message that can save man (Rom. 10:17) and is the only message that the Holy Spirit uses to convert man (Eph. 6:17).
- C. The apostle Peter insisted that all of the Old Testament was given by inspiration of God (2 Pet. 1:20-21).
- D. The same apostle, Peter, further stated that his writings in the New Testament were as inspired as the writings of the Old Testament prophets (2 Pet. 3:2).
- E. Further, the apostle Paul rated the Old Testament passages of Deuteronomy 24:14 and Leviticus 19:13 and the New Testament passages of Matthew 10:10 and Luke 10:7 as *scripture* which is the technical term for inspired writings (1 Tim. 5:18).

* By verbal inspiration is meant that God used the individual vocabularies of the writers of both the Old and New Testaments so that the resulting message conveyed the style of the writer while at the same time the text God intended was

penned. No error was allowed in the autograph or original and every word was God's message (cf. 2 Sam. 23:2 and Isa. 55:11).

II. DO THE "AUTOGRAPHS" (ORIGINALS) EXIST TODAY?

- A. "It is important to note that there are no original manuscripts, or *autographa*, of either the Old Testament or the New" (Wegner 165).
1. Any existing manuscripts discovered since the Old Testament and the New Testament were written, extant today, are copies of earlier ones.
 2. "The word, *manuscript*, derives from a Latin word meaning 'that which is written by hand,' and until the invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century all books were copied by hand" (Wegner 165).
 3. Several factors have contributed to the disappearance of the original manuscripts or autographs.
 - a. The materials used then were subject to decay when aging (papyrus or leather).
 - b. Wars, persecutions, and captivities of the Jews impeded preservation of materials.
 - c. The rabbis, because of reverence for the scrolls, buried the worn-out ones.
 - d. Many of the prophets were hated and their works destroyed (cf. Jer. 36 and Jehoiakim).
- B. Why did God not preserve the originals?
1. Geisler and Nix wrote: "Just why God did not see fit to preserve the autographs is unknown, although man's tendency to worship religious relics is certainly a possible determining factor (2 Kings 18:4)" (43).
 2. Geisler and Nix added: "It seems more likely that God did not preserve the originals so that no one could tamper with them. It is practically impossible for anyone to make changes in thousands of existing copies. The result has proved to be profitable insofar as it has occasioned the very worthwhile study of textual criticism" (43-44).
 - a. Textual criticism is a science whose practitioners seek to discover all the original readings from the plethora of materials containing Bible verses.
 - b. Less than one-tenth of the originals are, today, left uncertain as to the accuracy of the text. "Even when the accuracy of a reading in the original *text* (sic.) cannot be known with 100 percent accuracy, it is possible to be 100 percent certain of the *truth* (sic.) preserved in the texts that survive" (Geisler and Nix 44).

- C. It is necessary to note here that because of the accuracy of the scribal efforts, the *credibility* of the Old Testament texts is easily defended.
1. There were three scribal periods: Pre-Talmudic, Talmudic, and Masoretic that extended from about 500 B.C. until A.D. 1450 and the invention of the printing press.
 2. Scribes, copiers of the scrolls, had to follow stringent rules when making a new copy.
 - a. They had to count every letter; make sure a scroll ended at exactly the right place; use special ink; dress a certain way; remain silent while copying; and never erase; etcetera.
 - b. In fact, when copying the Torah (Pentateuch or first five books of the Old Testament), if the writing came up short on the final “page” that scroll was destroyed and the scribe started all over again.
- D. Early New Testament manuscripts were written in all large letters without separation of words or paragraphs. These are called *uncials* and about 85 papyrus fragments exist dating from the second to the eighth centuries A.D. However, there are about 245 uncials on parchment or vellum (leather), some of which are whole Bibles and they date from the third to the eleventh centuries (Geisler and Nix 387).
- E. Later scrolls and codices (book formed Bibles) in *cursive* or *miniscule* writing number about 2,745 and they date from the fourth to the fourteenth centuries (Ibid.).
- F. There are also about 2,147 *lectionaries* that are similar to church bulletins and contain a myriad of Bible verses the textual critic uses to check the scrolls for accuracy. These lectionaries date from the ninth to the fourteenth centuries (Ibid.).
- G. The total number of New Testament manuscripts thus numbers about 5,366 and this makes the case for the *credibility* of the New Testament.
- H. Textual critics also have at their disposal about 36,000 New Testament verses contained in the writings of the “church fathers” from the second to the fourth centuries that also add to their abilities to discover the autographs (Mosher 366). {Those “church fathers” quoted from a text similar to the one used to develop the King James revision* of A.D. 1611 (Ibid.)

* Some definitions are needed here as a background to the types of translations made from the ancient manuscripts. A translation is a rendering from one language to another and, technically, a Bible is not a *version* if it were not translated from the original languages. The American Standard of 1901 is, therefore, a version, but the King James of 1611 is actually a *revision* of Tyndale’s Bible which, itself, was a revision of the Latin Vulgate. A *recension* is the description given to a Bible when it is a product of the critical and systematic

revising of the original Greek based upon all new discoveries. A *paraphrase* is not Bible, but is a commentary and the two most famous are Kenneth Taylor's Living Bible Paraphrased and J.B. Phillip's New Testament.

III. EXTERNAL PRIMARY SOURCES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT TEXT ARE FEW IN NUMBER.

- A. The earliest fragments of the Old Testament text are some silver amulets discovered by a Gabriel Barky in 1985 in a grave near St. Andrew's Church of Scotland and they bear a copy of Numbers 6:22-27 from the Masoretic text (Wegner 185). The text is dated to the mid-seventh century B.C. (Ibid.).
- B. The Samaritan Pentateuch copies from about 200 B.C. represent a text used by Jesus (Luke 4).
- C. The Dead Sea scrolls, discovered in 1947, represent the Hebrew language text of every Old Testament book except for Esther and trace the text back to 250 B.C.
- D. There are some Hebrew language texts dating to about A.D. 1000, the most complete of which is the Cairo Codex.
- E. The Septuagint, a Greek language Old Testament, exists in copies and the Bible Jesus used was this text. The Septuagint is represented in the Codex Vaticanus, which text extant dates from the fourth century A.D. and also in the Codex Sinaiticus, also from the fourth century A.D.
- F. Some Aramaic commentaries (Targums) and Hebrew commentaries (Midrashes) also exist in copies, as well as do a number of fragments of texts and translations, even from some eras before the time of Christ.

IV. TRANSLATION THEORIES ARE, GENERALLY, EITHER WESTCOTT-HORT OR TEXTUS RECEPTUS IN NATURE.

- A. Westcott-Hort theorists believe that only the earliest manuscripts or uncials should be regarded as the sources for translation efforts.
 - 1. Modern versions of the Bible, for the most part, are based on the above theory.
 - 2. The earlier manuscripts form the basis of the present Greek critical text rather than the so-called *Received Text* used as the authority of earlier translations.
- B. The *Received Text* follows a Greek translation by Erasmus and his fifth edition of that work and was the basis for the New Testament work for the 1611 King James Version.
- C. The 1901 American Standard Version follows the Westcott-Hort theory in the New Testament. Both of the foregoing Bibles used the Hebrew language Old Testament and not the Septuagint for their translating efforts.

D. Modern versions generally follow the Westcott-Hort theory of text transmission.

CONCLUSION:

1. The Scriptures are “God-breathed” (2 Tim. 3:16).
2. There are no “autographs” of the Scriptures, but the credibility of the existing texts (if translated correctly) is proven by scribal accuracy and manuscript evidence.

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Early Translations: Greek and Latin

Don Walker

Unless you read from a Hebrew or Greek Bible as a native speaker, our topic is significant to you. It is important, because you need a translation. Even if you were reading from a Greek Testament this morning, as a Christian, translation is important for your evangelistic efforts. You are not going to run into very many people who speak Hebrew and Greek.

I know we each have our own interests and concerns. This is a topic that may interest some and have no appeal at all to others. Languages may not be your forte. However, having an accessible copy of God's Word should be very important to all of us. Thus, there is a strong and even an urgent need for translations.

THESIS: To consider the need for translations and examine more closely the Greek and Latin translations of the Bible to discover their import in the plan of God.

INTRODUCTION:

1. In starting we must give some consideration to the original documents.
 - A. The Old Testament was written primarily in the Semitic language of Hebrew, with sections of Ezra and Daniel being written in another Semitic language - Aramaic.
 - B. The New Testament was written in the Koine Greek.
 - 1) The Koine Greek is now a dead language and not susceptible to change as are other languages that are still being used.
 - C. The original manuscripts were written by men who were inspired by God.
 - 1) "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" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).
 - 2) "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor. 2:13).
 - 3) "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the 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 1:19-21).
 - D. Your average member will deal predominately, if not exclusively, with a translation of God's Word.
 - 1) Even Gospel preachers will spend much of their time in translations of God's Word.

- 2) Those translations probably will not be Greek or Latin.
2. The need for translations is not a new need.
- A. By the Intertestamental Period, for Jews living across the Middle East and Mediterranean Basin, Greek was the common language.
 - 1) Because Jews were using Greek daily the decision was made to translate the Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures) into Greek.
 - B. Concerning the New Testament, the mandate to “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations” (Matt. 28:19), or as Mark recorded, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15), obviously presented and continues to present challenges.
 - 1) First, there would be a need for additional handwritten copies of the Greek New Testament.
 - a. But, as God’s command was obeyed, there would be occasions arise where Greek was not the common language.
 - i. Heaven, from the very beginning of the Christian age recognized the challenges a diversity in language would present.
 - 2) There were several languages into which the Greek New Testament was translated.
 - a. Syriac was an early language (late 2nd/early 3rd c.).
 - b. Latin (Likely by late 2nd c. the Latin texts were in circulation in North Africa) was another of the early translations, the most well-known translation of which would be the Vulgate.
 - c. The Coptic, Gothic, Armenian, Georgian and the Ethiopic were translations that made their appearance as the years rolled by.

THESIS: In the context of translations, we will consider both Greek and Latin translations and their significance to the Word of God.

DISCUSSION:

I. GREEK TRANSLATIONS

- A. Brother Johnny Ramsey, while teaching on the topic of “Between the Testament” would speak of three important ‘S’s - The Scattering, Synagogues and the Septuagint Version.
 1. This would serve two needs.
 - a. It would give those Jews, who were not well versed in Hebrew, access to their Scripture or Law.
 - b. It would also allow an impartial hearing from the Greek speaking Gentiles.
 - c. Having the Old Testament in their own language would remove a dependency upon the Jews concerning their examination of the Law.
 - d. The prejudice of the Jews against Christianity would not be a factor in the Greeks searching the Scriptures.
- B. Concerning the Septuagint version, we read, “The translation is not only the earliest but also one of the most valuable of ancient biblical versions” (Metzger, 13).

1. Metzger went on to mention concerning its general fidelity to the original, its influence on the Jews, its relationship to the Greek New Testament, and its place in the New Testament church, the Septuagint is preeminent in the study of Scriptures.

C. The Septuagint

1. Septuagint is a traditional term which is from the Latin and means "seventy".
2. The Roman Numeral LXX is used as an abbreviation. It is called this because there were 72 scholars who translated this version and therefore it was rounded to 70.
 - a. The *Letter to Aristeas* (a pseudepigraphal letter) said there were 72 scholars who completed the translation in 72 days.
3. The *Letter to Aristeas* spoke of the Septuagint.
 - a. It stated that King Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt (285-246 B.C.) wanted to assemble the great books for all over the known world.
 - b. His librarian, Demetrius, "informed him that the Jewish law was indeed worthy to be placed in his library, but it would have to be translated into Greek" (Wegner, 195).
 - c. The letter's details have been questioned, however, by scholars.
 - d. The letter stated that an Egyptian delegation was sent to Eleazer, the High Priest, to make him aware of the plan.
 - e. R. W. Klein explained the exaggerations that developed.
4. The LXX had a great influence on both Jews and Gentiles.
5. It soon became the standard form of the Old Testament, especially for the Christians.
 - a. With such a reception among the Christians, there came rejection and condemnation from the Jews.
6. Christians used it extensively.
 - a. Even the inspired writers quoted from the LXX.
7. With the Jewish rejection of the LXX came a need for the Old Testament Scriptures in the language of the dispersion (the Greek language).
 - a. There were other Greek translations that were used by the Hebrews in their debates with the Christians.
 - a. Aquila provided a very literal Greek translation.
 - b. Theodotion's translation fell "midway between Aquila and the literary elegance of Symmachus and is based on earlier Greek translations" (Wegner 199).
 - c. Symmachus produced his translation sometime after Aquila and Thodotion.

II. LATIN TRANSLATIONS

- A. Augustine made a statement that helped us recognize the strength and even weakness in the ancient translations.
 1. "For the translations of the Scriptures from Hebrew into Greek can be counted, but the Latin translators are out of all number. For in the early days of the faith every man who happened to get his hands upon a Greek manuscript, and who thought he had any knowledge, were it ever so

little, of the two languages, ventured upon the work of translation” (Brumback).

2. **Michael Gorman** cautions, “[A] little knowledge of Hebrew or Greek can be dangerous....” (Gorman, Michael, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis*, 39).
- B. Thus, when we approach the Latin translations, we can hopefully see the challenge facing us, a challenge that is not as great for the Greek translations.
- C. You may have heard of the **Vulgate**, a Latin translation of the Bible made by Jerome ca. A.D. 400.
 1. In that translation Jerome gave many of the theological terms and phrases that became the basis of church use and teaching not only in the Romance languages, but it is also present in English today.
 2. This work by Jerome was commissioned by the Roman bishop Damasus in A.D. 383 because of the need for a standard, high quality Latin translation (*Brumback*).
 - a. The need was present because of the shifting to the Latin language.
- D. However, there “grew a welter of diverse Latin translations. Among them three types or families of texts gradually developed; Cyprian (d. 258) represents the African text, Irenaeus (ca. 130-ca. 200) of southern Gaul represents the European, and Augustine (d. 430) the Italian. Characteristic of each family are certain rendering; for example, as a translation of the Greek word *phos* (“light”), the African family prefers *lumen*, the European *lux*; for the Greek *dokimazo*, the African prefers *clarificare*, the European *glorificare* (Metzger, 31).
 1. It was these circumstances that led to Pope Damasus urging Jerome, the most learned Christian Scholar of his day to produce the **Vulgate**.

CONCLUSION:

1. Translations: the term conjures up visions of debates concerning the KJV, ASV, RSV or NIV.
 - A. Even now there is a plethora of versions – NKJV, NRSV, NASV or ESV.
 - B. It is a significant debate, to say the least.
 - 1) Good translations are a must if we want to see the full plan of God as God intends for it to be seen.
 - C. But it is not a new topic.
 - 1) Translations have been a topic of debate all the way back before the New Testament came on the scene.
 - 2) We, as Christians, can be thankful for the productions of both Greek translations and Latin translations.
 - 3) They have played a significant role in assisting in the study of Scripture and the spread of the gospel.
 - 4) For this we can be grateful.

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Translations Before The King James Version

Chris Butler

INTRODUCTION:

1. Language has been a barrier in many ways since God “confounded their language” at the tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1-9).
2. The many languages spoken in the first century created a unique challenge for preaching the Gospel.
 - a. On the day of Pentecost the language barrier was overcome by the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit, who enabled men to speak with “other tongues” or languages (Acts 2).
 - b. This gift was, no doubt, a necessity within the early church.
3. As we know, the Bible was originally written in Hebrew, Greek and small portions in Aramaic (Boyd).
4. Translations are just a necessary part of Biblical history.
 - a. They started early on.
 - b. One of the earliest being the Septuagint version or the LXX, which was a Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament.
5. “With the changing of nations and cultures across the centuries, these original writings have been translated many times to make the Bible available in different languages” (Youngblood 197).
6. “The chain ‘from God to us’ takes on a new dimension at this point, as the general transmission of the text in the original languages and early translations gives way to the particular transmission of the text in the English language. Before this may be traced, however, it is necessary to sketch the background of the English language and the Biblical text therein” (Geisler & Nix 539).
7. “The battle for vernacular scripture, the right of a nation to have the sacred writings in its own tongue, was fought and won in England” (ISBE).

DISCUSSION:

I. The Old English Partial Versions (c. 450-c. 1100).

- A. “In the earliest days of English Christianity the only known bible was the Latin Vulgate, made by Jerome between A.D. 383 and 405. This could only be read by the clergy and by monks, who alone were familiar with the language” (Zondervan 117).
- B. “Among these, the Old English versions are of special interest. Most of these versions consisted of only parts of the Bible, and even these had limited circulation. In this period few of the people of ancient England could read. Many of the familiar

- stories of the bible were turned into verse and set to music so they could be sung and memorized” (Youngblood 200).
- C. James Boyd points out that “Before translations, the stories of the Bible were presented in pictures, wall paintings, carvings, songs and poems” (MSOP 67).
- D. Caedmon (d. c. 680).
1. He is called the “unlettered poet of Whitby” (Youngblood 200).
 2. He is credited with producing a “metrical version” of some of the stories of the Bible (Zondervan 117).
 3. Geisler and Nix state, “other paraphrases and poems sung by Caedmon included the full story of Genesis, the story of Israel’s exodus, the incarnation, passion, resurrection and ascension of the Lord, the coming of the Holy Spirit, the apostles’ teaching, and so on” (Geisler & Nix 544).
 4. While his works were not translations, they certainly “paved the way for such” (ISBE).
 5. Lightfoot states, “Although these verses were not really translations, they mark the first known attempt to put the Bible accounts in the native Anglo-Saxon” (Lightfoot 96).
 6. “Though Caedmon's poems are loose in their structure as being the rhythmic paraphrase of an oral version, and though they, in the course of transmission, have been altered and injured both in alliteration and sense, they are to be commended in their purpose, for they sprang from an earnest desire to impart sacred knowledge in a popular and memorable form” (Eadie Kindle Locations 378-381).
- E. Aldhelm (640-709).
1. Aldhelm was the first bishop of Sherborne in Dorset.
 2. He is responsible for the “first straightforward translation of portions of the Bible into English”
 3. “The portion of scripture translated was the book of Psalms” (Lightfoot 96).
- F. Egbert (fl. c. 700).
1. He was of Northumbria and became the Archbishop of York.
 2. He “was the first to translate the gospels into English” (Geisler & Nix 545).
- G. Bede (674-735).
1. “The Venerable Bede was one of the greatest scholars of all Europe, and undoubtedly the greatest in England” (Geisler & Nix 545).

2. Another writes of him that, he was “the most learned man of his day in Western Europe” (Youngblood 200).
 3. He is the “author of the famous *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*” (Zondervan 117).
 4. “He also translated the fourth gospel, probably to supplement the other three, which were done by Egbert” (Geisler & Nix 545).
 5. “Tradition relates that he was suffering much in his final days, but that he compelled his scribe to take dictation until the very last verse was translated” (Geisler & Nix 545).
- H. Alfred the Great (849-901).
1. He was “king of England and a scholar of first rank” (Geisler & Nix 545).
 2. He is responsible for a translation of “Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History* from Latin into Anglo-Saxon” (Ibid).
 3. He also translated the “Ten Commandments, extracts from Exodus 21-23, Act 15:23-29 and a negative form of the Golden Rule” (Ibid).
 4. “He published a code of laws that was introduced by an Old English translation of the Ten Commandments and other brief passages from the Bible” (Youngblood 200).
 5. “It was largely a result of his efforts that the religious life of Britain, which had nearly become extinct, experienced a revival” (Geisler & Nix 545).
 6. “Toward the close of the ninth century King Alfred led his people in a religious reform that resulted in a translation of the Psalms and other sections of scripture” (Lightfoot 96)
 7. "Religious life had nearly died out; but it revived under him, and his patriotic valour kept his kingdom from relapsing into Pagan darkness and savagism through the inroads of the Danes, who were characteristically called the "heathen men," – as wild followers of Odin, as Hengist and Horsa, and the early Saxon invaders” (Eadie Kindle Locations 440-442).
- I. Aldred (fl. c. 950).
1. “Some of the earliest Old English versions of scripture were written between the lines of Latin-language manuscripts.”
 2. It was Aldred that introduced a new concept in this time.

3. He produced an “interlinear ‘gloss’ in the Northumbrian dialect between the lines of a late seventh century Latin copy of the Gospels” (Geisler & Nix 545).
 4. This is referred to as the “Lindisfarne Gospels” (Youngblood 200).
- J. “The Norman conquest in 1066 brought about many changes in England. Chief among these was a modification of the language, now known as Middle English” (Lightfoot 97).
1. “For nearly three centuries after the Norman conquest of 1066 the uncertain conditions of the language prevented any real literary progress, but some manuscripts survive of translations of parts of the Bible into Anglo-Norman French” (Zondervan 117).
 2. “It was not until the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries before parts of the Bible were put in English, and here the names of William of Shoreham and Richard Rolle stand out. It was their work on the Psalms in the first half of the fourteenth century that planted the seed of a struggle which was to last for two centuries in putting the Bible into the hands of the common people” (Lightfoot).

II. Middle English Partial Versions (c. 1100-c. 1400).

- A. Orm or Ormin (fl. c. 1200).
1. He was an “Augustinian Monk” (Zondervan 118).
 2. He produced a “poetical version of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles called the Ormulum” (Ibid).
 3. “This work, called the Ormulum, is preserved in only one manuscript, possible the autograph, of some 20,000 lines. Although the vocabulary is purely Teutonic, the cadence and syntax show evidence of Norman influence” (Geisler & Nix 546).
 4. “Orm states his own justification of his version as he writes, “if any one wants to know why I have one this deed, I have done it so that all young Christian folk may depend upon the Gospel only, and may follow with all their might it’s holy teaching, in thought, in word and deed” (Ibid).
- B. William of Shoreham (c. 1320).
1. He “has often been credited with producing the first prose translation of a Bible portion into a southern dialect of English (c. 1320)” (Ibid).

2. "Prior to the fourteenth century no complete book of Scripture had been literally translated into English" (Ibid).
- C. Richard Rolle (c. 1320-1340).
1. He was "responsible for the second of these literal translations into English" (Ibid).
 2. He like all others at this point "made his literal translations into North English dialect from the Latin Vulgate" (Ibid).
 3. Eadie states of Rolle, "often called the Hermit of Hampole. He seems to have been a recluse of the Order of St. Augustine, and he died in 1349 in the odour of sanctity." According to Baber, "his life was devotion, and his amusement study" (Eadie Kindle locations 853-855).
- D. "From the first half of the 14th century there survive two prose translations of the Psalter, done in two different dialects; and from the end of the 14th century, a version of the principal NT epistles, apparently made, however, not for the use of the common people, but for monks and nuns" (Zondervan 118).
- E. "There was no thought as yet of providing ordinary layfolk with the Bible in their own tongue. It was Wycliffe who first entertained this revolutionary idea. And it was Wycliffe who first made the whole Bible available in English" (Ibid.).

III. Middle English and Early Modern English.

- A. "Whereas there were no complete Bibles in the English language prior to the fourteenth century, there were several indications that such an enterprise would be forthcoming" (Geisler & Nix 547).
- B. Geisler and Nix state the following as indications:
1. "Among those indications were the attempts at translating the Psalter literally"
 2. "The wide circulation of those early translations"
 3. "The fact that the language of the rulers and the ruled was rapidly becoming fused"
 4. "The recently completed Crusades"
 5. "The rebirth of learning, and, perhaps the most important, the conflict between the leading princes of the church, which resulted in the 'Babylonish Captivity' (1309-1377) (Ibid).
 6. "During that period, the papal court was moved from Rome to Avignon and back to Rome" (Ibid).
- C. John Wycliffe (c. 1320-84).

1. Wycliffe is called, "The Morning Star of the Reformation" (Geisler & Nix 547).
2. "Wycliffe stands out as one of the most illustrious figures of the 14th century. This was a period of transition, neither the middle ages nor the reformation - a kind of middle ground between the two" (Zondervan 118).
3. "He seems to have become one of the king's chaplains about 1366, and became a doctor of theology in 1372" (Geisler & Nix 547).
4. He was "sent to France in 1374 to negotiate peace and meet with papal authorities in the matter of filling ecclesiastical appointments in England. Upon his return to England he began to speak as a religious reformer and issued nineteen articles in 1377" (Ibid).
5. This "resulted in the issuance of five papal bulls against him" (Ibid).
6. "Throughout the whole of this century the prestige of the Roman Catholic Church was very low" (Zondervan 118).
 - (a). There was the "Babylonian Captivity" of the popes at Avignon (Ibid).
 - (b). This was followed by the "Great Schism" where for a period of forty years there were two rival popes struggling for power. One was at Rome and the other at Avignon (Ibid).
7. During this period there was a great struggle between the "papacy and the English parliament over papal tribute" (Ibid).
8. Wycliffe sided with the English Parliament and stood in fierce opposition to the Roman church.
 - (a). "His firm and avowed resistance to the Romish usurpation, to its tyrannous policy, its crooked diplomacy, and its unscriptural theology, so edged and animated his sermons, speeches, and publications, both in Latin and English, that he could not be overlooked; for he had not spoken in honeyed words or in whispered rebuke, and his honest, patriotic wrath had boiled over in racy and unsparing denunciation" (Eadie Kindle Locations 1000-1002).
 - (b). "For the age of Wycliffe was one of great excitement; and the papal supremacy as a foreign usurpation had begun to encounter stout resistance" (Eadie Kindle Locations 1074-1075).

- (c). "He was convinced that the surest way of defeating Rome was to put the Bible into the hands of the common people, and therefore decided to make such a translation available" (Zondervan 118).
9. "Wycliffe had the peculiar idea that the common man was worth something. 'No man,' he said, 'was so rude a scholar but that he might learn the words of the Gospel according to his simplicity'" (Lightfoot 97).
- (a). "All secular men," he said, "ought to know the faith; so it is to be taught them, in whatever language is best known to them" (Eadie Kindle Locations 1388-1389).
 - (b). He states further, "Christ and his Apostles converted the world by making known the truths of Scripture in a form familiar to them. Honest men are bound to declare the doctrine which they hold, not only in Latin, but in the vulgar tongue, that the truth may be more plainly and more fully known. Christian men and women, old and young, should study first in the New Testament, should cleave to the study of it; and no simple man of wit, no man of small knowledge, should be afraid to study immeasurably in the sacred text" (Eadie Kindle Locations 1389-1393).
 - (c). Youngblood writes of him as a "social reformer who wanted to replace the feudal organization of state and church with a system that emphasized people's direct responsibility to God. The constitution of this new order would be the law of God...Before this could happen, the law of God had to be accessible to the laity as well as the clergy, the unlearned as well as the learned" (Youngblood 201).
 - (d). Wycliffe also complains that "Scripture has many impugners who extol the power of the Pope above it so much as to warrant the inference that he may take away one of its books and add a new one. So that, as an ardent lover of the truth, he longed that the people should know the highest style of all truth as contained in the Word of God, and that Word no longer hidden in a dead and foreign language. He 'rolled the stone from the well's

mouth' that all might approach and drink of the living fountain, since the popular systems of divinity, furnishing only an intellectual discipline, and reaching not to the depths of the inner nature, were only as 'cisterns, broken cisterns,' at which the thirsty soul could not satisfy itself" (Eadie Kindle Locations 1348-1351).

10. In 1380 he published the New Testament and two years later the Old Testament.
 - (a). "It is uncertain exactly how much of the translation was done by Wycliffe himself" (Zondervan 118).
 - (b). He was helped by Nicholas Hereford who translated the majority of the O. T. (Ibid).
 - (c). These translations were made from the Latin version and were the first complete English translations of the Bible.
 11. Wycliffe was responsible for organizing "a kind of religious order of poor preachers, called Lollards, whom he sent abroad through England to preach his doctrines and read the scriptures to all who wished to hear" (Ibid).
 12. Even though he faced opposition from the Roman church he was allowed to retire in Lutterworth where he died in 1384 (Ibid).
 13. "Twelve years later, however, his bones were disinterred and burned, and the ashes scattered over the river that flows through Lutterworth" (Ibid).
 14. Zondervan points out that "His translation had indelibly stamped itself on our present-day Bible. Some of the expressions that are first found in his version are: 'strait gate', 'make whole', 'compass land and sea', 'son of perdition', and 'enter thou into the joy of the Lord'" (Ibid).
 15. We close this section of study with the words of Wycliffe himself, as quoted by Eadie. "The sacred Scriptures" he held to "be the property of the people, and one which no party should be allowed to wrest from them" (Eadie Kindle Locations 1394-1395).
- D. John Purvey (c. 1354-1428).
1. "In 1388 John Purvey, a close friend and associate, thoroughly corrected and revised Wycliffe's first version" (Lightfoot 97-98).

2. "This work replaced many of the Latinate constructions by the native English idiom..." (Geisler & Nix 549).
 3. "The result of this revision was a weakening of papal influence over the English people, as this revision tended to drift away from the liturgical Latin of the church" (Ibid).
 4. This revision brought a decree by the church known as the "Constitutions of Oxford" which forbade anyone "to translate or read any part of the Bible in the vernacular without the approval of his bishop or of a provincial council" (Zondervan 118).
 5. "Six years later a law was enacted that all persons who should read the scriptures in the mother tongue should 'forfeit land, catel, life, and goods from their heyres for ever'" (Ibid).
 6. Nicholas Hereford and John Purvey were imprisoned.
- E. William Tyndale (c. 1492-1536).
1. The times of Tyndale.
 - (a). "After the capture of Constantinople in 1453, Christian scholars were compelled to leave the capital of the Eastern Empire, where for a thousand years Greek learning had flourished. They brought with them to Western Europe many Greek manuscripts. This led to a revival of interest in biblical studies and made it possible for Erasmus to issue in 1516 the first printed edition of the Greek New Testament" (Zondervan 118).
 - (b). "By 1500 most of the countries of Europe had the scriptures in the vernacular. England, however, had only scattered copies of the Wycliffe manuscript version, the language of which had by then become obsolete" (Ibid).
 - (c). This was a time of transformation in England and all Europe according to Geisler and Nix. They give the following reasons:
 - i "The rise of nationalism"
 - ii "The spirit of exploration and discovery"
 - iii "The literary revival"
 - iv "The resurgence of the classics followed the fall of Constantinople."
 - v "Johan Gutenberg invented movable type for the printing press."

- vi "Cheap paper was introduced into Europe."
- vii "Greek began to be studied publicly at the University of Paris."
- viii "The first Greek grammar appeared in 1476, and the first Greek lexicon was published in 1492."
- ix "The first Hebrew Bible was published in 1488."
- x "The first Hebrew grammar in 1503, and a Hebrew lexicon followed in 1506."

2. William Tyndale was a "great figure in the history of the English Bible" (Zondervan 119).
 - (a). Lightfoot calls Tyndale "the true father of the English bible" (Lightfoot 98).
 - (b). He "spent ten years studying at Oxford and Cambridge" (Ibid).
 - (c). Erasmus came to Cambridge in about 1509 to be a professor of Greek, and about a year later Tyndale also came to Cambridge (Ibid).
 - (d). It was during his time here that he found his "chief aim in life - to give to the English people a translation of the Bible based not on Latin but upon the original Greek and Hebrew" (Ibid).
 - (e). He too was opposed to the Roman church and papal influences. In response to a statement that "Englishmen were 'better without God's law than without the Pope's', He replied, 'I defy the Pope and all his laws; If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plow shall know more of the scripture than thou dost'" (Ibid).
 - (f). Perhaps he simply echoed a sentiment of his professor Erasmus who is quoted as saying, "I would to God the plowman would sing a text of the scripture at his plow, and the weaver at his loom with this would drive away the tediousness of time. I would that the wayfaring man with this pastime would expel the weariness of his journey" (Ibid).
3. "In the wake of the Renaissance, he brought with him one of the major contributions to the transmission of the English Bible. This contribution was the first printed edition of

any part of the English Bible, although not the first complete Bible printed in the English language” (Geisler & Nix 549).

- (a). This was a noble task, but one that kept him on the run and eventually cost him his life.
- (b). Tyndale eventually left England as he said, “there was no place to do it in all of England” (Lightfoot 98).
- (c). He then went to Hamburg Germany in 1524 where his New Testament translation was completed (Youngblood 203).
- (d). He tried to have his translation printed in Cologne but ran into opposition by city officials (Youngblood 202).
- (e). From Cologne he went to Worms where he found a printer named Peter Schoeffer who produced 6,000 copies (Youngblood).
- (f). Tyndale’s translation differed from Wycliffe’s in two respects.
 - i “It was rendered not from the Latin language but from the Greek original” (Ibid).
 - ii “It was circulated in printed form, not hand copied manuscript” (Ibid).
- (g). Having completed the New Testament, he turned his attention to the Old Testament.
 - i He produced editions of the Pentateuch, the book of Jonah, and a revision of Genesis (Youngblood).
 - ii He also produced a “revision of the New Testament” (Youngblood 203).
- (h). Tyndale’s “life’s work” would literally cost him his life.
 - i “Shortly after the completion of his revision, Tyndale was kidnapped, conveyed out of Antwerp, imprisoned in the fortress at Vilvorde in Flanders where he continued his translation of the Old Testament (Proverbs and the Prophets)” (Geisler & Nix 551).
 - ii There “he was found guilty to heresy in August 1536” (Ibid).

- a As a result he was “degraded from his priestly office” and “handed over to the secular power for execution.”
 - b On October 6 his execution was carried out being “strangled and burned at the stake” (Youngblood 203).
 - c He is said to have cried at the stake, “Lord, open the King of England’s eyes” (Geisler & Nix 551).
- F. Miles Coverdale (1488-1569).
1. He was “Tyndale’s assistant and proofreader at Antwerp in 1534” (Geisler & Nix 551).
 2. “The key individual in the publication of the first complete bible in English Bible in printed form was Miles Coverdale” (Ibid).
 3. “His translation was basically Tyndale’s version revised in the light of the German versions, and not noticeably improved thereby” (Ibid).
 4. “He introduced chapter summaries, separated the Apocrypha from the other Old Testament books and introduced some new expressions into the text” (Ibid).
- G. Thomas Matthew (c. 1500-1555).
1. Thomas Matthew as a “pen-name for John Rogers, a former associate of Tyndale” (Zondervan 120).
 2. His version was a combination of Tyndale and Coverdale.
 3. This version has the “distinction of being the first edition of the whole English Bible actually to be printed in England” (Ibid).
- H. The Great Bible (1539).
1. This Bible was a “revision of the Matthew Bible, by Coverdale” (Zondervan 120).
 2. “It was called the Great Bible because of its size” (Ibid).
 3. “At the foot of the title page were the words, ‘This is the Bible appointed to the use of the churches’” (Ibid).
 4. This Bible was not actually a translation, but a “revision of Roger’s version of Tyndale’s bible” (Ibid).
 5. There were five other editions of this Bible despite its opposition.
 6. In 1543 Henry VIII issued edicts, “which forbade anyone of any ‘estate, condition, or degree....to receive, have, take, or keep, Tyndale’s or Coverdale’s New Testament’” (Geisler & Nix 553).

7. This Bible was the “authoritative text of The Book of the Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, published in 1549 and 1552” (Ibid).
- I. The Geneva Bible (1557, 1560).
1. This Bible was “produced during the reign of Mary Tudor” (Ibid).
 2. “With the ascension of Mary in 1553, hundreds of Protestants lost their lives...some men closely associated with Bible translation, like John Rogers and Thomas Crammer” (Zondervan 120).
 3. “While England was offering persecution, Geneva was offering refuge” (Geisler & Nix 553).
 4. “Coverdale escaped martyrdom by fleeing to Continent” and others fled to “Geneva where the leading figure was John Calvin” (Zondervan 120).
 5. William Wittingham, brother-in-law to John Calvin, produced a revision of the English N.T. in 1557 (Ibid).
 - (a). “This was the first English NT printed in roman type and with the text divided into verses” (Ibid).
 - (b). Afterward, “he and his associates then undertook the revision of the whole Bible” (Ibid).
 6. In 1560 this Bible appeared and is known as the “Genevan Bible” or as it is otherwise known the “Breeches Bible” because of the rendering of Gen. 3:7 (Ibid).
 7. “Geddes MacGregor identifies four significant contributions that led making the English Bible more popular with the people” (Geisler & Nix 554)
 - (a). “First, in the Old Testament it followed the Hebrew more closely...”
 - (b). “Secondly, though it followed customary practice of the day in providing notes to the text, its notes were comparatively free of the controversial violence that was the fashion of the age”
 - (c). “Thirdly, the use of a smaller page...made it easier to handle, while plain Roman type mad it more legible than Bible printed in Gothic letter”
 - (d). “Fourthly, ...the plan of division into verses...was used for the first time for the whole English bible”
 8. In addition to that the “Geneva Bible introduced italicized words into the text where the English idiom required additional words” (Ibid).
 9. This Bible “went through at least 140 additions” (Ibid).

10. This was the Bible the pilgrims took to the new world in 1620 (Youngblood 204).
- J. The Bishops' Bible (1568).
 1. The Geneva Bible "made obvious the deficiencies of the Great Bible" (Zondervan 120).
 2. The Geneva bible was "unacceptable to many of the clergy" because of its "renderings and the marginal notes" (Ibid).
 3. Because of this, Archbishop Parker along with eight other bishops "made a revision of the Great Bible, which was completed and published in 1568 and came to be known as the Bishops' Bible" (Ibid).
- K. The Rheims-Douay version (1589, 1609-10).
 1. Lightfoot writes, "The zeal of Protestant revisions and editions eventually forced into being a Roman Catholic translation of the Bible" (Lightfoot).
 2. The "New Testament was produced in 1582 at the English college of Rheims" (Ibid).
 3. "In 1609-10 the college at Douai issued a translation of the Old Testament" (Ibid).
 4. Zondervan states "The preface warned readers against the then existing 'profane' translations and blames Protestants for casting what was holy to dogs" (Zondervan 120).
 5. "The main objection to the version is its too close adherence to the words of the original Latin....and contained a large number of notes, most of them to interpret the sacred text in conformity with Roman Catholic teaching and to reply to the arguments of the Reformers" (Ibid).
 6. The view of Catholics towards the English translations was, "for all the English versions are most corrupt" (Geisler & Nix 560).

CONCLUSION:

1. The battle for the Bible in one's native tongue was fought and won in England.
2. Noble men who believed that the Bible belonged to the people and not the pulpit took up the weapons of this warfare, their minds, knowledge, wisdom books and pens and fought for the right of the people to read the Bible in their own language.
3. There was fierce opposition, and some of them gave their lives for this cause.
4. I hope that we can appreciate from this study the diligence, dedication, and determination of these men.

5. I hope we appreciate just how blessed we are to enjoy the freedom of possessing, reading, studying, teaching, and living the Book divine.

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The King James Version

Gary Colley

INTRODUCTION:

1. King James I, was the King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland (New Analytical Bible 5).
2. The King James translation of the Bible (1611), also known as “the Authorized Version,” was preceded by several partial translations, none of which were satisfactory to King James.
3. He wanted the Bible translated completely, and correctly, so that it could benefit all the people.
 - A. Unfaithful translators today have perverted, omitted, changed, and deformed the text of the Word of God, with their theological wanderings!
 - B. Of course, Satan was the first MIS-TRANSLATOR (Gen. 2:15-17; 3:1-4).
 - C. Much of the danger of the modern translations lies in their subtlety!
 - D. The subtle changes in the text causes, over a period of time, error to be accepted!
 - E. This course was the way of some in the days of the New Testament (Gal. 1:6-9).
 - F. It has continued today in the “New” translations, human creeds, catechisms, etc.
4. Those whom King James charged to formulate this translation were under the strict order of the King.
 - A. These translators were Greek Scholars, who could speak the Greek, write the Greek, read the Greek, and understood the Greek in which the New Testament was written.
 - B. Some have not known that the Koine Greek became a dead language soon after the New Testament was written.
 - C. It is not the same as “Classical” Greek in which meanings can and do change.
 - D. The translators gave this dedication to King James upon finishing the translation:
 1. “So that, if on the one side, we shall be traduced by Popish persons at home or abroad, who therefore will malign us, because we are poor instruments to make God’s holy truth to be yet more and more known to the people, whom they desire still to keep in ignorance and darkness; or if, on the other side, we shall be maligned by self-conceited brethren, who run their own ways, and give liking unto nothing but what is framed by themselves, and hammered on their anvil, we may rest secure, supported within by the truth and innocence of a good conscience, having walked the ways of simplicity

and integrity, as before the Lord, and sustained without by the powerful protection of Your Majesty's grace and favor, which will ever give countenance to honest and Christian endeavors against bitter censures and uncharitable imputations" (New Analytical Bible 6)."

I. SOME OBJECTIONS TO THE KJV.

A. Some say the KJV, after being in use for 350+ years, is filled with "obsolete words" which are not used in the 21st Century.

1. While this is partially true, the KJV is written on a fifth grade level, with no words too large to pronounce and understand with study by most 10 year olds! SOME HAD TO GET A "PHD" (College Doctors degree) BEFORE THEY HAD TROUBLE UNDERSTANDING THE WORDS IN THE KJV.
2. Our forefathers have studied it, believed it, and obeyed it, and will grace Heaven with their presence after the resurrection and Judgment Day (Heb. 9:27).
3. With a good dictionary the few words that may give "a problem" can be easily defined and understood!
4. The main importance of the KJV is that it can be trusted, as many other translations cannot be, due to the fact that it is a word for word translation.
 - a. This gives what was said by the Lord and His apostles, and not just what some "think" the meaning may be today.
5. The KJV and the American Standard Version, 1901, (ASV) complement each other, both being word for word translations, and can be studied with profit together!
6. These translations do not contain the destructive errors of most, if not all, of the "modern translations."
7. The 47 Greek Scholars of the KJV and the 101 Greek Scholar translators of the ASV, means that we have the benefit of 148 of the world's ripest Greek scholars on whom we can rely for the truth.
8. We have every assurance that these are the "words of eternal life" (Jn. 6:63).
9. There are over five thousand three hundred manuscripts of the Bible found both in the Hebrew and Greek.
10. The Textus Receptus of the New Testament, also called the Traditional Received Text is the underlying text of the KJV, which is similar to the "Majority Text."
11. The Westcott and Hort Text of the New Testament is the underlying text of the Revised Standard Version (RSV) and the New American Standard Version (NASV). This Greek text was published in 1881 by two deists, who denied the deity of Christ and His virgin Birth!

- B. Some object to the fact that the KJV uses the word “Easter” instead of “Passover” which is corrected in the ASV in Acts 12:4.
 - 1. If these perhaps think that the Holy Spirit is commanding the observance of a holiday called Easter, they are sadly mistaken!
 - 2. There is no command given here or anywhere in the Bible for the observance.
 - 3. There is no instruction anywhere in the KJV, or otherwise, giving how it is to be observed.
 - 4. This was simply a marking of the time of the year by the translators and not the teaching of an observance.
 - 5. A mistake in translating is a mistake no matter how serious. However, there is a vast difference in a mistake of no consequence and one that introduces false doctrine into the text!
 - 6. A little study will satisfy the sincere seeker of the truth of this matter!

II. GOD’S GUARDS ON HIS REVELATION ARE IMPORTANT:

- A. His revelation is perfect (I Cor. 2:9-13; Jas. 1:25).
- B. We learn from II Timothy 3:16-17 that God breathed His revelation to lost man and for the needs of lost man. It is God’s grace bending to man’s needs.
- C. Holy men of God were given the guidance of the Holy Spirit in order in insure that no mistakes would be made in God’s revelation (II Pet. 1:20-21; Jn. 16:13; Lk. 10:16).
- D. We are not to substitute human ideas for His Word (Mk. 7:7-9).
- E. Man’s opinions are not to be accepted as if taught by God (Prov. 14:12; 16:25).
- F. There are no “latter revelations” given by God (Jude 1:3; Gal. 1:8-12).
- G. There are great dangers in using such “New” translations as the “New International Version” (NIV), in which among other errors all five points of Calvinism are explicitly taught!
 - 1. Total Depravity is taught in Psalm 51:5 of the NIV.
 - 2. It teaches man is born with a “sinful nature,” and is not therefore condemned because of “sinful practice” (the meaning of “sinful flesh” (Rom. 8).
 - 3. It removes the word “begotten” from every text referring to Jesus Christ, which denies the deity of Jesus Christ (Jn. 3:16; etc.).
 - 4. It deletes the statement of Philip concerning the condition of confessing Jesus before baptism, and the eunuch’s answer (Acts 8:37).
 - 5. It falsely teaches the premillennial concept of the final and complete salvation of national Israel (Rom. 8:26).

6. It falsely teaches that sinners are “included in Christ” at the point of hearing (Eph. 1:13).
 7. It also incorrectly teaches that justification is reached at the point of faith (Rom. 10:10), and the same verse wrongly teaches pardon is received at the point of confession (Rom. 10:10).
 8. It has the Calvinistic view that the Holy Spirit directly and personally opens the minds of men in order for them to understand the Scriptures (I Cor. 2:12-13).
 9. It changes the teaching of I Corinthians 1:6 from “the testimony of Christ” (the Gospel) to “our testimony about Christ” (Testimonialism!).
 10. In accordance with false theory of “faith alone” it has changed “the answer of a good conscience” to “the pledge of a good conscience toward God” (I Pet. 3:21).
- H. It causes us to ask, “Why do some of “our” schools require the students to use the NIV and other similar “translations?” (Isa. 55:8-9).

CONCLUSION:

1. Although the majestic King James Version of the Bible has come under repeated attack, a summary of the textual evidence demonstrates that this translation of God’s Word is far superior to the numerous would-be translations and versions of today.
2. The claim that “the newer versions are more reliable because they use better Greek manuscripts” is simply a false claim!
3. According to current figures (1992), the Greek manuscript base supporting the Authorized (KJV) Version has some 5,210 textual witnesses (papyrus fragments, uncial and cursive manuscripts).
4. However, the textual witnesses supporting the Western or Nestle/Aland readings number only 45 papyrus fragments, uncial and cursive manuscripts, which are said to provide the “foundation for all modern versions and translations of the English Bible.”
5. Hence, the KJV is based upon the majority of textual witnesses, some extending back to A.D. 150, predating by two-hundred years + that so-called “best” or “oldest” manuscripts of the modernists and liberal higher critics!
6. Let us remove the unholy hands off of our Bible, lest they poison the River of Life at its sacred source!
7. The late brother Guy N. Woods made the following statement commending the KJV to the world. He said, “Its message of salvation, the unparalleled beauty of its sentiments, and the stateliness of its style and content have made it the most beloved book ever written.”

The Cessation of Revelation

Billy Bland

INTRODUCTION:

1. God has revealed Himself and His will to mankind.
 - A. The phrase "Thus saith the Lord" appears 415 times in the King James Version of the Bible.
 - B. Other phrases such as "God said" are repeatedly found throughout the Word of God.
2. We are blessed in that we have revelation from God.
3. The word "revelation" ("apokalupsis") means:
 - A. "An uncovering" (Thayer).
 - B. "A disclosure" (Mounce).
 - C. The word "apokalupsis" is variously translated as, "appearing," "coming," "lighten," "manifestation," "reveal," and "revelation(s)."

I. THE NEED FOR REVELATION.

- A. We could not know God without revelation.
 1. We could know there is a God (Psa. 19:1, Rom. 1:20).
 2. But we could not know God.
- B. We could not know God's will for us without revelation from Him (Jer. 10:23, Jdg. 17:6, 21:25).
- C. Revelation is the basis for all we say and do (Col. 3:17).
 1. The first record of God speaking is in Genesis 1:3.
 2. "God said" is found 10 times in Genesis chapter 1.
- D. Franklin Camp observed, "Revelation requires inspiration and confirmation. Revelation and inspiration equal the authority of God" (7).
- E. Brother Camp further observed:
 1. "God said" is the basis of inspiration. 1 Cor. 2, 2 Tim. 3:16-17.
 2. "God said" is the basis of revelation.
 3. "God said" is the basis of the knowledge of God. Gal. 4:9, Acts 17.
 4. "God said" is the basis of creation. Gen. 1.
 5. "God said" is the basis of prophecy. 1 Peter 1:16-21.
 6. "God said" is the basis of religion. John 4:19, 20, 22.
 7. "God said" is the basis of faith. Rom. 10:17.
 8. "God said" is the basis of acceptable worship. John 4:22-24.
 9. "God said" becomes the basis of marriage. Gen. 2, Mat. 19:9.
 10. "God said" becomes the basis of hope. Gen. 3:15-16, Rom. 15:4, Eph. 2:12.
 11. "God said" is the basis for judgment. Gen. 6:7.
 12. "God said" is the basis for grace. Gen. 6:8, Rom. 4:16.

13. "God said" becomes the basis of salvation. Gen. 6:22.
 14. "God said" is the basis of distinction in languages. Gen. 11:1-6.
 15. "God said" is the basis of spiritual life. John 5:24-25, 6:63.
 16. "God said" will be the basis of the resurrection. John 5:28-29.
 17. "God said" must be the basis for preaching. Jonah 3:2 (7-8).
- F. All of these references are an indication of how basic and fundamental an inspired revelation from God to man is in all acceptable religion and worship (Ibid).

II. THE HOW OF REVELATION.

- A. How has God communicated to man?
- B. In times past God used various methods (Heb. 1:1-2).
- C. Now He has communicated through Christ (Heb. 1:2).
- D. Christ spoke:
 1. From the Father (John 14:10, 24).
 2. Christ sent the Holy Spirit to apostles (John 14:26).
 3. The Holy Spirit inspired the apostles (Mat. 10:19-20).
 4. The apostles were guided into all the truth (John 14:26, 16:13).
 5. The truth was written in God's revelation – the Bible.
- E. God revealed His will to us by the means of words (1 Cor. 2:11-13, Mat. 10:19-20, 2 Sam. 23:2, Jer. 1:9).
- F. The completed Word of God is the Bible.
- G. Acts 1:16 illustrates a definition of "Scripture."
 1. The Holy Spirit spoke by the mouth of David.
 2. This was recorded in print by inspired David and Luke.
 3. This, according to Luke, equates Scripture.
- H. We have the revelation from God.

III. THE CESSATION OF REVELATION.

- A. God completed His Revelation (John 16:13, Jude 3).
- B. Once the revelation was completed and confirmed, both revelation and confirmation ceased (1 Cor. 13:8-13).
- C. Since the apostles were guided into all truth (John 16:13), and it was "once for all delivered" (Jude 3 ASV), there is no more revelation being given today.
- D. Consequently, any who claim to have a revelation from God since the close of the miraculous age (around the close of the first century A.D.), are making false claims (cf. Joseph Smith, Mohammed, modern day claims of direct operation of the Holy Spirit, etc.).

IV. THE BLESSINGS OF REVELATION'S CESSATION.

- A. We have the complete Word of God (Jam. 1:25).

- B. We can distinguish truth from error by comparing what the revealed Word of God teaches (Acts 17:11).
- C. We can have confidence in our faith, knowing God's Word is not going to change (Titus 1:2, Mat. 24:35).
- D. We have an objective standard – God's Word (Jam. 1:25).

CONCLUSION:

1. It is a blessing to have God's revelation, the Bible.
2. We should love God's Word (Psa. 119:97, 113, 165).
3. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (Rom. 1:16).

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Do We Still Have God's Word?

Keith A. Mosher, Sr.

INTRODUCTION:

1. The basic problem for anyone who is studying the Bible is how the text should be approached.
2. One could, as does the liberal who denies verbal inspiration, view the Bible as no more than a history book; the only advantage in this way of study is the realization that the people of the Bible were real, historical persons.
3. One must, however, realize that the Bible is Holy Writ, which view does not ignore geography, history, etcetera. One's view of the Bible, then, is critical to how one will use it.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE BIBLE IS A "GOD-BREATHED" MESSAGE.

- A. "For his merciful kindness is great toward us: the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord" (Psa. 117:2).
 1. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork" (Psa. 19:1).
 2. "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Mat. 4:4).
 3. "All scripture is given by inspiration (Greek, "breathing out," K.M.) 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" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
 4. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the 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).
- B. The above passages illustrate the Greek term, *rama*, translated *word* in Romans 10:17 and Ephesians 6:17 [Note God's *breath* and Genesis 2:7].
- C. Compare Ezekiel 2:7 and Ezekiel 3:26-27, and note that God's message was put into Ezekiel's mouth.
- D. A definition of the action of verbal inspiration is found in 1 Corinthians 2:9-13 [Note: verbal inspiration is not mechanical dictation nor thought inspiration. Compare 2 Samuel 23:2].
 1. "Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold I have put my words in thy mouth" (Jer. 1:9).

2. "Wherefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them" (Jer. 5:14).
 3. "Trust ye not in lying words, saying The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord are these" (Jer. 7:4).
- E. The God of creation has spoken to man.

II. WHAT GOD SPOKE WAS, OF NECESSITY, WRITTEN.

- A. Note the following verses: Deuteronomy 9:10; Exodus 31:18; Jeremiah 8:8; Ezekiel 2:9-10; Zechariah 5:1-2; John 21:25; and 1 Corinthians 14:37 and the result of having written as found in John 10:34-36.
- B. Amos wrote: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets" (3:7). Therefore, in order to love God and keep his commandments, one must know the written text, and he can know the text (1 John 5:3; Heb. 12:25).
- C. God revealed Himself through *act* and *word*.
 1. Passages like Exodus 3:2-10 and Exodus 12:12-13 illustrate the method of God's way of revealing Himself and His actions.
 2. A similar illustration is found at Luke 22:15-20 and 1 Corinthians 11:23-28.
- D. The need for man to receive revelation is two-fold: God transcends the space-time system in which humans exist, and man cannot know God's specific will from man's limited viewpoint. Man cannot claim any "internal" knowledge of the will of God apart from a revealed will (Jer. 10:23).

III. WHAT GOD SPOKE WAS WRITTEN AND PRESERVED.

- A. Two important issues face the church: the preservation of truth and the application of truth.
- B. There are four "links" in the transmission of truth from God to man: Inspiration; Canonization; Transmission; and **Preservation**.
- C. The principles of the preservation of the revelation of God are noted in 2 Kings 10:10; Psalm 12:6-7; 33:11; 19:7; 100:5 and 119:89.
- D. *A failure to grasp the doctrine of the preservation of the words of scripture is the starting point for all other kinds of apostasy (John 12:48).*
 1. Persons who believe that the original writings of the Scriptures were verbally inspired by God, then of necessity, must believe they have been providentially preserved through the ages.
 2. Note Galatians 3:16 and Matthew 22:32.

IV. THERE ARE FOUR PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL PRESERVATION.

- A. The first principle of the preservation of Holy Writ is that without God's intervention to keep His Word pure there would be no Christianity (1 Cor. 13:10).
- B. The second principle of the preservation of Holy Writ is that the keeping of the Word originated in the eternal counsels of God (Psa. 119:89).
- C. The third principle of the preservation of Holy Writ is that God has used men who have worked to preserve the text.
 - 1. Aaronic priests and scribes copied the Old Testament (Rom. 3:2).
 - 2. The manuscripts have been preserved for the New Testament.
- D. The fourth principle of the preservation of Holy Writ is that there is no difference between God's speaking and the Scriptures "speaking." See, for example, Luke 4:16ff.
- E. Copies of the text are holy (2 Tim. 3:15). Copies of the text are true when accurate (Dan. 10:21). Accurate copies of the text cannot be broken (John 10:35).
- F. A principle, taught by liberal modernists, is that God "lays on the heart" which words are His. Such a doctrine is called "illumination" and is a gross error (Eph. 3:3-5).
- G. All of so-called Christendom does not believe that God preserved His accurate message, but see Matthew 24:35.
- H. God gave us His Word, now what?
- I. Some will deny it (cf. Gen. 3:1-5 and John 8:44).
- J. Some choose just the parts they like (Compare "red letter" editions and the "Mary Pell" Bible. See also Proverbs 1:24-31).
- K. Some try to change the Word of God [This activity is propagated by modern collators who are in the business of diluting and altering the underlying Greek text of the Bible!].
- L. Modern translations contain changes in the doctrine of Holy Writ and are dangerous tools in the hands of unscrupulous teachers and preachers and those who are either misinformed or ignorant of what the preserved text actually says.
- M. Too many do not love the Bible, and in recent times even the Supreme Court of the United States of America has thrown the teachings of Holy Writ into the trash can of perversion. Compare Psalm 138:2.
- N. Why is it that gospel preachers have to exhort church members to read and study God's Word? Would not those who love Him just naturally want to know what He was saying?
- O. Honor and respect must be given to the God's actual Word which He has preserved forever (Col. 3:17).
- P. Preservation is a most important doctrine (John 5:39; 12:48).

CONCLUSION:

1. God has preserved His Word.
2. The question is, will anyone obey it?

Uninspired Men Who Helped Preserve and Publish God's Word

Will Anderson

INTRODUCTION:

1. The value of God's Word cannot be overstated.
2. The fact that God loved us so much that He not only sent His Son, but that He inspired men to record the process through written words is truly amazing.
3. That He not only explained the process, but also that He revealed His will for us is an incredible blessing.
 - A. Without that revelation, we would have no knowledge of anything pertaining to God or His will outside of His mere existence.
 - B. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:11, KJV).
4. We have benefitted greatly because of those men of old who were inspired, and accordingly, recorded God's inspired Word in written form.
5. There are also many who, while uninspired, have been very influential in helping in the process of preserving, publishing, and allowing God's Word to be accessible to us today.
6. We will notice just a few of the most influential uninspired men who have been a blessing to the spreading of God's written Word.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE SEVENTY (OR SEVENTY-TWO) TRANSLATORS OF THE SEPTUAGINT (3rd CENTURY B.C.)

- A. During the third and fourth centuries B.C., the Greek Empire was at its peak.
- B. This was especially true of the time of Alexander the Great.
- C. One of the key components of the Greek Empire was that they strongly believed in assimilating to the Greek culture.
- D. "Wherever his invincible battalions beat down the enemy, there the Greek language secured a stronghold" (Price 50).
 1. One particular location that this was true was in Alexandria, Egypt.
 2. "In the times of the Ptolemies one-third of the population of Alexandria was Jewish" (Price 51).
 3. Ptolemy Philadelphus was the ruler of the Ptolemaic Egyptian Dynasty of the Greek Empire.
 4. Under his watch, along with his sister/wife Arsenoe II, Jews were granted full religious and political rights, and there was a great

cultural and educational resurgence that led to the founding of the famous museum of Alexandria and the translation of many great works into Greek (Geisler 503).

5. It was during this time that the seventy, or seventy-two, translators of the Septuagint collaborated to produce this work.
 - a. Traditionally, this Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures is thought to have been translated by six members of each of the twelve tribes.
 - b. Tradition also holds that they accomplished this work in seventy-two days.
 - c. Sometimes tradition tends to exaggerate things.
 6. A word of warning must be inserted here.
 7. The Septuagint did include the Apocrypha, which the Jews did not include in the Hebrew canon of Scripture.
- E. These translators, while unknown to us, made tremendous effort that has benefitted generations to come.

II. THE ESSENES OF KHIRBET QUMRAN (2nd CENTURY B.C. -- 1st CENTURY A.D.)

- A. When the word "Qumran" comes up, thoughts are usually taken to one of the greatest finds in archaeological history, the Dead Sea Scrolls.
- B. The Essenes were a small ascetic group of Jews who were most viable from the second century B.C. to the first century A.D.
- C. They lived a lifestyle that believed in poverty and self-deprivation as elements that brought one closer to God.
- D. One such community of Essenes lived in Khirbet Qumran, on the northeast side of the Dead Sea.
 1. It was there that an Arab shepherd named Muhammad adh-Dhib accidentally found some of scrolls in a cave in 1947 (Mosher 347).
 2. Over the next several years, archaeologists discovered what collectively have been called the Dead Sea Scrolls.
 3. "The six hundred plus texts of the Dead Sea scrolls include all of the Old Testament except for Esther and the Song of Solomon" (Mosher 348).
 4. This find was monumental for several reasons.
 - a. They show continuity and consistency between the earlier and later scribal texts of the Old Testament.
 - b. It contains a single copy of Isaiah, which went against the ideas of the day of many higher Biblical critics.
 - c. "textual critics can now prove that the Hebrew Bible has remained unchanged for the last 2,200 years" (Mosher 348).
 - d. It proves that one can trust his modern copy of the Hebrew Scriptures.

III. THE MASORETIC SCRIBES (A.D. 500-900)

- A. "The Masoretes are special Jewish scribes entrusted with the sacred task of making copies of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) approximately AD 500-900.
- B. They develop (sic) a meticulous system of counting the number of words in each book to make sure they have copied it accurately.
- C. Any scroll found to have an error is buried according to Jewish law" (Rose 20).
- D. Their system of reproducing the text was remarkable.
 1. Their accuracy, as has already been described, was exacting.
 2. "Masoretic scribes placed a number in the margins (the Masoretic parva) which was a count of the times an expression occurred in the text so that a later scribe could check his copying accuracy.
 3. "Later scribes placed notes in the margin to aid the next scribe in his work and/or to explain some reason for emending a text" (Mosher 346).
 4. The find of the Dead Sea Scrolls helped to impress upon the modern reader the accuracy of the Masoretic scribes.

IV. JOHN WYCLIFFE (A.D. 1320-1384)

- A. "John Wycliffe stands out as one of the most illustrious figures of the fourteenth century.
- B. He is said to have become Master of Balliol College, and to have won a high place among the scholars of his day.
- C. With Oxford and its attractive circle of scholars close at hand, Wycliffe became deeply interested in the ecclesiastical controversies of the times" (Price 232).
- D. Wycliffe's work in Biblical translation was groundbreaking for the English language.
 1. He "was an early dissident in the Roman Catholic Church (during the 14th century) and his followers were known as Lollards, though that name was already used in England and Europe.
 2. "He was a strong advocate of evangelism, and in reformed circles is considered a precursor of the Reformation.
 3. "He is often called 'The Morning Star of the Reformation'" (Sisman 171).
 4. While it is unknown how much Wycliffe himself added to the work is unknown, the translation completed under his watch is thought by many to be the first complete Bible translation in English.
 5. His associates, Nicholas of Herford and John Purvey were critical to the success of this translation.
 6. Because of his disdain for the Roman church, and because of the Roman church's disdain for "laity" having access to the Bible, Wycliffe's body

was exhumed by the Roman church, burned and the ashes were thrown in the river Swift.

V. JOHANNES GUTENBERG (A.D. 1398-1468)

- A. Gutenberg's printing press was one of the most influential technological advances in human history.
- B. "He could not have realized – even the most thoughtful of his contemporaries could not have realized – the significance of his achievement.
- C. There have been few inventions in all the ages since the evolution of the system of writing that have so profoundly affected human culture" (Price 242).
 - 1. Gutenberg's invention allowed much faster reproduction of God's Word as compared to the handwritten copies of previous centuries.
 - 2. This allowed for much easier access to the Biblical text.
 - 3. Prior to the printing press, complete copies of the Bible were unaffordable for the vast majority.
 - 4. Gutenberg first printed the Latin Vulgate version of the Bible in the mid fifteenth century.
 - 5. There was only a short time before the printing press became widely used throughout Europe.
- D. Since the days of Gutenberg, the Bible has been printed more than any other book, and there is not even a close second.

VI. ERASMUS (A.D. 1466-1536)

- A. Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam is famous for editing the first published Greek New Testament.
- B. His edition of the Greek New Testament forms the basis for the Textus Receptus.
 - 1. The Textus Receptus was used for the King James Version and the New King James Version.
 - 2. "The reception of Erasmus's edition of the Greek New Testament was quite mixed.
 - 3. Because of the hundreds of printing errors in it, a new edition was issued in 1519.
 - 4. In 1522 Erasmus produced a third edition, in which he reluctantly inserted 1 John 5:7" (Geisler 450).

VII. WILLIAM TYNDALE (A.D. 1494-1536)

- A. "William Tyndale came onto the scene at one of the most opportune moments in history.
- B. In the wake of the Renaissance, he brought with him one of the major contributions to the transmission of the English Bible.

- C. This contribution was the first printed edition of any part of the English Bible, although not the first complete Bible printed in the English language" (Geisler 549).
- D. Tyndale was determined to help get the Bible into the commoner's hands.
 - 1. He is famously quoted as saying "I defy the Pope and all his laws; if God spares my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth a plough shall know more of scripture than thou dost" in response to one of his critics.
 - 2. His desire led him to be strangled and burned at the stake.
- E. "Tyndale's version of the New Testament provided the basis for all the successive revisions between this day and ours.
- F. The King James Version is practically a fifth revision of Tyndale's revision; and where it departs from his, the revision committee of 1881, 1885, and 1901 return to it with regularity" (Geisler 551).

VII. MILES COVERDALE (A.D. 1488-1569)

- A. "The credit for the first complete printed Bible in Middle English goes to the work of Miles Coverdale.
- B. Coverdale had been a proof-reader for Tyndale in Antwerp, Belgium (1534)" (Mosher 387).
- C. Geisler quoted F.F. Bruce as saying, "His translation was basically Tyndale's version revised in the light of the German versions, and not noticeably improved thereby" (552).
- D. Coverdale's version gave way to other "protestant" Bibles as the Great Bible, the Geneva Bible, The Bishop's Bible, and the King James Bible.
- E. While the Coverdale Bible did not gain great notoriety like those which followed, or Tyndale's which came before, his work in the process of bringing the English Bible to the people was critical.

CONCLUSION:

1. While these men were uninspired, and many of them likely had views that were opposed by scripture, we can appreciate their appreciation for God's Word.
2. Many through the years have put their lives on the line to allow us to have access to God's Word today.
3. The preservation and publishing of God's Word should be hugely important to us, because His Word "is able to save your souls" (James 1:21).

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Which Old Testament Books Belong in the Bible?

Daniel F. Cates

INTRODUCTION:

1. One cannot always judge a book by its cover--even one which reads Holy Bible.
 - A. The Bible used by the Catholics may have Holy Bible on the cover, but inside it is significantly different; how? There are forty-six books in the Old Testament; additionally there are numerous chapters and verses appended to those found in a "regular" Bible.
2. Why some Bibles look different and why we accept thirty-nine Old Testament books are the concern of this study.

DISCUSSION:

I. DEFINITION OF TERMS.

- A. "Inspiration" is a compound of two Greek words meaning "God breathed"; that is, books which are the product of God and not man; though the ones who actually put pen to paper were men, God directed their very words--not merely their thoughts--while preserving their personalities, backgrounds, culture, etc. in their style.
- B. "Canon," from a Greek word implying a standard, refers to an officially accepted body of work.
 1. In modern culture, the term is applied to "authorized" works of fiction to distinguish these from things like fan fiction; for instance, Sherlock Holmes, Star Wars, Doctor Who, etc.
 2. In religion, "canon" refers to the books recognized as God's authentic Word.
 3. Geisler and Nix in their *A General Introduction to the Bible* wrote, "The history of the word canon indicates a development from a literal rod or ruler to the concept of a standard for something. Subsequently, the word was applied to the rule of faith" (218).
 4. W.H.C. Frend indicated that the emergence, or more accurately, the recognition of the canon was necessary; he wrote, "Most important [apparently, to the "unity and singleness of purpose of the church" and "to form a pattern of orthodoxy"-DFC] of all was the emergence of a fixed canon of Scripture that gave the church its own sacred book, different from that of the Jews and in no way dependent on any pagan or Gnostic literature" (250).
- C. The term "homologoumena" refers to books unquestionably belonging in the canon.
- D. "Antilegomena" refers to books accepted by some but disputed by others.

- E. "Apocrypha," meaning hidden, refers to books that have some concealed message.
1. A good application of the idea is found in Origen's letter to Julius Africanus; he wrote, "[The Jewish wise men-DFC] hid from the knowledge of the people as many of the passages which contained any scandal against the elders, rulers, and judges, as they could, some of which have been preserved in uncanonical writings" (9).
 2. One might remember that true Scripture never white washed even the most beloved righteous!
- F. "Deuterocanonical" means second canon and refers to books accepted by some in addition to or in the place of Scripture.
- G. "Pseudepigrapha," literally, false writing, is a term used especially to describe works written anonymously but attributed to some well-known Bible person.
1. A good description of this is provided by the ironically named fourth century *Constitutions of the Holy Apostles*, which reads, "We have sent all these things to you, that ye may know our opinion, what it is; and that ye may not receive those books which obtain in our name, but are written by the ungodly. For you are not to attend to the names of the apostles, but to the nature of the things, and their settled opinions. For we know that Simon and Cleobius, and their followers, have compiled poisonous books under the name of Christ and of His disciples, and do carry them about in order to deceive you who love Christ, and us His servants. And among the ancients also some have written apocryphal books of Moses, and Enoch, and Adam, and Isaiah, and David, and Elijah, and of the three patriarchs, pernicious and repugnant of the truth" (VI.iii.16).
 2. Eusebius described such as "Writings published by heretics under the names of the apostles [though the same would apply to other Bible people whose names are applied to similar heretical works-DFC] ... The type of phraseology used contrasts with the apostolic style, and the opinions and thrusts of their contents are so dissonant from true orthodoxy that they show themselves to be forgeries by heretics. Accordingly, they ought not be reckoned even among the spurious books but discarded as impious and absurd" (III.25).
- H. The "Septuagint" was the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament- and the version that Jesus used when quoting the Old Testament.

II. BOOKS ACCEPTED.

- A. God Who has provided His Word for man has established the canon of Scripture; it is not man, then, who determines what is or what is not Scripture; rather, man recognizes what is Scripture providentially preserved by God.
 - 1. This is reminiscent of the thought of Daniel Webster's statement on the understandability of the Bible; he said, "I believe that the Bible is to be understood and received in the plain and obvious meaning of its passages; since I cannot persuade myself that a book intended for the instruction and conversion of the whole world, should cover its true meaning in such mystery and doubt, that none but critics and philosophers can discover it" (10).
 - 2. Geisler and Nix wrote regarding a future finding of some book that is seemingly canonical, "It seems highly unlikely that God would have inspired a book He did not preserve" (217), supporting the idea that providence determines preservation.
- B. The process of recognizing canon and rejecting that not included in canon is laid out by Geisler and Nix.
 - 1. Regarding canonicity, "a book is valuable because it is canonical" [and not the other way around] and "a book is canonical because it is inspired" (211).
 - 2. "What do not influence canonicity are the age of a book, a book's wholly having been penned in Hebrew [portions of the Old Testament were in Aramaic], a book's placement in the Torah (the Law of Moses), a book's religious value, a book's acceptance by "the religious community" (208-210).
 - 3. The tests of canonicity would include these considerations: first, "Was the book written by a prophet of God?" (223); second, "Was the writer confirmed by acts of God?" (226); third, "Did the message tell the truth about God?" (226); fourth, "Does it come with the power of God?" (228); fifth, "Was it accepted by the people of God?" (229); and a sixth from another section of Geisler and Nix' study: "The witness of the Holy Spirit" (233).
- C. Everett Ferguson spoke of the rabbis at Jamnia's discussing "the canonicity of certain Old Testament books" pointing out that "they were debating a canon received, not creating one" (423).

III. SOME BOOKS REJECTED--THE OLD TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA.

- A. 1 Esdras, an erroneous history attributed to Ezra but written around three or four centuries later concerning how Zerubbabel won the right to return to Palestine, and how the Jews returned from Babylon to Palestine--it is not even recognized in the Catholic canon.

- B. 2 Esdras, basically an erroneous apocalypse attributed to Ezra but written perhaps five or six centuries later concerning the futures of nations--it is also not in the Catholic Bible.
- C. Tobit, an error and false doctrine filled story from the Assyrian captivity, though written around 200 B.C., recounting events in the lives of Tobit and his son Tobias--it is doubted by Catholic scholars, though it is in their Bible.
- D. Judith, also written about five or six centuries too late is an error and false doctrine filled fanciful, Pharisaical tale about Judith's killing the leader of the Assyrian army after being accepted into his tent.
- E. The rest of Esther, or Additions to Esther, are prayers and letters attributed to people of the book of Esther though written four centuries later and in Greek [along with most of the rest of the Apocrypha].
- F. The Wisdom of Solomon, also error and false doctrine [especially Gnostic] laden and nine centuries too late to have been written by its supposed author Solomon.
- G. Ecclesiasticus (The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach), designed to give practical advice like Proverbs though it contains false doctrine.
- H. Baruch, with the Epistle of Jeremiah, written two or more centuries after it is purported to be, an erroneous and false doctrinal prophetic work meant to urge the Jews not to revolt again and to warn against idolatry.
- I. The Song of the Three Holy Children (The Prayer of Azariah), The History of Susanna, and Bel and the Dragon, all books supposedly filling gaps in the book of Daniel though written four or five centuries late and in Greek.
- J. The Prayer of Manasses, written five or six centuries too late as Manasseh's prayer from Babylon while a captive of the Assyrians--it is not in the Catholic Bible.
- K. 1 Maccabees, a historic work showing how Judas Maccabeus and his brothers liberated the Jews from Syrian control.
- L. 2 Maccabees, an error and false doctrine and self-contradiction filled history designed also to show how Judas Maccabeus liberated the Jews from Seleucid control.
- M. Many other rejected books from the Old Testament period exist--some of which were even found among the Dead Sea Scrolls.

IV. WHY WERE THE REJECTED BOOKS REJECTED?

- A. The Apocrypha contradicts plain and basic Bible doctrine.
- B. The Apocrypha is confusing and self-contradictory.
- C. The Apocrypha is historically and geographically inaccurate in many places.

- D. The Apocrypha has an unauthentic and at times base sound, lacking the dignity and style found in inspired Scripture.
- E. There are no claims in the Apocrypha of its inspiration [the closest thing to such a claim (Sir. 50:27-29) is obviously not a claim of inspiration but of illumination].
- F. Three of the books of the Apocrypha were never accepted into the Catholic canon, and at least one that was is strongly disputed by Catholic scholars.
- G. Those books of the Apocrypha that were canonized were not added by the whole Catholic church until the Council of Trent (April 8, 1546).

V. THE VIEW OF THE "CHURCH FATHERS."

- A. The early church fathers often quoted the apocrypha, at least holding some on par with the other books of Scripture from what might be called a didactic if not a presumably inspired perspective--it must be noted that these books were not even universally accepted by the Catholic church until the Council of Trent which was convened between 1545 and 1563; moreover, several were and are even yet rejected.
- B. Origen called the Wisdom of Solomon, "A work which is certainly not esteemed authoritative by all" (*De Principiis* IV.i.33).
- C. Julius Africanus and Origen disagreed over the inclusion of apocryphal books with Daniel; Julius wrote to Origen, "I cannot understand how it escaped you that this part of the book is spurious ... plainly a more modern forgery ... [unlike the apocryphal additions which were originally Greek-DFC] all the books of the Old Testament have been translated from Hebrew into Greek" (1); Origen effectively responded that since they were generally accepted by those in Greek churches--specifically referring to Tobias [Tobit] and Judith which "the Jews do not use" (Letter 13)--that it would be wise to also accept them (Letter 3) and he continued to argue his case with some vehemence through the rest of the letter, saying at one point that Julius spoke "somewhat irreverently, and without the becoming spirit of piety ... in this scoffing way of the Scriptures" (Letter 11), though he referred to these and other sections as uncanonical (Letter 9).

VI. IS THERE ANY VALUE IN ANY OF THE APOCRYPHAL BOOKS?

- A. Largely, no; however ...
 1. The history of 1 Maccabees is very valuable and helps to demonstrate the accuracy of genuine prophecy--especially that of Daniel.
 2. 2 Maccabees 7 provides an excellent illustration of the resolve of the

faithful Jews in the time of the despotic Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

CONCLUSION:

1. While one may not always, even with the words "Holy Bible," be able to judge a book by its cover, the authenticity of the canon and its distinction from uninspired works is evident when one applies an honest and humble and open-minded reasoning to Bible study (Isa. 1:18).

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Which New Testament Books Belong in the Bible?

Daniel F. Cates

INTRODUCTION:

1. In 2003, with the release of Dan Brown's *The DaVinci Code*, many Bible believers were shocked to hear that there are other "gospels."
2. Others were aware of this well before--especially given the 1945 discovery of the Gnostic gospels at Nag Hammadi in Egypt.
3. Some have run across *The Apocryphal New Testament* which was produced in London in 1820.
4. Some may have only had their first taste of other rejected Bible books with the 2003 and 2007 documentaries *Banned from the Bible* parts I and II or 2005's *The Other Bible*.
5. Why do we recognize the 27 New Testament books which we recognize?

DISCUSSION:

I. DEFINITION OF TERMS.

- A. An "apocalypse" is a book which reveals something through the use of symbolism; while there are numerous Bible books and chapters which employ apocalyptic language (Revelation, Daniel, Zechariah, Ezekiel, etc.), many pseudepigraphal books claim to be apocalyptic.
- B. "The Apocalypse" is the book of Revelation, its name coming from the opening of the book in the Greek, *αποκαλυψις*.
- C. "Gnostic gospels" are heretical accounts of the life of Jesus which were produced by members of various Gnostic sects who generally elevated some special knowledge which they claimed alone to possess, denied the divinity of Jesus, believed in the incompatibility of evil flesh with pure spirit, and accordingly promoted disparate views of the nature of God.
- D. "Nag Hammadi" refers to the Egyptian location of the discovery of a number of Gnostic texts in 1945.

II. BOOKS ACCEPTED.

- A. Jude wrote, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (3).
1. From this, Harold Brown accurately reasoned, "The fact that heresies continually arose, from the beginnings of Christianity, but were cast aside, leaving a solid nucleus of belief intact through the centuries, supports the contention that the nucleus was there and was solid from

- the beginning, even though the documents that define it, and that now serve as our standards of comparison, are relatively late" (73,74).
2. That relatively late date, he gives at "effectively complete by A.D. 200, although a few books remained controversial until into the fourth century" (Brown, 74).
- B. The canon stands closed; Geisler and Nix wrote, "Theologically the canon is closed. God has inspired only so many books and they were all completed by the end of the apostolic period (first century-A.D.). ... Historically the canon is closed. For there is no evidence that any such special gift of miracles has existed since the death of the apostles. The immediate successors of the apostles did not claim new revelation, nor did they claim the special confirmatory gifts. ... The canonical books are those necessary for faith and practice of believers of all generations" (217,218).
- C. In the early fourth century, Eusebius wrote, "At this point, it may be appropriate to list the New Testament writings already referred to. The holy quartet of the Gospels are first, followed by the Acts of the Apostles. Next are Paul's epistles, 1 John, and 1 Peter. The Revelation of John may be added, the arguments regarding which I shall discuss at the proper time. These are the recognized books. Those that are disputed yet known to most are the epistles called James, Jude, 2 Peter, and the so-named 2 and 3 John, the work of the evangelist or of someone with the same name" (III.25).

III. SOME BOOKS REJECTED.

- A. Many books were rejected from the New Testament canon; generally falling into these categories:
1. "Infancy gospels" that told of events in the life of Mary or others or of Jesus' performing miracles--innocent (1 Infancy 15:1-6) or mischievous (1 Infancy 17:7) or even wicked ones (1 Infancy 19:20,21)--as a child though Scripture says his first was performed at the outset of His earthly ministry (John 2:11).
 - a. These are classified among "New Testament Apocrypha."
 2. "Gnostic gospels" and other Gnostic books which discredited Jesus as God (like the recently popularized Gospel of Judas which holds Judas as a hero).
 3. New Testament apocrypha abound not only as infancy Gospels, but also as books of "Acts" of various ones like John, Peter, Paul, etc.
 4. Numerous apocryphal "apocalypses" supposedly of New Testament people join many like natured Old Testament pseudepigrapha.

IV. WHY WERE THE REJECTED BOOKS REJECTED?

- A. The rejected books were rejected because, being uninspired, they were other gospels (Gal. 1:6-9), not "once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3), not "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" (2 Tim. 3:16,17), and not pertaining "unto life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3).

V. THE VIEW OF THE "CHURCH FATHERS."

- A. Irenaeus referred to the "Protoevangel of Thomas" among similar "apocryphal and spurious writings" elevated by the Marcosians as "false and wicked" and likewise designed "to bewilder the minds of foolish men" (I.xx.1).
- B. Origen wrote of the pseudepigraphal Doctrine of Peter, "That work is not included among ecclesiastical books; for we can show that it was not composed either by Peter or by any other person inspired by the Spirit of God" (Preface.8).

VI. IS THERE ANY VALUE IN ANY OF THESE REJECTED BOOKS?

- A. No.

CONCLUSION:

1. The recognition of canon is essential to appreciating the Word of God.
2. When one misses canon, then any doctrine becomes reasonable regardless of how heretical it may truly be!

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Various Criticisms of the Bible

Keith A. Mosher, Sr.

INTRODUCTION:

1. In *Advance Introduction to the Bible* courses taught in many graduate schools, students will often read about a third-century Bible critic named Malchus Porphery who attempted to gather into one volume all the alleged contradictions in the Bible.
2. Why report such a fact to modern Bible students? To allay any fears that any later or recent attacks on the Bible are strange phenomena [In fact, Satan, at the dawn of civilization, tried to denigrate the Word of God; Genesis 3:4-5].
3. How many “satans” today have convinced themselves that the Bible cannot be God’s Word, because it is just one big discrepancy?
4. The Bible has been scrutinized more than all other literature, yet the Bible stands, and the critic is gone!

I. WHY ARE THERE CRITICAL ALLEGATIONS?

- A. First of all it should be noted that many critics fail to note the differences in the *chronologies* of certain events recorded in Holy Writ.
 1. Many, for example, have found a “contradiction” between John 20:17 and Matthew 28:9.
 2. Compare John 20:24-29.
- B. Second, too few Bible critics fail to recognize *who* is making the recorded statement.
 1. Compare Acts 2:38 and the “gift of the Holy Spirit.”
 2. Some recorded statements are the words of uninspired men (e.g. John 9:31).
- C. In the third place multitudes of Bible critics commit the error of failing to recognize the viewpoints of the various writers. Note Exodus 33:23 and John 1:18, and then note Isaiah 6:1 and John 12:41.
- D. Fourth, there are those who, denying any supernatural influence on the writers of the Holy Bible, try to “late-date” all of the books so that the amazing prophecies of later events can be denied.
 1. Rudolph Bultmann, for example, imagined that the Bible, especially the New Testament, was no more than *myth* and that one would have to *demythologize* the text to guess at who the real Jesus was!
 2. Note 1 Corinthians 14:37.
- E. In the fifth place, one of the huge failures of Bible critics is that they do not realize, or at least do not teach, that only context gives true meanings to words. Dictionaries and lexicons give *usage* not *meaning*.

F. Finally, scribal errors, most of which are now corrected by the modern textual critic, can creep into a text, but that is not the fault of the original penman [Note 1 John 5:7 and John 5:4].

II. HISTORICAL CRITICS ARE ANTI-VERBAL INSPIRATION.

["Higher criticism" is the exercise of opinion as to the genuineness of the Biblical text and is most often destructive criticism.]

- A. When scholarly research is applied to the transmission of the Bible manuscripts, such efforts are called textual or lower criticism. Generally, textual critics have assumed that the Bible is the inspired, inerrant Word of God, or their work would have no meaning.
- B. Historical or higher criticism can be limited to three areas.
 - 1. The techniques of dating a manuscript are subjective.
 - 2. Historical verification of the events recorded is demanded and the text is often mocked if such physical evidence is not forthcoming.
 - 3. The history of a given manuscript within a community is questioned.
- D. Higher critics who seek to discover the materials the supposed non-inspired Bible writers used to write their books are called *source* or *literary* critics.
- E. Higher critics who study the literary forms of the Bible (such as history, poetry, and prose) are known as *form* critics. [See Bultmann above.]
 - 1. Old Testament form critics, in the classical sense, followed the *documentary hypothesis* as to how the Bible originated. [Modern Old Testament form critics are now down-playing the documentary hypothesis idea and are opting for the concept that since the Jewish community thought the text was from God and so treated the material as divine, modern communities, at least, can adopt the same attitude!]
 - 2. Form criticism as applied to the New Testament is called *formgeschichte* or *form-history*. German rationalistic theologians applied their evolutionary ideas to the gospel accounts and assumed that Mark wrote first from an oral *quelle* (German for source), and that that "*q*" *material* was then copied from Mark and added to by Matthew and Luke.
 - a. Such critics decided, without any real evidence, that their own non-supernatural, evolutionary theories about the two-decade time frame from the beginning of the church until the first written gospel account was filled with oral tradition about Jesus. Note, however, Luke 1:1-4!
 - b. Form critics then classify such imaginary sayings into forms and then attempt to guess at the *sitz in leben* (the

situation in life) for the supposed traditional sayings. *In other words, the form critic is examining his own assumptions in order to “discover” the assumptions of the early church in all those stories it told about Jesus.*

- c. Compare the so-called *Bultmannian secret*.
3. An offshoot of form criticism is *tradition criticism* which concept is that within the stories told, when passed on by word of mouth, are traditions that developed as the stories were embellished over the years.
4. *Redaction criticism* is also a by-product of higher criticism and assumes that a myriad of *editors* used available sources to assemble the Bible. Who those great editors were has not been revealed, for all such is speculation.
5. Given all of the above, however, Peter is still recorded as teaching that no man ever thought of the Bible text on his own (2 Pet. 1:20-21).

III. TEXTUAL CRITICS FIND AND ELIMINATE “VARIANTS” IN THE ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS.

- A. Given the fact that there are nearly 6,000 manuscripts, 10,000 to 20,000 translations, and 36,000 patristic quotations available, textual critics are bound to find some variants in all those copies.
- B. Textual critics count about 200,000 variants but the real problems only involve about one tenth of one percent of the text. [Compare this to McGarvey’s day.]
 1. An example of a variant is 1 Corinthians 15:50.
 2. Another example of a variant is Matthew 6:11.
- C. It should be noted here, then, that a translation is no more reliable than the text from which it is made.
- D. The textual critic, today, is able to do several things in order to make sure that the autograph has been established.
 1. Readings of known, reliable copies, can be used to eliminate scribal (copyist) errors.
 2. The styles of the Bible authors are easily recognized and any additions thus eliminated.
 3. The “shorter” readings are, generally, more reliable since the textual critic knows that the copyist usually added to the text, if he did make an error.
 4. The modern textual critic also knows that the more difficult reading is more often than not the correct one since it would be rare for a copyist to make the text more difficult.

- E. Textual critics have collated the ancient manuscripts by *families*, the largest of which is the **Byzantine**; the second largest is the **Western**, which family has the largest number of variants; the **Caesarean** which manuscripts seem to have been influenced by Origen of Alexandria, Egypt in the second century A.D.; and the **Alexandrian** group. [The relative merits of the Alexandrian group versus the Byzantine family is the chief issue between the *majority text* method of Bible translation and the **critical debate** method used by most modern translators today.]
- F. Many theological differences between Catholics, Protestants, and the Bible can be traced to which Bibles were more popular in ancient times.
 - 1. The majority text has no early witness before A.D. 350.
 - 2. The reason it is popular has to do with the Greek Orthodox's reaction to Rome and its influence on the Greek text.

IV. THE TRANSLATION DEBATE IS ONGOING.

- A. All books lose force in translation, and no new translation has arrived without incurring the displeasure of its detractors.
- B. Note that translation is a science which probably owes more to those who have sought to translate the Bible than to any other group of translators.
- C. Wycliffe's, Tyndale's, and the King James translations all had their enemies.
- D. There are varying views about translations.
 - 1. Pedantry insists that only the original languages should be used. (These scholars mock those who have to use translations and call them ponies and not real horses!)
 - 2. Literal translations are actually impossible. [Both a literal and idiomatic translation can, however, give the meaning.]
 - 3. Dynamic equivalence often goes too far.
 - 4. Translation is a very complex process and involves a *source* language and a *receptor* language. There must, then, by *good analysis* of the source and some *restructuring* of the receptor.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Most seminarians downgrade the Bible to nothing more than the evolutionary product of communities which texts were passed on and edited over the centuries.
- 2. Critical allegations result from failures to use proper approaches to the text.
- 3. Higher criticism denigrates verbal inspiration.
- 4. Textual criticism evaluates manuscripts and other materials in order to eliminate variants and to reestablish the autograph (the original).

5. Translation, then, depends of the type of Hebrew and Greek manuscripts chosen by the translators.

Methods of Recording and Publishing God's Word

Clifton Angel

INTRODUCTION:

1. God has spoken (Heb. 1:1-2).
2. Praise Him for doing so, for "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23).
3. Throughout creation and the Bible, there are evidences of God's Law of Divine Economy – sometimes called God's Law of Parsimony.
 - a. It is the idea that God does not waste energy in accomplishing His will.
 - b. In the words of the beloved Curtis A. Cates, "God doesn't lick his calf twice."
4. Considering God's efficiency and man's need for God's words of direction, it is only logical that God would have His words recorded, published, and preserved throughout history.
5. In this study, we will endeavor to answer two questions pertaining to God's methods of recording and publishing His Word:
 - A. **How far have we come?**
 - B. **Where will we go?**

DISCUSSION:

I. HOW FAR HAVE WE COME?

- A. Before the words of the Bible began to be written, there was the "Development of Writing" (Wegner 75).
 1. Paul D. Wegner asserts, "Before there were written documents, information was transmitted orally so that accuracy depended upon the memory of the orator" (Wegner 75).
 2. As it pertains to God's revelation to man, at least the first portion of Wegner's statement holds weight; for, the first occurrence of the Hebrew word for "write" in the Biblical text (except for Job 13:23, 19:23, and 31:35) is the occasion of Exodus 17:14.
 - a. (Because of evidence that will not be considered in this manuscript, I am confident that the life of Job was during the Patriarchal period, which would put him before Moses' lifetime and most likely closer to that of Abraham; this also adds affirmation that "writing" existed before the days of Moses).
 - b. We can be certain that Moses is the human author of Genesis and Exodus, which historical records include events prior to the life of Moses and during the life of Moses, yet prior to his commission to begin writing Scripture.

- c. Therefore, aside from the Book of Job, any revelation from God that was written prior to Moses' writings has not been preserved.
 - d. That which God has revealed and preserved for us until today can be trusted to be the complete revelation that man needs from God.
 - e. Interestingly, while Exodus 17:14 contains the first occurrence of the Hebrew word "write" in the Pentateuch, it also contains the word for "said," which word can be found first at Genesis 1:3 and many times between Genesis 1:3 and Exodus 17:14.
3. Wegner goes on to give some history to the "Development of Writing" (Wegner 75).
- a. "Some of the earliest forms of writing are pictures and **drawings** that communicated a story or idea" (Wegner 75; **emphasis added, CA**).
 - b. "In a **pictogram** pictures of objects represent letters or sounds" (Wegner 77; **emphasis added, CA**).
 - c. "A **logogram** is a picture that represents a concept, and each picture may have several different meanings" (Wegner 78-79; **emphasis added, CA**).
 - d. "In the next stage of writing," which he refers to as "**Syllabic Writing**," "signs no longer represented a concept but a sound" (Wegner 79; **emphasis added, CA**).
 - e. "Once an **alphabet** was developed in the next stage of writing, there would be no limit to the possible word combinations that could be made."
 - i. "In this stage a letter equals a sound so that words are formed by placing together certain sounds."
 - ii. "The **alphabet**, with its ability to reduce a language to between twenty to thirty signs, revolutionized communication – something we take for granted" (Wegner 79-80; **emphasis added, CA**).
 - f. It was not until this study that I realized the possibility that Adam, Eve, and their contemporaries may have lived *without* an alphabet and writing as we know it.
- B. The "Development of Writing" necessitated materials to write upon and the methods of writing upon said materials.
- 1. "In almost every region the earliest material on which writing has been found is **stone**" (Lightfoot 5; **emphasis added, CA**).
 - a. "Stone inscriptions (the Moabite Stone and the Siloam inscription) are also the oldest known examples of writing in the land of Palestine" (Lightfoot 5).

- b. Logically, stone is one of the first materials used and explicitly mentioned in the Bible for the recording of Scripture.
 - c. "And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them" (Ex. 24:12; see also Ex. 31:18; 32:15-16; 34:1, 28; Deut. 5:22; 27:2-3; Josh. 8:30-32; Job 19:24).
 - d. Inscribing words into stone required the use of a **chisel** (Geisler 337).
 - i. However, it was the "finger of God" that inscribed the tablets of stone given to Moses by God.
 - ii. "And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God" (Ex. 31:18; see also Deut. 9:10).
2. Perhaps just as old and used contemporarily with stone, **clay** was inscribed using a **stylus** and then sun-dried or baked (Geisler 336-337).
- a. Clay was "used in ancient Sumer as early as about 3500 B.C." (Geisler 336).
 - b. Jeremiah seemed to reference writing on clay: "O LORD, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the **earth**, because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters" (Jer. 17:13; **emphasis added, CA**).
 - c. Ezekiel used clay in his work as a prophet: "Thou also, son of man, take thee a **tile**, and lay it before thee, and portray upon it the city, even Jerusalem" (Ezekiel 4:1; **emphasis added, CA**).
3. **Papyrus** may have been the first writing material that was made in the form of a sheet.
- a. "It was made by pressing and gluing two layers of split papyrus reeds together in order to form a sheet" (Geisler 337).
 - b. Geisler dates it as far back as 3100 B.C. (337).
 - c. Lightfoot dates it as far back as 3500 B.C. (6).
 - d. Lightfoot also asserts with confidence that the original letters of the New Testament were written on sheets of papyrus (6).
 - e. Wegner writes, "Papyrus was significantly more convenient than clay tablets since it could be easily written upon,

- was very light, could be joined in scrolls or codices (books), and was easily handled" (93–94).
- f. However, he goes on to indicate how that papyrus lacked durability in comparison to a material like clay (Wegner 94).
 - g. In the "first or second century A.D. ... the papyrus roll began to give way to what is known as the papyrus **codex**. A codex manuscript is simply what we know today as a book" (Lightfoot 6).
 - h. **Pen** and **ink** were used for writing on papyrus and most of the materials mentioned below (Geisler 338).
4. Another material that could be had in sheet form and made into scrolls was **leather**.
- a. Donald L. Brake states, "The earliest known manuscripts of the Old Testament date from the Babylonian captivity in 586 BC" (25).
 - i. My understanding is that these are the oldest manuscripts to have been discovered to the date of his publication.
 - ii. He goes on to tell these manuscripts were "written on leather in the form of a scroll" (Brake 25).
 - b. Leather is believed to have been the material used by Jeremiah and Baruch at the occasion of Jeremiah 36 (Geisler 337; Lightfoot 5).
 - c. While **pen** and **ink** were employed for writing, a **penknife** was used for sharpening the pen, and, on at least one occasion, it was used for destruction: "And it came to pass, that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth" (Jer. 36:23) (Mosher 332–333).
 - d. Let us now consider some of the scribal rules developed between 100 B.C. and A.D. 400 for the purpose of maintaining the accuracy of the Old Testament text:
 1. Only parchments made from clean animals were allowed; these were to be joined together with thread from clean animals.
 2. Each written column of the scroll was to have no fewer than forty-eight and no more than sixty lines whose breadth must consist of thirty letters.
 3. The page was first to be lined, from which the letters were to be suspended.

4. The ink was to be black, prepared according to a specific recipe.
 5. No word or letter was to be written from memory.
 6. There was to be the space of a hair between each consonant and the space of a small consonant between each word, as well as several other spacing rules.
 7. The scribe must wash himself entirely and be in full Jewish dress before beginning to copy the scroll.
 8. He could not write the name *Yahweh* with a newly dipped brush, nor take notice of anyone, even a king, while writing this sacred name" (Wegner 172).
5. **Parchment**, like leather, was made from animal skins.
 - a. "The skins are soaked in lime water to make them white" (Wegner 95).
 - b. "Parchment was more expensive than papyrus, but it had several advantages: it is smooth and durable, both sides could be written on, the light color gave clarity to the writing, and parchment could be reused" (Wegner 95).
 - c. Geisler & Nix distinguish parchment from leather also by its ability to be written upon on both sides, whereas leather was primarily one-sided for the purpose of making scrolls (337).
 - d. Parchments are explicitly mentioned by Paul: "The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the **parchments**" (2 Tim. 4:13; **emphasis added, CA**).
 6. Closely akin to parchment is the writing material called **vellum**.
 - a. Vellum was essentially parchment, but with a much higher quality and often much thinner (Lightfoot 7; Wegner 95).
 - b. "Vellum was not known prior to 200 B.C." (Geisler 337).
 - c. Lightfoot indicates, "Vellum came into prominence as a writing material due to the efforts of King Eumenes II (197–158 B.C.) of Pergamum in Asia Minor" (7).
 - d. "It was inevitable that vellum would replace papyrus, and so from the fourth century through the Middle Ages the principle receptacle for the written Word of God was vellum."
 7. Other materials mentioned by Geisler & Nix and Lightfoot are:

"**metal** (Ex. 28:36; Job 19:24; Matt. 22:19–20); a **wooden** writing board recessed to hold a **wax** writing surface (cf. Isa. 8:1; 30:8; Hab. 2:2; Luke 1:63); **precious stones** (Ex. 28:9, 11, 21; 39:6–14); ... **potsherds** (Job 2:8), better known as **ostraca**;" "**linen**" (Geisler 337); and **lead** (Lightfoot 8).

8. **Paper** which comes from the word "papyrus" (Brake 29) has been manufactured in a number of different ways from a number of different materials throughout history (Geisler 350–351).
 - a. Geisler & Nix place the origin of paper as far back as the second century A.D. and beginning in China (350).
 - b. It was used in Eastern Turkestan in the fourth century, Arabia in the eighth century, and Europe in the tenth century (Geisler 350).
 - c. Europeans began manufacturing paper in the twelfth century, and it gained popularity and commonality in Europe by the thirteenth century (Geisler 350–351).
- C. The **printing press** was revolutionary to publishing in general, and especially to the copying and publishing of the Bible.
 1. Despite what many believe, Johann Gutenberg did not invent printing, nor movable type (Wegner 263; Brake 69).
 2. Rather, "The seeds of automated printing belong to the Chinese" (Brake 69).
 3. The Chinese printed the first book using "carved wood block images" in A.D. 868 (Wegner 263).
 - a. A new block had to be carved for every different page desired.
 - b. They also invented movable type around A.D. 1041–1049 (Wegner 263).
 - c. This allowed letter blocks to be moved around in a frame to form different pages of words; however, the massive amount of characters in the Chinese alphabet prevented it from becoming popular among the Chinese (Wegner 263).
 - d. This is where Johann Gutenberg comes on the scene.
 4. While Gutenberg was not the inventor of printing with movable type, he is the pioneer of rediscovering and popularizing it (Wegner 263).
 - a. Gutenberg lived from 1398 to 1468 (Wegner 264).
 - b. His first complete book was his greatest work – the Gutenberg Bible (Wegner 263).
 - c. It was originally named "Mazarin Bible" or "42 Line Bible" (Brake 70).
 - d. It was a "two-volume copy of Jerome's Latin Vulgate (Wegner 263).
 - e. Building his press and printing several copies of the Bible put Gutenberg into a debt he could not repay; therefore, his lender Johann Fust seized his printing shop, press, and Bibles (Brake 72).

5. "For centuries biblical manuscripts had been hand-copied from earlier texts, a process that took many hours of painstaking effort and risked introducing new mistakes into the text" (Wegner 264).
 6. "With the invention of the printing press things began to change, as Bruce Metzger notes: 'Now copies of books could be reproduced more rapidly, more cheaply, and with a higher degree of accuracy than had every been possible previously'" (Wegner 264).
 7. "By 1500, ... Bibles from printing presses were found in seventeen European countries" (Brake 72).
 - a. "Towns with presses grew to 260, and there were 1,120 printing offices" (Brake 72).
 - b. "Almost forty thousand different works in various editions totaling more than ten million copies had flooded the market" (Brake 72).
 8. Although he died "destitute and forgotten," "Clearly Gutenberg had an impact" (Brake 72).
- D. Industry, manufacturing, transportation, trade, technology, etc. all play a part in the transformation and development of new methods of publishing God's Word.
1. Mark Mitchell claims to own an original copy of the first **newspaper** ever printed: *The Oxford Gazette*.
 - a. It was printed in 1665 (Mitchell).
 - b. It contains record of one week of Black Plague deaths (Mitchell).
 - c. To this date, I, and I am sure other Gospel preachers also, write short newspaper articles containing studies of and lessons from God's written Word.
 2. The first **radio** was invented by Nikolai Tesla in 1893, but the first pattern for "wireless telegraphy" was received in 1896 by Guglielmo Marconi, "who is often credited as the father and inventor of the radio" (Wood).
 - a. The first uses of the radio were by the military, who primarily communicated via Morse code messages (Wood).
 - b. In the 1920s, following World War I, the radio began to gain popularity with civilians, the first advertisements were aired, and radio news broadcasting was born (Wood).
 - c. The Moody Bible Institute lays claim to "the first Christian radio station," which was started in 1926 ("70 Years").
 - d. I am not certain of the first radio broadcast by members of the Lord's church, but *The Christian Chronicle* has reported on

- one continuous program than can be dated as far back as 1947: Herald of Truth (Fulton).
- e. Modern radio has been transformed by satellite technology and the internet.
 - i. To this day, several Gospel preachers still visit radio studios and broadcast messages from God's Word.
 - ii. Furthermore, many Gospel preachers have discovered and made use of internet broadcasting in the form of **podcasts**.
3. "Electronic **television** was first successfully demonstrated in San Francisco on Sept. 7, 1927" (Stephens; **emphasis added, CA**).
- a. Closely connected, yet preceding television, is **photography** and **videography** ("History of Photography").
 - b. Since their inception, photography, videography, and television have advanced exponentially, and so, to try to reach the masses, many teachers of the Bible have sought to use these means as much as possible also.
 - c. Jule Miller and Texas H. Stevens produced the "Visualized Bible Study" on **film strips** in 1956 (Harp).
 - i. One author writes, "It is arguably the greatest evangelist tool ever produced by churches of Christ" (Harp).
 - ii. Today, the production is often called "The Jule Miller Film Strips."
 - d. One of the best works begun in the field of television is the Gospel Broadcasting Network, which has been able produce Bible teaching material of its own and to broadcast more widely a number of other faithful televised Bible programs.
4. **Computer** technology and the **internet** have completely changed how our modern world operates.
- a. We have more information at our fingertips than our minds can begin to consume.
 - b. For the Bible student, free access can be made to a wealth of Bible resources.
 - i. All English translations of the Bible and many in other languages as well can be accessed online.
 - ii. For example, consider the *Bible Gateway* website.
 - iii. Numerous Bible commentaries, dictionaries, and lexicons can be accessed online.
 - iv. For example, consider the *Bible Study Tools* website.
 - c. Videos of Bible teaching can be produced and watched easily via computers, tablets, and smart phones.

- d. Bible teaching can be conducted to students who are literally on the opposite side of the globe from the teacher, using programs like Skype and FaceTime.
 - e. Entire libraries can be stored on electronic devices that fit within the palms of our hands.
 - i. For example, my current iPhone has 64 gigabytes of data storage.
 - ii. Ted Holmes reports in his blog that a non-illustrated King James Bible would require about **four megabytes** of digital storage (Holmes).
 - iii. Now, one gigabyte is equal to 1,024 megabytes.
 - iv. Therefore, 256 KJV Bibles can be stored electronically in one gigabyte.
 - v. Therefore, 16,384 KJV Bibles can be stored within the storage capacity of my handheld phone.
 - vi. If that's not overwhelming enough, storage devices called **portable hard drives** are very affordable, fit in the palm of the hand, and can contain multiple terabytes (1,024 gigabytes is equal to one terabyte).
- E. One subject that is inherently connected with any writing is the language that is used.
1. The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew, with a small portion being Aramaic.
 2. The New Testament was originally written in Koine Greek.
 3. According to *Wycliffe Global Alliance*, the complete Bible has been translated into 636 languages, while just the New Testament has been translated into 1,442 languages ("Scripture").
 - a. YouVersion, which has a Bible application that can be downloaded and used on smart phones and tablets, boasts of "support" for 1,071 languages ("Installs").
 - b. However, there are 7,097 living languages ("2016 Bible").

II. WHERE WILL WE GO?

- A. I do not know.
1. I do not know what developments will be made in the future as pertains to writing, writing materials, and methods of publishing.
 2. I do not know what developments will be made in the future as pertains to electronic transmission, computer technology, and memory storage.
- B. However, I do know that, *as we go*, we must seek to make disciples by teaching them of God's written Word, baptizing them according to

God's authority, and continue to teach them from what God has recorded, published, and preserved.

1. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matt. 28:18-20).
2. Even God's first commission of man concerning His written Word was for the purpose of teaching: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them" (Ex. 24:12).

C. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35).

1. "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pet. 1:24-25).
 - a. A note of interest and importance needs to be made here.
 - b. Although God has accomplished a beautiful and unfathomable task in recording, publishing, and preserving His Word, never has the written Word disposed of God's desire for men to orally proclaim His revelation.
 - c. "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21).
2. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27).
3. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10).
4. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" (2 Cor. 5:11a).

CONCLUSION:

1. God has spoken (Heb. 1:1-2).
2. Without His Word, mankind is broken (Jer. 10:23); but by His grace, power, and providence, we have His Word written, and now published in so many different ways.
3. God has spoken.

- a. Are we listening?
- b. Are we telling others?

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Modern Versions (Part I)

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

INTRODUCTION:

1. Why Versions are needed in our day.
 - A. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew and small portions in the Aramaic.
 - B. The New Testament was penned originally in Greek.
 - C. Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek are not our native tongues.
 - D. We speak English and thus need an English version.
2. There was an English translator in the twentieth century who declared the job of Bible translation is an impossible one.
 - A. Such a view is a serious reflection upon the Godhead who gave us the Bible through inspired men – some 32 for the Old Testament and 8 for the New Testament.
 - B. Those who translated the Old Testament from the Hebrew into the Greek, the Septuagint, did not work on an impossible task. They knew translation was possible, and they did it.
 - C. Deity, the Godhead Three, never intended that the Bible remain in one language and one only. The Bible is meant for the whole human family, worldwide, and all men do not speak the same language quite obviously.
 - D. Interestingly enough, the English man who made the above statement headed a group which put out a translation!

I. HERE ARE SOME ESSENTIAL MATTERS RELATIVE TO TRANSLATIONS.

- A. We are not to add to or subtract from God's word (Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18-19). Included also are warnings not to substitute or modify His word.
- B. There are three essentials for a good translation.
 1. It must be accurate.
 2. It must be understandable.
 3. It must be dignified and majestic. In translational work we are not dealing with comic books or newspapers. Some have gone so far as to say, "I want a Bible that reads like today's newspaper!" This is a most perilous attitude since there is nothing in our homes of less value than a day old newspaper! In translations we are dealing with God's holy and eternal word.

II. LET US LOOK AT SOME MODERN VERSIONS WITH THEIR DANGERS – THE RSV.

A The RSV of 1946, the New Testament and 1952, the Old and New set forth a tone for many that would come later.

1. It was modernistic, put out by modernists and to advance the cause of modernism.
2. One of its own translators of the Old Testament, Harry M. Orlinsky, affirmed out west that "the RSV is the Bible of the liberal Protestant community." His assessment is true.
3. Bro. Stroop, a teacher of mine in David Lipscomb College, reviewed the RSV shortly after it came out. He wrote, "If the RSV becomes popular with many people, the ones that will follow it will get worse and worse." They have!
4. Let us take a look at what they did with Psalm 45:6; 51:5; Isa. 7:14; Mark 16:9-20; Luke 1:1-4; Romans 11:20 and 1 Timothy 3 where they have an elder married only once – not the husband of one wife. Tell what is wrong with this mistranslation.
5. The RSV was bad from its infamous beginning.

III. THE TEV AND THE NEW ENGLISH BIBLE OF THE 1960's.

- A. They were modernistic in design.
- B. The TEV by Bratcher was called "Good News For Modern Man." It was misnamed; it was "Bad News For Modern Man." Look what he did with Matthew 5:17; Luke 1:27 between his first edition and the second one and Acts 20:7.
- C. In Matthew 16:18 the NEB "out-Romed Rome and out-Poped the Pope."

IV. THE LIVING BIBLE PARAPHRASED BY KENNETH TAYLOR.

- A. It is misnamed.
- B. It is not living.
- C. It is not the Bible.
- D. It is not a real paraphrased volume.
- E. It advances Calvinism and Premillennialism.
- F. For many years I have wished he had a different last name!

V. THE NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION OR THE NIV.

- A. It came out in the 1970 decade.
- B. Soon after it came out brother Guy N. woods told me personally, "As little as I think of the RSV, I would prefer it to the NIV. The NIV is shot through with error." He was right on target in his assessment of the NIV.
- C. Here are some errors from the NIV.
 1. Matthew 1:1 they changed Book to account. Why the change?
 2. Matthew 5:17 and Ephesians 2:15 are contradictory.
- D. Look at how it dealt with fornication as they softened the term.

- E. Look at the change they made on "only begotten" in John 1, 3 and 1 John 4:9.
- F. They messed up badly Acts 2:27, 32.
- G. In Romans and Galatians they have us with a sinful nature. However, we get our nature from God.
- H. How they tampered with the gospel plan of salvation.
- I. Note what they did to Ephesians 5:19.
- J. Why this perverted Bible ever caught on with so many of our professors, preachers and people in the pews is strange indeed.

VI. THE READER'S DIGEST BIBLE OF THE 1980's.

- A. It was linked with the RSV, and that says a mouthful.
- B. One of its producers said they had not tampered with doctrine even in this shortened Bible.
- C. There are about 773,000 words in our Bible. They left out about 300,000 words or about 40%. They omitted about 50% of the old and 25% of the New Testament.
- D. Give some of its deadly omissions.
- E. They omitted Revelation 22:18-19 as I almost knew they would.
- F. Relate what they did to a 2 Corinthian passage.
- G. It is perverted from Genesis to Revelation.

CONCLUSION:

1. This study has noticed only a very few of the many that came out during the 20th century.
2. I would not recommend a single of these as a safe and reliable Bible.
3. Each of the foregoing is danger personified to one's soul.

Modern Versions (Part II)

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

INTRODUCTION:

1. In this second part of our study on Versions in this lectureship I have been requested to deal with two modern Versions – one of which came out in the early part of the 21st century and an earlier one that came out the latter part of the 20th century.
2. I will deal with the English Standard Version first and the New King James Version next.
3. The former is much more objectionable than is the latter.

I. THE ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION

- A. It is new, but being new does not guarantee greater accuracy by any means.
 1. The New Revised Standard Version has new in its title but it is flawed with error.
 2. The NIV has new in its title but it is still a perversion, as I proved in our initial study.
- B. In Genesis 49:10 the ESV removes Shiloh and injects tribute in its place. Yet it places Shiloh in a footnote. Truth belongs in the text and not just a footnote! Jacob was not speaking to his sons about tribute or even a city in the usage of this term. He is speaking of a person who would come. Unto HIM would be the gathering of the people. He was speaking of the coming Messiah who would be seed of woman, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David. It is a Messianic pointer – not a tribute or a city reference.
- C. Some New Testament examples of its flawed translations.
 1. In Matthew 1 in the genealogy section they have Asaph for Asa. Yet in 1 Kings 15 they have Asa.
 2. In Matthew 1 they change Amon to Amos. Yet in the Old Testament the ESV has Amon in 2 Kings 22. Even the LBP and the NIV did not tamper with these names. An objector to this might say, "All this over names?" Who of us wishes to have our names changed? Furthermore, they get Kings and Matthew 1 out of harmony with each other. This is minus any and all justification.
 3. The ESV leaves Matthew 5:17, Ephesians 2:15 and Hebrews 10:9 in total shambles.
 4. Why change fornication or adultery in such passages as Matthew 5 and 19 into a much more inaccurate term? Show what is wrong with such.

5. Why change regeneration in Matthew 19:28 into new world unless they desired to please the premillennialists?
6. Why not translate eis in Matthew 28:19 as "into" and not "in?" The ASV did and the KJV should have.
7. Why change the definite "the" to the indefinite "a" in Mark 1:4?
8. Why bracket Mark 16:9-20, implying it is a questionable? Our older translations or versions did not bracket these verses. In my book on *Dangers of Modern Versions*, I devote an entire chapter on this passage. The late and lamented Noel Meredith and I once had a short conversation with one our professors who told us he could not be sure this passage belonged. Both of us answered, "We can be sure it belongs!" His modernism showed. He is now deceased and knows better no doubt!
9. In Luke 1:1-4 the ESV casts a doubt on Luke's inspiration, even as the RSV had done earlier. Luke had perfect understanding; he was not just a close observer of what he wrote! The RSV and ESV are kin to each other on this passage.
10. In Luke 14:5 is it son portrayed (ESV) or an ass (KJV) fallen into the pit?
11. In Luke 16:23 why change Abraham's bosom to Abraham's side?
12. The ESV tampered with monogenes (only-begotten) in John 1, 3 and 1 John 4:9.
13. Why bracket John 7:53-8:11, leaving the passage questionable?
14. Why make Sceva a high priest in Acts 19:14 instead of a chief priest? He may have been a pagan priest!
15. Why change convenient season in Acts 24:24ff to opportunity?
16. Why in the ESV of Romans 10:10 do they have justified at faith, salvation at confession, and yet have people baptized INTO Christ in Galatians 3:27?
17. Why change father and daughter to an engaged couple in 1 Corinthians 7:36-38? Here again the RSV and ESV are kindred versions – both flawed.
18. Why were they not consistent in placing the Holy Spirit in the upper case instead of doing so part of the time and not all the time in the Book of Revelation?
19. In no sense of the term will I recommend this version as dependable and accurate. IT IS NOT!

II. THE NEW KING JAMES VERSION.

- A. It is a fairly new translation coming out in the New New Testament in the latter part of the 1970's and the Old Testament added later.
- B. Its design was to update some of the expressions that came out in the older KJV.

- C. It claimed to unlock the treasures of the older KJV. I have read carefully the New King James and not aware of ANY treasures of the KJV that people could not have with the KJV of 1611. I have read the KJV New Testament 768 times as of December, 2016 and have never been aware that I was reading a version with locked treasures awaiting the debut of the NKJB.
- D. To its credit it does not make some of the serious errors most modern versions have in abundance. I shall now list a few of these for your consideration.
- E. It does a good job in updating many of these.
- F. At times this version will replace KJV terms that are less precise. Sexual immorality for fornication is one. Men and women may tell sexy stories to each other, read pornographic material and talk to each other about illicit matters and yet, due to various constraints, may never commit overt fornication. Who has trouble in determining what fornication and adultery really mean? Of lesser concern is changing err in Matthew 22:29 to mistaken.
- G. "Unto death" in Revelation 2:10 should have stayed "unto death," and not changed to "until death." "Until death" does not necessarily mean dying as a martyr, but "unto death" does if necessary.
- H. It possibly is the best version that has come out in our lifetime. Yet it has never been a temptation to me to shelve the KJV for the NKJB. In my judgment there has NEVER been a superior English version eclipsing the majestic KJV. There is absolutely nothing that I need for my salvation now and in eternity but what I can find and relish in my beloved KJV. It has been my conviction for many years that it, the KJV, will be responsible for populating heaven with more English speaking people than all other versions of the English combined. If you know of one or more that I need, not found in the KJV, you would be my friend to point it out.

CONCLUSION: Let us ever be content with a dependable Bible and not hearken to something simply because it is new.

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