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WHICH VERSION OF THE BIBLE IS THE BEST?

There are over 60 different versions of the Bible in the English language alone. Which one is the best? Which one should we use? Let's look at how they have come to us.

In Luke 24:44 Jesus Christ listed the 3 divisions of the Old Testament ... THE LAW, THE PROPHETS, and THE WRITINGS (or Psalms). Notice:

And he said unto them, These [are] the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the LAW OF MOSES, and [in] THE PROPHETS, and [in] THE Psalm, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand THE SCRIPTURES. (Luke 24:44-45)

Christ here defined "the Scriptures" as these 3 divisions. There was no Apocrypha that was inspired by God! That covers the Old Testament, and the New Testament had not yet been written.

2 Timothy 3:15-17 shows that ALL Scripture is inspired by God. And Revelation 22:18-19 clearly concludes God's written revelation to man for this age. Notice:

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

To sum this up: the 2 parts of the Bible (O.T. and N.T.) as originally inspired by God are PERFECT! But none of the over 60 different English translations referred to above totally reflects that original perfection. God inspired the original authors of all the books of the Bible; but God did not necessarily inspire any specific translator of those books.

An important key in assessing the value of any particular translation is to correctly identify the translators' source material. Different translators based their translations on different source material. The source material falls into 2 large groups:

- the books of the Old Testament, originally in Hebrew;
- the books of the New Testament, originally in Greek.

Now not all translators have had a knowledge of these 2 languages, Hebrew and Greek. Therefore they have at times relied on other manuscripts, which themselves already represented a translation from the originals. For example, some translators relied on the LXX (Greek Septuagint) instead of the Hebrew originals; others relied on the Latin manuscripts instead of the Greek New Testament. In such cases the translators obviously had no influence on the accuracy of their source materials.

The preservation of the Old Testament was committed to the Jews.

1 What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit [is there] of circumcision? 2 Much every way: chiefly, because that UNTO THEM WERE COMMITTED THE ORACLES OF GOD. (Romans 3:1-2)

The Jewish scribes took this responsibility very seriously indeed and thoroughly checked each new copy of a book for accuracy. Once that had been done, the old copy was destroyed ... thus they were not preserved. Even though some minor scribal errors did occur, producing minor textual differences, none of them really have any effect on doctrine and the Old Testament is not an area of major doctrinal controversy.

Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, [that] observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. (Matthew 23:2-3)

The scribes did preserve the Old Testament accurately, even though they didn't really understand what they were preserving, and even though they themselves don't really believe the Old Testament; they interpret it through their talmudic traditions.

The NEW TESTAMENT was not preserved by the Jewish scribes. The New Testament was recorded by the disciples of Jesus Christ ("disciples" being those He taught!).

BIND UP THE TESTIMONY, SEAL THE LAW AMONG MY DISCIPLES. (Isaiah 8:16)

To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, [it is] because [there is] no light in them. (Isaiah 8:20)

The same word for "seal" is also used in Isaiah 29:11, which reads:

And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of A BOOK THAT IS SEALED, which [men] deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I CANNOT; FOR IT [IS] SEALED: (Isaiah 29:11)

Of the 8 authors of the New Testament (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, James, Peter and Jude) 7 were Jews! Only Luke appears to have been a non-Jewish convert amongst these authors.

And Luke makes very clear that his gospel account was based on reports of the Jewish eyewitnesses of Christ's ministry (Luke 1:2), and the Book of Acts he wrote as a travelling companion of the Apostle Paul.

This means that the WHOLE Bible together is basically a Jewish book! But God inspired these 8 New Testament authors to use overwhelmingly the medium of the GREEK language to record the New Testament. All the New Testament books, except for Matthew's Gospel and the Letter to the Hebrews, were originally written in Greek. These two books are reported to have first been written in the Hebrew language, and then later translated into Greek. The original Hebrew copies for these two books are lost and only the Greek language copies have survived. Thus the entire New Testament has only been preserved in the Greek language.

When Isaiah 29:11 states: "Seal the law among my disciples", it meant that the disciples of Jesus Christ

would complete the canonizing of the New Testament text. Once that had been done by the disciples, the actual text was then preserved by the Greeks. They didn't do quite as good a job as the Jewish scribes had done. There are reasons for this.

SOME GENERAL BACKGROUND

In the HEBREW MSS the words were always separated from one another. But the Hebrew text did not preserve the vowel sounds. Thus the pronunciation of some words was lost. Also, by providing different vowels to some words, different meanings can be arrived at. This can happen even when the text has been preserved correctly! This produces errors in interpretation ... people arguing over which vowels are the correct ones to provide. (An analogy would be if in English we didn't write vowels and you had the word "ht" which could be "hat" or "hit" or "hot" or "hut" or "heat" or "hate" or "hoot" ... it could at times be rather difficult to know for sure which word was meant.)

This accounts for some of the divergent renderings you can find in the centre reference column of the KJV for many O.T. verses. The Hebrew vowel pointings were added only very much later and they carry no inspiration.

The originally inspired text also did not have any punctuation ... again allowing for some latitude in interpreting the written text. Did a word go with the previous sentence, or was it the first word of the new sentence (i.e. new thought)?

In the GREEK MSS all the words on one line were originally written together without any spaces between them. (This is also true for the LATIN MSS that were produced from the Greek and Hebrew texts.) All manuscripts were copied by hand, which is what the word "manuscript" means.

This allowed for much more error than the system of the Jewish O.T. scribes. A scribe copying a Greek manuscript line by line, without any spaces between the words could very easily skip a line or perhaps ten or twenty characters without noticing this.

The Jewish scribes, upon completing a copy of a book, would count and recount the total number of letters in that book, which were conveniently divided into separate words. If the number of letters in the new copy was not identical to the number in the old copy, then the mistake was searched for and rectified. This was a scrupulous and meticulous job.

The Greek scribes of New Testament books, in which there were no spaces between the words on a line, had no such system of "checks and balances". If a line was dropped, something that can easily happen when words run into one another, then it often went unnoticed. When a later scribe then wanted to make a new copy from this defective one, he might notice this mistake and try to make some sense out of this passage by providing the missing words. If he had access to another copy, he could check that one, or he might make "an educated guess" regarding the missing words or characters.

The originally inspired Greek texts also did not have any punctuation. The same comment as was made for the Hebrew texts in this regard applies here also.

CHAPTER divisions were first introduced into the LATIN VULGATE sometime between 1227 A.D. and 1248 A.D.. Around 1440 A.D. they were also introduced to the Old Testament Hebrew part of the Bible.

The division into VERSES first appeared in the Vulgate as early as 1558 A.D.. From then on they soon became a regular feature.

NUMBER OF MANUSCRIPTS: There are at least 5309 surviving Greek manuscripts. 95% of the time

they all agree ... put another way, 5% of the time some of these disagree with the other manuscripts. To give you some idea of the scope of this, let's look at the King James Version of the whole Bible. The following statistics apply to this English text and can be in a general way indicative of the situation with the Greek texts:

In the KJV there are 3,568,489 letters which make up 810,697 words which are divided into 31,175 verses which are divided into 1,189 chapters.

Taking the figure of 5% for disagreements amongst manuscripts we get: there are differences in 178,424 letters or in 40,534 words or in 1,558 verses or in 59 full chapters. That's a lot of scribal errors ... 178,424 letters were copied incorrectly or in some cases dropped! While this may sound like a very large number of discrepancies, this can in most cases be reconciled by accepting as correct the 95% of manuscripts which agree on any given verse.

FIRST 3 CENTURIES: Papyrus was used as writing material and there are 70 MSS dating to this time.

4TH CENTURY - 10TH CENTURY: Writing was now done on vellum or on parchment. The writing was in "uncials" ... rounded capital letters not connected to each other. There are 250 MSS from this period.

10TH CENTURY - 14TH CENTURY: Writing was done on vellum in cursive letters ... letters connected to each other. There are 2500 MSS and a further 1600 lectionaries from this period.

14TH CENTURY - 15TH CENTURY: Paper became the writing material and cursive letters were still used.

15TH CENTURY: Printing was invented with the Johann Gutenberg Bible (a Latin Vulgate version) being the first important book produced.

OTHER MANUSCRIPTS: There are also various other old manuscripts around. Among them we find:

OLD LATIN MSS: There are 40 MSS of these available. They differ greatly among themselves.

LATIN VULGATE: There are 8000 of these MSS around. They represent the official Catholic Bible.

SYRIAC PESHITTA VERSION: There are 250 MSS of these around.

HARKLEAN (i.e. SIMPLE) SYRIAC VERSION: 50 MSS are extant.

OTHERS: The EGYPTIAN VERSION, the ARMENIAN VERSION, the GEORGIAN VERSION, the ETHIOPIC VERSION, the PERSIAN VERSION, the GOTHIC VERSION, the SLAVONIC VERSION ... most of these are not at all faithful to the Byzantine Greek text.

THE SEPTUAGINT VERSION (LXX):

This represents the so-called first attempt at translating the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. Its origin is shrouded in myths. There is no proof that such a complete version ever existed. Various books of the Old Testament were at different times translated into Greek in Alexandria, Egypt.

The real author, the one to whom the only surviving LXX version today can be led back to is ORIGEN (his name means 'son of Horus'), an Egyptian and a Catholic theologian who lived from around 185 A.D. to 254 A.D.. Origen tried to combine all the slipshod Greek versions that were circulating at the time.

Origen used the New Testament Greek text to correct the Old Testament Greek LXX text in those places that are quoted in the New Testament. This way he made it look like the New Testament writers were quoting from the LXX he had put together. He managed to make about one third of the quotations from the Old Testament that appear in the New Testament agree verbatim with his LXX text. His LXX text is actually of a later date than the writings of the New Testament writers.

It is generally known that the LXX is a terribly poor quality rendition of the Hebrew Scriptures! (For more information see my 14-page paper on 'The Facts About the Septuagint'.)

But here is the important point: all three of our major old MSS from the 4th and 5th centuries (i.e. SINAITICUS, VATICANUS and ALEXANDRINUS) are based on the LXX! This means that the oldest surviving major MSS are all unreliable because their source material is unreliable! To illustrate this point:

CODEX VATICANUS MSS:

This is from around 350 A.D., or about 100 years after Origen produced his LXX. For the Old Testament it represents the LXX text. It is written on fine vellum and was discovered in the Vatican Library in 1481 A.D. ... very conveniently about 28 years after the fall of Constantinople (which event brought a flood of Greek New Testament MSS to Western Europe). It is of a shocking textual quality!!!

It leaves out (intentionally!) Genesis 1:1 - 46:28; Psalm 106 -138; Paul's Pastoral Epistles; Hebrews 9:14 - 13:25 and the whole book of Revelation. Further, in the gospels alone it leaves out 748 whole sentences, 452 clauses and 237 words. However, it does contain the Apocrypha! In the gospels alone it disagrees with SINAITICUS (the other old MSS) over 3000 times! (Remember the 5% margin of disagreements I referred to earlier.)

VATICANUS IS OLD, BUT TOTALLY USELESS!

CODEX SINAITICUS:

This is also from around 350 A.D. and also has its Old Testament text based on Origen's LXX. It was found in 1844 A.D. on the trash-pile (!!) of St. Catherine's Monastery by Tischendorf. The monks had thrown it out as useless!

It contains nearly all of the New Testament (as if "nearly all" is good enough!) PLUS "Epistle of Barnabas" and "Shepherd of Hermes". In many places from 10 to 50 words are dropped through sheer carelessness. On every page of the MSS there are corrections and revisions ... by as many as TEN different people. Many of these have been dated to the 6th and 7th centuries A.D.. It is even worse than Vaticanus!

These two old MSS, both representing Origen's LXX, can't even agree with each other! Both are nothing more than old rubbish! Yet, because of their age, scholars give credence to them. When a commentary says something like:

"Most of the oldest or most reliable MSS read as follows ..."

... they mean "VATICANUS and/or SINAITICUS reads as follows!" So don't be fooled by the label "the oldest manuscripts" or "the most reliable manuscripts". Scholars are fascinated by "old rubbish".

THE LATIN VULGATE VERSION:

By 250 A.D. a Latin version of the whole Bible was in existence in Carthage. Others soon appeared. But they disagreed with each other in many places. So in 382 A.D. Pope Damasus commissioned JEROME to make an official revision of these old Latin Bibles. This Jerome completed in 405 A.D.. Jerome used firstly the Latin versions already extant, then Origen's LXX and Origen's Hexapla and also SOME Hebrew manuscripts.

Jerome's efforts produced the LATIN VULGATE. It was NOT an accurate translation of the original texts, but a reconciling of all the versions he esteemed ... the LXX foremost among them. Jerome produced AN INTERPRETATION OF THOUGHT, put into beautiful Latin. Notice that the VULGATE is not strictly a faithful translation of the original texts, but the translator's INTERPRETATION of what he felt the original texts meant.

We have now departed a long way from the meticulous care of the Hebrew scribes in preserving the Old Testament!

However, for 1000 years this Latin Vulgate version of the Bible reigned supreme without a rival! It was and still is the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church. It is the source of the English language Catholic Bible, the Rheims-Douai Version. When the Protestant Reformation started, this was still the only Bible for most of the Protestants as well.

It was only when Constantinople fell to the Turks in 1453 A.D. (by then Jerome's Vulgate was already over 1000 years old!) that a flood of Greek MSS was brought to Western Europe by scholars who fled from Constantinople. This led to a revival in Biblical studies. Therefore Greek was then introduced as a subject of study at both, Oxford and Cambridge.

ORIGIN OF GREEK MANUSCRIPTS:

All the Greek MSS in existence today come from two areas in the Middle East ... 1) Antioch in Syria, and 2) Alexandria in Egypt. Let's look at both areas:

ANTIOCH: This city very quickly became a centre for the early New Testament Church.

Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and ANTIOCH, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. (Acts 11:19)

The Church there grew quickly ...

And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to ANTIOCH, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord. Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as ANTIOCH. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. (Acts 11:20-23)

Barnabas then brought Paul to Antioch ...

Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: And when he had found him, he brought him unto ANTIOCH. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the

church, and taught much people. And the disciples WERE CALLED CHRISTIANS FIRST IN ANTIOCH. (Acts 11:25-26)

It was in Antioch that members were first called "Christians". Antioch also had direct links to the Church in Jerusalem ...

And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. (Acts 11:27)

It was at Antioch that Paul and Barnabas were raised in rank to "Apostles" ...

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid [their] hands on them, they sent [them] away. (Acts 13)

Antioch became Paul's home-base. It was from there that Paul started all three of his journeys. The end of his first journey is recorded in Acts 14:26 ...

And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. (Acts 14:26)

To summarize: It is very easy to see from the New Testament that Antioch was a leading centre for the early Church. The majority of Greek MSS in existence come from the Antioch text-base. This represents about 95% of all Greek MSS. These MSS are known by the following names:

- ANTIOCHIAN TEXT,
- BYZANTINE TEXT,
- SYRIAN TEXT,
- MAJORITY TEXT,
- UNIVERSAL TEXT,
- REFORMATION TEXT,
- IMPERIAL TEXT,
- TRADITIONAL TEXT,
- TEXTUS RECEPTUS (i.e. RECEIVED TEXT).

ALEXANDRIA: This city never featured in the early Church at all! In the Bible "Egypt" is used to typify sin and slavery. Alexandria was a centre of Greek culture with very strong pagan influences. It was a melting-pot for Egyptian religious practices, Greek philosophies and Jewish traditions. Philo, a Jew, was from there and he attempted to reconcile the Greek customs of his day with his own Jewish heritage. It was here that the original corrupt translations of the books of the Old Testament were made that Origen,

another native of Alexandria, later combined into what we today know as the LXX version of the Old Testament. Another influential pagan teacher from Alexandria was Clement of Alexandria, a man from whom Origen got many of his ideas.

The integrity of both, the teachers from Alexandria and also the translations made there, leaves much to be desired. About 5% of all Greek MSS in existence trace their origins back to Alexandria.

These MSS are known by the following names:

- ALEXANDRIAN TEXT,
- EGYPTIAN TEXT,
- LOCAL TEXT,
- MINORITY TEXT,
- HESYCHIAN TEXT.

Now the point is this: when scholars talk about differences in the original Greek texts, they can usually be led back to the difference in these two areas of origin, Antioch and Alexandria.

God saw to it that the New Testament was preserved for us today. Which one did God preserve for us ... the 95% of texts from Antioch, or the 5% of texts from Alexandria? Which city does God reveal to be prominent in the development of the first century Christian Church? It should be easy to see that the Antiochian text represents the one God preserved for us and that the Alexandrian text is the one Satan has been able to corrupt and slip in as his choice of textbase.

When we look at English translations of the Bible, it is helpful to know which textbase the translators used. Some translations are based on the Antiochian text while others are based on the Alexandrian text. Because the three oldest surviving MSS (Vaticanus, Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus) all represent the Alexandrian text, therefore many of the more recent translators have chosen this as their text to translate from. This explains many of the changes in some of the modern translations.

To paraphrase 2 Peter 3:5, "FOR THIS THEY WILLINGLY ARE IGNORANT OF ..." that all three of those old MSS are of an utterly abominable and corrupt state! Antiquity on its own is of no value at all!

Later I'll examine some of the differences in these two textbases to illustrate how the Alexandrian text does its best to undermine the truth of the Word of God.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A TRANSLATION:

To be quite clear: There is not a single translation of the Bible available today which does not incorporate some errors. No translation is perfectly correct. But by careful comparisons with other translations pretty well all of the errors can be sorted out.

The ideal translation of the whole Bible should be based on:

- the Masoretic text of the Old Testament, and
- the Antiochian text of the New Testament.

Translations that use the LXX as their source for the Old Testament and/or the Alexandrian text as their source for the New Testament will not reflect God's Word, as originally inspired, as accurately as those that use the above-mentioned sources.

Next, the attitude and integrity of the translators is of the utmost importance. The Hebrew scribes did not dare to knowingly change, add or subtract even a single character from the inspired text. [The only exception to this (i.e. HAVING KNOWINGLY ALTERED THE TEXT) that I am aware of is in Deuteronomy 16:1-6, where some Jewish scribe changed the words "feast of unleavened bread" to read "passover". I discuss this passage in one of my other articles.] When they did feel that their source MS contained an error, they nevertheless copied it faithfully and then noted their observations in the margin. They simply did not make changes in the text!

THAT IS THE TYPE OF ATTITUDE TO LOOK FOR IN TRANSLATORS!

An attitude of respect for the mind that inspired the text in the first place! When something doesn't immediately make sense to the translator, he should not assume that his understanding is automatically correct ... he should not set himself up as the final authority of what any given verse has to mean.

That attitude of the Hebrew scribes is regrettably not found among those who made copies of the New Testament. The Alexandrian texts especially are of a shocking quality. The Antiochian texts, while not reflecting the high standards of the Hebrew scribes, are generally fairly good and, because there are so many of them in existence, textual discrepancies can generally be resolved by comparison with other MSS of the same genre.

This approach means that translators should translate the Hebrew and the Greek faithfully into English, without unduly interpreting everything as 'figures of speech'. If God inspired a figure of speech in a certain place in the Psalms or in the Prophets, then the translator should translate what the words literally mean ... that's the attitude of the Hebrew scribes! If such figures of speech have specific meanings in Hebrew, then it is the job of a COMMENTARY to point this out ... but it is not for a translator of the Word of God to INTERPRET such figures of speech (except where absolutely necessary) into his translation ... such interpretation would hide the originally inspired words from his readers and he would impose his own personal interpretation as the only possible meaning for the text in question. He would be the final judge as to what that figure of speech simply HAS TO MEAN!

The right attitude that I have been describing here is MORE CLOSELY REFLECTED IN THE KING JAMES TRANSLATION THAN IN ANY OTHER!

The third factor to consider is the competence of the translators in the biblical languages of Hebrew and Greek. If a translator lacks competence in these languages, then he cannot be relied upon to produce a faithful translation of the texts that God originally inspired. He will have to rely on the works of other men.

ENGLISH BIBLES:

Up until 1300 A.D. the only Bible available was the LATIN VULGATE that Jerome had produced. Jerome had based his Old Testament very largely on the LXX of Origen.

JOHN WYCLIFFE: In 1380 A.D. he produced an English version of the New Testament. And in 1382 he produced an English version of the Old Testament. About 170 handmade copies of his Bible are in existence. Wycliffe did NOT translate from the Hebrew or the Greek! Rather, his English Bible was a translation from the Latin Vulgate. It was the only source he had access to. John Wycliffe did coin a number of expressions which have survived into later translations.

Among the English expressions he coined are: "straight gate", "make whole", "son of perdition" and "enter you into the joy of your Lord".

GUTENBERG BIBLE: This, the first printed Bible, was produced in 1456 A.D.. It was in fact a Latin Vulgate Bible.

ERASMUS: In 1453 A.D. Constantinople was captured by the Turks and the scholars who fled to Western Europe brought MANY Greek MSS with them. This led to a revival in interest in biblical studies. Universities started to offer Greek as a subject of study. And so in 1516 A.D. Erasmus produced the first printed edition of the GREEK New Testament. This opened the New Testament up to study. His Greek text represented the Byzantine (or Antiochian) text that had been brought to Europe from Constantinople.

WILLIAM TYNDALE: He was born in 1494 A.D. and studied at Oxford and Cambridge. Because of persecution he fled to the continent and there translated the New Testament from the Greek text that Erasmus had published. He did a good job! 90% of his New Testament is retained in the King James translation! After 10 years on the continent Tyndale was betrayed by an English Catholic and killed as a heretic at age 40 years.

Note! This was the first New Testament in the English language that was based on the Antiochian Greek text!

MILES COVERDALE: In 1535 A.D. he produced an English Bible. His source documents were the Latin Vulgate and Luther's German Bible. This obviously is not a dependable foundation.

THOMAS MATTHEW: In 1537 A.D. he produced an English Bible which was a revision that combined Tyndale and Coverdale. For this effort Queen Mary had him burned at the stake in 1555 A.D.. His translation, however, was also not based on the right source documents.

THE GREAT BIBLE: This was produced in 1539 A.D. by Coverdale as a revision of the Matthew Bible.

THE GENEVA BIBLE: This was a revision of the Tyndale Bible.

THE BISHOPS BIBLE: This was a revision of the Great Bible.

RHEIMS & DOUAI VERSION: This was translated for English Catholics. Like Wycliffe's Bible, it was made from the Latin Vulgate version of Jerome.

KING JAMES VERSION: King James, faced with all these differing English versions of the Bible, in 1607 A.D. commissioned 54 scholars (47 of whom actually took part in the work!) to produce a new translation from the original Hebrew and Greek manuscripts. This translation was to have a minimum of marginal notes.

The scholars were divided into 6 groups: 3 for the Old Testament, 2 for the New Testament and 1 for the Apocrypha. When a group finished its work, it was submitted to a panel of 12 men for evaluation. Where it was deemed necessary to provide words in English that were not found in the original Hebrew or Greek MSS, this was done in ITALICS, to acknowledge to readers that these words originated with the translators and were not in the inspired text.

NOTE! THIS IS THE ATTITUDE THE HEBREW SCRIBES ALSO HAD!

These men finished the job in 2 years. Then a further 9 months were spent by a special committee of 12

men carefully evaluating and revising this work. It was published in 1611 A.D.. Since then slight alterations (mainly spelling changes!) have been made to it. Originally it contained the Apocrypha, but that was dropped.

This translation used the correct source documents ... the Hebrew masoretic text for the Old Testament and the Received Text (i.e. Antiochian Text) for the New Testament. It does not reflect the opinions of one man, but the pooled knowledge of 47 highly qualified scholars. And even then it does not impose its interpretation in cases of ambiguity by faithfully rendering all additions to the inspired text in italic print. It does indeed also contain some mistakes, but far fewer than any of the other translations.

WITHOUT DOUBT IT IS THE BEST TRANSLATION AVAILABLE IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE!

THE ENGLISH REVISED VERSION: This was published in 1881 A.D.. The Greek textbase these translators used had 5788 different readings from the Greek text used by the King James translators. In the English text of the Bible these translators made about 36000 changes. It proved to be basically a revision of the KJV, but for the worse.

AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION: In 1901 A.D. they produced a revision of the KJV, very similar to the English Revised Version (ERV). However, they substituted the word "LORD" with the word "Jehovah", which is a change for the worse.

Towards the end of the 19th century many Greek MSS papyri were discovered in the sands of Egypt. These represent the Alexandrian textbase. They were not really more accurate than the Received Text, but scholars were impressed enough by the differences to want to produce revised translations of the Bible.

REVISED STANDARD VERSION: This appeared in 1946 and is a revision of the American Standard Version (ASV). Basically this revision modernized the language of the previous version.

NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION: This is a relatively recent translation into modern language. While the language used is very appealing, the problem lies in the source documents underlying this translation. The NIV is based on the Alexandrian text of the New Testament! This is an unreliable foundation. Shortly I will demonstrate this with specific examples.

NEW KING JAMES VERSION: This is not a new translation. It is merely an updating of the language of the (old) KJV. As is stated in the Preface, special care was taken in this revision of the language "... to preserve the work of PRECISION which is the legacy of the 1611 translators". Even back in 1786 A.D. the Catholic (note!) scholar Alexander Geddes said of the King James Bible:

"if accuracy and strictest attention to the letter of the text be supposed to constitute an excellent version, this is of all versions the most excellent."

This the revisers tried to retain. They do acknowledge in the preface, however, that while they used the masoretic text for the Old Testament, they did "CONSULT" the Septuagint (LXX), the Latin Vulgate and also the Dead Sea Scrolls.

THIS "CONSULTATION" DETRACTS FROM THIS TRANSLATION!

The comments in the Preface regarding the New Testament text are very enlightening. I'll quote one

paragraph that is relevant here:

"The manuscript preferences cited in many contemporary translations of the New Testament are due to RECENT RELIANCE on a relatively few manuscripts discovered in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Dependence on these manuscripts, ESPECIALLY TWO, the SINAITIC and VATICAN manuscripts, is due to the greater age of these documents. However, in spite of the age of the materials, some scholars have shown REASONS TO DOUBT THE FAITHFULNESS of these manuscripts to the original text, since they OFTEN DISAGREE WITH ONE ANOTHER and show OTHER SIGNS OF UNRELIABILITY. The Greek text obtained by using this minority of sources and related papyri is known as the ALEXANDRIAN TEXT."

(My own emphasis)

The Preface continues to say that

"... a GROWING NUMBER OF SCHOLARS now regard the Received Text as FAR MORE RELIABLE than previously thought (such as by the translators of the NIV, etc.)."

Other English versions need not concern us as they do not really meet the criteria we laid out earlier. These would include such works as Moffatt's translation, the New English Bible, the Living Bible, the Good News Bible and ALL sectarian Bibles (JW, SDA, Mormons, etc.).

I realize that many people have their particular preferences when it comes to Bible translations. Even some ministers will at times make comments like:

"I REALLY LIKE THE WAY the NIV (or Moffatt, or the RSV, or the Amplified Bible, etc.) states this verse ...".

My response to a statement like that is always:

"I am not really interested in what YOU like! Not one bit! My only interest is: IS THAT THE TRANSLATION GOD LIKES?"

We need to be careful that we don't look for translations that say the Scripture in the words WE would like to see. That is a blatant way of reading OUR ideas INTO the Word of God!

Ministers do this when they read OTHER TRANSLATIONS of the verse they are discussing. They forget that another translation is NEVER proof of anything! A given translation doesn't prove a thing! After all, before quoting that particular translation, did you check the source material that translation is based on? Usually, you didn't do that, right? What if it is based on the LXX or the Vulgate or the Alexandrian Minority texts ... but it says it just the way YOU WANT TO SEE IT for the particular point you are making? Does it in those circumstances make the LXX or the Vulgate or the Alexandrian text more acceptable?

There is really only one logical way to make a point out of a particular word or phrase, and that is this:

A) What does the original Hebrew or Greek actually say?

B) What does this Hebrew or Greek mean in English?

C) Is there a translation that correctly captures the meaning of this Hebrew or Greek word or expression?

D) Translations that convey other ideas than what the original word or phrase actually means are worthless! Throw them out!

E) Don't indulge in 'proof-texting'! You know, attaching Scriptures to YOUR IDEAS by making the Scriptures say what YOU want them to say.

SOME PROBLEMS WITH THE KJV (AND OTHERS ALSO!):

There are some difficulties with the way the translators of the King James Version translated some things. These comments mostly apply also to all the other English translations, but we'll focus on the KJV.

For a start, in a number of cases they translate two or more Greek words into the same English word. This is obviously inaccurate and it creates some confusion, because in Greek the two or three DIFFERENT words clearly don't all mean exactly the same thing. For example:

A) The 3 different Greek words "KOSMOS", "AION" and "OIKOUMENE" are all at times translated by the one English word "WORLD".

B) The 3 different Greek words "GEHENNA", "HADES" and "TARTAROS" are all at times translated by the one English word "HELL".

C) The 3 different Greek words "THERION", "ZOON" and "KTENOS" are all at times translated by the one English word "BEAST".

D) The 2 different Greek words "AGAPE" and "PHILEO" are both at times translated by the one English word "LOVE".

E) The 2 different Greek words "APISTEO" and "APEITHEO" are both at times translated by the English expression "BELIEVE NOT".

F) The 2 different Greek words "OIKOS" (also other words derived from OIKOS) and "THERAPEIA" are both at times translated by the one English word "HOUSEHOLD".

Next, at times a Greek word is, without any justification, given a meaning totally different from its normal meaning. This was done purely to keep the translators prejudices intact. For example:

A) The Greek word "PASCHA" is used 29 times; 28 times it is correctly rendered as "PASSOVER", but one time (in Acts 12:4) it is incorrectly translated as "EASTER".

B) The Greek word "KOSMOS" is used 183 times; 182 times it is correctly rendered as "WORLD", but one time (in 1 Peter 3:3) it is incorrectly translated as "ADORNMENT".

C) The Greek word "THERAPEIA" is used 4 times; twice it is correctly rendered as "HEALING", since it is derived from the verb "THERAPEUO", which means "to heal". But twice (in parallel Scriptures) it is incorrectly translated as "HOUSEHOLD" ... in Matthew 24:45 and in Luke 12:42, basically because the word's correct meaning didn't make any sense to the translators in these two verses.

Next, the translators saw that at times the Bible states something differently from the way it was being practised by people. In those cases rather than translate a word correctly and create problems with the church's existing customs, they disguised the real meaning by creating a new English word. Keep in mind that some of them were still burned at the stake anyway ... being a translator of the Bible was a dangerous profession.

For example:

They understood that the Greek word "BAPTIZO" means "TO IMMERSE". But they were also faced with the existing CUSTOM of the church to sprinkle babies with a few drops of water. Therefore, rather than create a controversy over this practice, they simply coined a new English word "BAPTIZE", allowing people to THINK that this means "to sprinkle".

There are other examples of Greek words being anglicized by the translators for the same reason ... to avoid confrontation with existing religious customs.

Thus, there are some problems to be aware of when we study the KJV, as well as any other translation.

COMPARING DIFFERENT TRANSLATIONS:

Now let's look at specific verses and how they are translated in different versions. This is a random selection and only scratches the surface. It should be sufficient though to ILLUSTRATE the points I am making, namely that the Alexandrian textbase is generally not a reliable reflection of the text God actually inspired, and that none of the other translations approach the KJV's generally high integrity in sticking to what the inspired text actually says! This is not to say that in some specific instances a translation based on the Alexandrian textbase may not reflect a more correct translation of a verse than the KJV. Each instance must be evaluated on its own merits, but in general terms the KJV is, in the case of different interpretations, far more likely to be correct than those translations that differ from it.

Some explanations before we start: I will be showing you 3 different Greek Texts. They are:

THE RECEIVED TEXT which is called Stephens Text,

THE BYZANTINE TEXT which is called BYZ,

THE ALEXANDRIAN TEXT which is called N26, short for the Nestle 26 MS.

The Bible abbreviations I will be using are KJV, NIV, RSV, NAS and MOFFATT.

Right, here goes ...

EXAMINING MATTHEW 9:18

tauta autou lalountos autois idou archon elthon prosekunei auto legon hoti he thugater mou arti

eteleutesen en alla elthon epithes ten cheira sou ep auten kai zesetai (Matthew 9:18, Stephens Text)

tauta autou lalountos autois idou archon eis elthon prosekunei auto legon hoti he thugater mou arti
eteleutesen alla elthon epithes ten cheira sou ep auten kai zesetai (Matthew 9:18, BYZ)

tauta autou lalountos autois idou archon eis elthon prosekunei auto legon hoti he thugater mou arti
eteleutesen alla elthon epithes ten cheira sou ep auten kai zesetai (Matthew 9:18, N26)

While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and WORSHIPPED him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. (Matthew 9:18) KJV

While he was saying this, a ruler came and KNELT BEFORE him and said, ``My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live." (Matthew 9:18 NIV)

MOFFATT and the RSV both say "KNELT BEFORE" ...

NAS says "BOWED DOWN BEFORE" ...

GOOD NEWS BIBLE says "KNELT DOWN BEFORE" ...

Comments: In all 3 Greek texts the word for "worshipped" is "PROSEKUNEI", which is the imperfect active indicative of "PROSKUNEO". The word is used 60 times in the N.T. and in the KJV it is ALWAYS translated as "worship", because that is what it means. An examination of the 60 passages where it is used makes this meaning absolutely clear!

Yet the NIV, RSV, NAS and MOFFATT all water this meaning down to "kneeling down" or "bowing down". Translating it as "kneeling down" detracts from the clear INTENT Matthew was trying to convey; it makes it more secular than "worship".

SO WHICH TRANSLATION CAN WE TRUST IN THIS CASE?

EXAMINING MATTHEW 1:25

kai ouk eginosken auten eos ou eteken ton huion autes ton prototokon kai ekalesen to onoma autou iesoun (Matthew 1:25, Stephens Text)

kai ouk eginosken auten eos ou eteken ton huion autes ton prototokon kai ekalesen to onoma autou iesoun (Matthew 1:25 BYZ)

kai ouk eginosken auten eos ou eteken huion kai ekalesen to onoma autou iesoun (Matthew 1:25 N26)

And knew her not till she had brought forth HER FIRSTBORN son: and he called his name JESUS. (Matthew 1:25) KJV

But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus. (Matthew 1:25 NIV)

RSV and MOFFATT and GOOD NEWS BIBLE all leave out "her FIRSTBORN".

Comments: Notice that the Alexandrian Text (N26) leaves out the words "autes ton prototokon" ... "her firstborn". That is typical for the sloppiness of the Alexandrian Text! It actually does include these words in Luke 2:7 and for that verse the NIV also therefore includes them. Thus:

"and she gave birth to HER FIRSTBORN, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." (Luke 2:7 NIV)

Matthew was saying exactly the same thing as Luke, but the sloppy Alexandrian Text has lost it (probably maliciously in order to disguise that Mary had other children later) ... and all these other translations follow the corrupt Alexandrian Text.

SO WHICH TRANSLATION CAN WE TRUST IN THIS CASE?

EXAMINING MATTHEW 9:13

poreuthentes de mathete ti estin eleon thelo kai ou thusian ou gar elthon kalesai dikaiious all
amartolous eis metanoian (Matthew 9:13, Stephens Text)

poreuthentes de mathete ti estin eleon thelo kai ou thusian ou gar elthon kalesai dikaiious alla
amartolous eis metanoian (Matthew 9:13 BYZ)

poreuthentes de mathete ti estin eleos thelo kai ou thusian ou gar elthon kalesai dikaiious alla
amartolous (Matthew 9:13 N26)

But go ye and learn what [that] meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call
the righteous, but sinners TO REPENTANCE. (Matthew 9:13) KJV

But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the
righteous, but sinners.' (Matthew 9:13 NIV)

NIV and RSV and MOFFATT and NAS and GOOD NEWS BIBLE all leave out the words "TO
REPENTANCE".

Comments: Notice that the Alexandrian Text leaves out the words "eis metanoian", meaning "TO
REPENTANCE". This text would have us believe that Christ just called sinners ... no strings attached!
WHAT are sinners called to do? Do you think the scribes in Antioch just added these two words to their
manuscripts out of their own heads? Whose idea was it to tell people to repent ... you have just three
guesses. Again, the Alexandrian scribes just dropped these two words, either maliciously to conform to
their own ideas or else through carelessness.

SO WHICH TRANSLATION CAN WE TRUST IN THIS CASE?

EXAMINING MATTHEW 20:7

legousin auto hoti oudeis hemas emisthosato legei autois hupagete kai humeis eis ton ampelona kai ho
ean he dikaion lepsesthe (Matthew 20:7, Stephens Text)

legousin auto hoti oudeis hemas emisthosato legei autois hupagete kai humeis eis ton ampelona kai ho
ean he dikaion lepsesthe (Matthew 20:7 BYZ)

legousin auto hoti oudeis hemas emisthosato legei autois hupagete kai humeis eis ton ampelona
(Matthew 20:7 N26)

They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard;
and whatsoever is right, [that] shall ye receive. (Matthew 20:7) KJV

``Because no-one has hired us,' they answered. ``He said to them, `You also go and work in my
vineyard.' (Matthew 20:7 NIV)

NIV and RSV and NAS and MOFFATT leave out "AND WHATSOEVER IS RIGHT THAT SHALL YOU

RECEIVE".

Comments: Here the Alexandrian Text leaves out the phrase "kai ho ean he dikaion lepesthe". That probably sounded too much like there is a connection between our WORKS and the rewards God will give us. It is easy to see a motive for this with people who don't believe that God expects us to have "good works" (e.g. Ephesians 2:10, etc.). So did the Antiochian scribes add this phrase off their own bat or did the Alexandrian scribes intentionally drop this phrase "and whatsoever is right that shall you receive"?

SO WHICH TRANSLATION CAN WE TRUST IN THIS CASE?

EXAMINING MATTHEW 19:16-17

kai idou eis proselthon eipen auto didaskale agathe ti agathon poieso hina echo zoen aionion ho de eipen auto ti me legeis agathon oudeis agathos ei me eis ho theos ei de theleis eiselthein eis ten zoen tereson tas entolas (Matthew 19:16-17, Stephens Text)

kai idou eis proselthon eipen auto didaskale agathe ti agathon poieso hina echo zoen aionion ho de eipen auto ti me legeis agathon oudeis agathos ei me eis ho theos ei de theleis eiselthein eis ten zoen tereson tas entolas (Matthew 19:16-17, BYZ)

kai idou eis proselthon auto eipen didaskale ti agathon poieso hina echo zoen aionion ho de eipen auto ti me erotas peri ton agathou eis estin ho agathos (Matthew 19:16-17, N26)

16 And, behold, one came and said unto him, GOOD Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? 17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? [there is] none good but one, [that is], GOD: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. (Matthew 19) KJV

16 Now a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?" 17 "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments." (Matthew 19 NIV)

RSV and MOFFATT and NAS and GOOD NEWS BIBLE all leave out the word "God" in verse 17.

Comments: In verse 16 the Byzantine Text reads "didaskale agathe", i.e. "GOOD Master". The Alexandrian Text leaves out the word "agathe", "good". Therefore the NIV and the others also leave this out in verse 16. In verse 17 the BYZ Text reads: "... legeis agathon oudeis agathos ei me eis ho theos ...", "theos" meaning "GOD". The Alexandrian Text, apart from changing the word-order a bit, changes these words to "... erotas peri ton agathon eis estin ho agathos ...", the main difference being that the word "GOD" is omitted.

The effect, as illustrated by the NIV, is that the whole meaning is changed from the man addressing Jesus Christ as "GOOD Master" without thinking about what this actually means, to a mere question about HOW TO RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE. In that case Christ would have simply answered the question. The point is that addressing someone as "GOOD master" is a form of worship which should be reserved for God. This the NIV has conveniently omitted.

Consider also that Christ's answer (in the NIV) ... "why do you ask Me about what is good? There is only One who is good"... does not make sense without the expression "GOOD Master" in the preceding verse. Think this through carefully!

The internal evidence in these two verses of the Alexandrian Text once again proves A MALICIOUS

CORRUPTION of the original text!

SO WHICH TRANSLATION CAN WE TRUST IN THIS CASE?

EXAMINING MATTHEW 25:13

gregoreite oun hoti ouk oidate ten emeran oude ten oran en eo huios tou anthropou erchetai (Matthew 25:13, Stephens Text)

gregoreite oun hoti ouk oidate ten emeran oude ten oran en eo huios tou anthropou erchetai

(Matthew 25:13 BYZ)

gregoreite oun hoti ouk oidate ten emeran oude ten oran (Matthew 25:13 N26)

Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh. (Matthew 25:13) KJV

Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour. (Matthew 25:13 NIV)

RSV and MOFFATT and NAS leave out "wherein the Son of man comes".

Comments: The Alexandrian Text leaves out the words "en he ho huios tou anthropou erchetai", meaning "wherein the Son of man comes". The NIV and the other translations all reflect this omission. Again, this omission leaves Christ's whole statement hanging in the air. You have to then ask "what day or hour are you talking about?" People who don't believe in the return of Christ have a ready motive for wanting to leave out these words!

SO WHICH TRANSLATION CAN WE TRUST IN THIS CASE?

EXAMINING MATTHEW 27:35

staurosantes de auton diemerisanto ta imatia tia autou ballontes kleron hina plerothe to rethen hupo tou prophetou diemerisanto ta imartia mou eautois kai epi ton imatismos mou ebalon kleron (Matthew 27:35, Stephens Text)

staurosantes de auton diemerisanto ta imatia tia autou ballontes kleron (Matthew 27:35 BYZ)

staurosantes de auton diemerisanto ta imatia tia autou ballontes kleron (Matthew 27:35 N26)

And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. (Matthew 27:35) KJV

When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots [that the word spoken by the prophet might be fulfilled: "They divided my garments among themselves and cast lots for my clothing."] (Matthew 27:35 NIV)

And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots; (Matthew 27:35 RSV)

MOFFATT and NAS also leave out the words omitted by the RSV.

Comments: In this case the Byzantine Text differs from the Stephens Majority Text; instead the BYZ agrees with the Alexandrian Text. However, in this case the NIV chose to include the words "that the word spoken by the prophet might be fulfilled ..." even though they are not found in the Alexandrian Text. But the RSV and MOFFATT and the NAS leave these words out.

The reason the NIV chose to include these words is because of John 19:24, which reads ...

eipounoun pros allelous me schisomen auton alla lachomen peri autou tinos estai hina he graphe

plerothe he legousa diemerisanto ta imatia mou eautois kai epi ton imatismos mou ebalon kleron oi men oun he stratiotai tauta epoiesan (John 19:24, Stephens Text)

eipounoun pros allelous me schisomen auton alla lachomen peri autou tinos estai hina he graphe

plerothe he legousa diemerisanto ta imatia mou eautois kai epi ton imatismos mou ebalon kleron oi men oun he stratiotai tauta epoiesan (John 19:24 BYZ)

eipan oun pros allelous me schisomen auton alla lachomen peri autou tinos estai hina he graphe

plerothe [he legousa] diemerisanto ta imatia mou eautois kai epi ton imatismos mou ebalon kleron oi men oun stratiotai tauta epoiesan (John 19:24 N26)

They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did. (John 19:24) KJV

``Let's not tear it," they said to one another. ``Let's decide by lot who will get it." This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled which said, ``They divided my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing." So this is what the soldiers did. (John 19:24 NIV)

As can be seen, the Alexandrian Text for John 19:24 INCLUDES these words and therefore the NIV chose to also follow the Majority Text for Matthew 27:35, rather than the Alexandrian Text. There was nothing to be gained by leaving them out in one place and then including them in the parallel passage.

But for Matthew 27:35 the RSV and NAS and Moffatt leave out some text.

SO HOW MUCH CAN WE TRUST THE RSV AND MOFFATT IN THIS CASE?

EXAMINING MATTHEW 1:23

idou he parthenos en gastrixei kai texetai huion kai kalesousin to onoma autou emmanuel ho estin methermeneuome non meth hemon ho theos (Matthew 1:23, Stephens Text)

idou he parthenos en gastrixei kai texetai huion kai kalesousin to onoma autou emmanuel ho estin methermeneuome non meth hemon ho theos (Matthew 1:23 BYZ)

idou he parthenos en gastrixei kai texetai huion kai kalesousin to onoma autou emmanuel ho estin methermeneuome non meth hemon ho theos (Matthew 1:23 N26)

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. (Matthew 1:23) KJV

The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel -which means, ``God with us." (Matthew 1:23 NIV)

"Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (Matthew 1:23 RSV)

Comments: All these translations are in agreement that it is talking about "A VIRGIN"! However, this is a quote from Isaiah 7:14, which reads as follows ...

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a VIRGIN shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14) KJV

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The VIRGIN will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14 NIV)

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, A YOUNG WOMAN shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14 RSV)

For this verse MOFFATT and the GOOD NEWS BIBLE also say "YOUNG WOMAN" instead of "virgin".

Comments on this verse: The RSV and MOFFATT use the argument that the Hebrew word used also means "a young woman" ... but this argument misses the point. "Young women" are conceiving and bearing children all the time ... that's no special sign in any way! What makes it a sign is that this young woman was a virgin!

It also misses the point that in ancient Israel all young women were virgins UNLESS they were already married or else they were considered to be harlots!

MOFFATT's and the RSV's translation of the Hebrew as "young woman" is an obvious slight of the intended meaning! As we saw above, in Matthew 1:23 the RSV has to ADMIT that Isaiah 7:14 really means "virgin". However, the RSV and MOFFATT do their best to play down the virgin-birth in other places as well. Let's go over to the book of Luke.

SO HOW MUCH CAN WE TRUST THE RSV AND MOFFATT IN THIS CASE?

EXAMINING LUKE 1:34

eipen de maria pros ton aggelon pos estai touto epei andra ou ginosko (Luke 1:34, Stephens Text)

eipen de maria pros ton aggelon pos estai touto epei andra ou ginosko (Luke 1:34 BYZ)

eipen de maria pros ton aggelon pos estai touto epei andra ou ginosko (Luke 1:34 N26)

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? (Luke 1:34) KJV

How will this be, Mary asked the angel, ``since I am a virgin?" (Luke 1:34 NIV)

And Mary said to the angel, "How shall this be, since I have no husband?" (Luke 1:34 RSV)

MOFFATT also says "I have no husband".

Comments: First notice that the different Greek MSS agree on this verse; they all say the same thing.

Next, the words "andra ou ginosko" really do mean "I KNOW NOT A MAN", "ginosko" being the present active indicative of the verb "TO KNOW"!

This means that the KJV is a totally accurate translation; the NIV also captures the meaning correctly; but the RSV and MOFFATT both disguise the fact of Mary still being a virgin ... "not having a husband" isn't necessarily the same as still being a virgin. They are both sneaky ways of trying to undermine the clearly stated fact of "I know not a man". They are subtle ways of discrediting and taking away from the truth of God.

SO HOW MUCH CAN WE TRUST THE RSV AND MOFFATT IN THIS CASE?

EXAMINING LUKE 2:33

kai en ioseph kai he meter autou thaumazontes epi tois laloumenois peri autou (Luke 2:33, Stephens Text)

kai en ioseph kai he meter autou thaumazontes epi tois laloumenois peri autou (Luke 2:33 BYZ)

kai en ho pater autou kai he meter thaumazontes epi tois laloumenois peri autou (Luke 2:33 N26)

And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. (Luke 2:33) KJV

The child's father and mother marvelled at what was said about him. (Luke 2:33 NIV)

And his father and his mother marvelled at what was said about him; (Luke 2:33 RSV)

MOFFATT and NAS both say it the same way as the RSV.

Comments: Stephens Text and the Byzantine Text read "kai en ioseph kai he meter autou", which the KJV correctly translates as "and Joseph and his mother". The Alexandrian Text, however, has been changed to read "kai en ho pater autou kai he meter", changing the word "Joseph" for "father" and moving the possessive pronoun "his" ("autou") to refer to the first noun (i.e. "father"). Notice also that the NIV's use of the word "child's" (as in "child's father") is totally unjustified even by the corrupt Alexandrian Text ... the word "child" is simply not used in any of these MSS!

The motive for these deliberate subtle changes in the Alexandrian MSS and in the translations based on them should be obvious ... to take away from the actual account. The Bible makes very clear that Joseph was not really Christ's father, and Luke (who wrote this verse) knew this very well. It was some dishonest scribe in Alexandria who DELIBERATELY CHANGED the words in this verse ... and that happens to appeal to the modern translators. When we see the word "Joseph" replaced by the word "father", then that obviously is not a scribal error or mistake ... that is obviously a DELIBERATE alteration.

SO WHICH TRANSLATION CAN WE TRUST IN THIS CASE?

EXAMINING LUKE 4:4

kai apekrithe iesous pros auton legon gegraptai hoti ouk ep arto mono zesetai ho anthropos all epi panti remati theou (Luke 4:4, Stephens Text)

kai apekrithe iesous pros auton legon gegraptai hoti ouk ep arto mono zesetai [ho] anthropos all epi panti remati theou (Luke 4:4 BYZ)

kai apekrithe pros auton ho iesous gegraptai hoti ouk ep arto mono zesetai ho anthropos (Luke 4:4 N26)

And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. (Luke 4:4) KJV

Jesus answered, ``It is written: `Man does not live on bread alone.'" (Luke 4:4 NIV)

And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone'." (Luke 4:4 RSV)

MOFFATT and NAS also leave out "but by every word of God".

Comments: The Alexandrian Text has dropped the phrase "all epi panti remati theou", "but by every word of God". Again the contextual evidence proves the Majority Text correct and the Alexandrian Text as corrupted!

Jesus Christ did not just make a negative statement (i.e. telling us what we are NOT to do). That does not provide any guidance or leadership! He obviously followed up the negative statement with the positive one of what we SHOULD DO! That is precisely the way Christ had originally presented the thought to ancient Israel, and He was just quoting Himself, remember? Notice where Christ FIRST made this statement.

And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that MAN DOTHTH NOT LIVE BY BREAD ONLY, BUT BY EVERY [WORD] THAT PROCEEDETH OUT OF THE MOUTH OF THE LORD DOTHTH MAN LIVE. (Deuteronomy 8:3)

Even the NIV has it correct in Deuteronomy 8:3.

He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. (Deuteronomy 8:3 NIV)

Also, the same account is also found in Matthew 4:4. And there the Alexandrian Text has it correct; thus the NIV and the RSV also have Matthew 4:4 correct. Here is the NIV ...

Jesus answered, ``It is written: `Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" (Matthew 4:4 NIV)

Thus, in summary, Luke 4:4 is once again evidence for THE CARELESSNESS of the Alexandrian scribes and the gullible, almost eager, approach of modern translators in accepting such errors.

EXAMINING LUKE 24:6

ouk esti hode all egerthe mnesthete hos elalesen humin eti on en te galilaia (Luke 24:6, Stephens Text)

ouk esti hode all egerthe mnesthete hos elalesen humin eti on te galilaia (Luke 24:6 BYZ)

ouk estin hode alla egerthe mnesthete hos elalesen humin eti on te galilaia (Luke 24:6 N26)

He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, (Luke 24:6) KJV

He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: (Luke 24:6 NIV)

Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee,

(Luke 24:6 RSV)

Comments: The Greek MSS all agree on this verse, but the RSV chooses nevertheless to leave out "He is not here, but is risen". This omission cannot be based on the Alexandrian MSS, which includes these words. So WHY did the RSV leave this out?

SO HOW MUCH CAN WE TRUST THE RSV IN THIS REGARD?

Thus far I've limited the examples to the books of Matthew and Luke. I mentioned earlier that the Vaticanus MSS leaves out 748 whole sentences, an additional 452 clauses, and an additional 237 words in the gospels alone. Many of those omissions are reflected in the official Alexandrian Text which forms the basis for the NIV, the RSV and other translations. We have thus far looked at just a few examples of these omissions.

If there were no time restraints, I could literally give over 1000 examples to continue illustrating this point! That would be a simple task (though enormously time consuming) because the Greek Text used for the English Revised Version which was published in 1881 (and on which the American Standard Version, published in 1901 and then the Revised Standard Version, published in 1946, are based!) had 5788 DIFFERENT readings from the Received Text that was used by the KJV translators. In the English Text of the ERV (English Revised Version) the translators made about 36000 changes from the KJV English text ... that's about 24 changes on every page of a 1500-page Bible!

It is a "simple" task because we today have the different Greek texts involved on the computer, and we can view the different Greek texts for every verse simultaneously, in that way immediately noticing the differences. We could start with Matthew 1:1 and very methodically work through to Revelation 22:21.

The result is always the same: These translations (the NIV, RSV, etc.) are a dig at the miraculous nature of various events, a questioning and critical approach, a chipping away at the accounts preserved in the Antiochian Texts, a constant dropping of details; in short, a perverting of the accounts as God inspired them to be recorded.

What I will do now is give just a few more RANDOM examples that illustrate the sneaky and diabolical nature of translations like the NIV and the RSV.

EXAMINING HEBREWS 2:11

ho te gar hagiazon kai oi hagiazomenoi ex henos pantes di en aitian ouk epaischunetai adelphous autous kalein (Hebrews 2:11, Stephens Text)

ho te gar hagiazon kai oi hagiazomenoi ex henos pantes di en aitian ouk epaischunetai adelphous autous kalein (Hebrews 2:11 BYZ)

ho te gar hagiazon kai oi hagiazomenoi ex henos pantes di en aitian ouk epaischunetai adelphous autous kalein (Hebrews 2:11 N26)

For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified [ARE] ALL OF ONE: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, (Hebrews 2:11) KJV

Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy ARE OF THE SAME FAMILY. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers. (Hebrews 2:11 NIV)

For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified HAVE ALL ONE ORIGIN. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brethren, (Hebrews 2:11 RSV)

MOFFATT also says "... have all one origin", identical to the RSV.

Comments: All three Greek MSS say exactly the same thing for this verse. They all have the expression "ex henos pantes" which means "of one all", or grammatically adjusted, "all of one"! The Greek MSS simply do not have a word that means "family" (as the NIV implies) or "origin" (as the RSV and MOFFATT imply).

This means that ONLY THE KJV is a correct translation of this verse; the other translations are INTERPRETATIONS ... they only tell you what THEY think the text means, but they do NOT tell you what it actually says! Their interpretations allow you to reach some totally unwarranted deductions from this verse, which can be misleading, to say the least.

What I would like you to notice here is THE ATTITUDE of the translators ... one of conscientious faithfulness to small details on the part of the KJV, and one of self-willed presumptuousness on the part of the other translations!

It is this difference in attitude that, given enough time, I could demonstrate literally HUNDREDS of times! That is also true for the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. Here are some examples.

EXAMINING MICAH 5:2

But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, [though] thou be little among the thousands of Judah, [yet] out of thee shall he come forth unto me [that is] to be ruler in Israel; WHOSE GOINGS FORTH [have been] from of old, FROM EVERLASTING. (Micah 5:2) KJV

``But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, WHOSE ORIGINS are from of old, FROM ANCIENT TIMES." (Micah 5:2 NIV)

"... from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, WHOSE ORIGIN IS FROM OF OLD, FROM ANCIENT DAYS." (Micah 5:2 RSV)

MOFFATT says "... WHOSE ORIGIN IS OF OLD, OF LONG DESCENT."

Comments: Again, only the KJV is a correct reflection of the actual Hebrew text. The NIV, RSV and MOFFATT all imply that Christ had an origin, a beginning, with MOFFATT stating this in the most direct way by using the word "descent".

You might read one of these versions and not even catch these innuendos, because you know that Christ has always existed with the Father ... but someone who doesn't yet have that understanding can easily be led astray by these translations. The differences are just so subtle in discrediting Jesus Christ's eternal past, without any special fanfares to attract your attention.

THAT IS WHAT IS SO PERNICIOUS ABOUT THESE SUBTLE UNDERHANDED MIS-TRANSLATIONS!

EXAMINING PSALM 111:9

He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and REVEREND [is] his name. (Psalm 111:9) KJV

He provided redemption for his people; he ordained his covenant for ever -- holy and AWESOME is his name. (Psalm 111:9 NIV)

He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant for ever. Holy and TERRIBLE is his name! (Psalm 111:9 RSV)

NEW KING JAMES (NKJ) has "awesome", like the NIV.

MOFFATT has "a majestic God, terrible", totally leaving out the words "his name".

Comments: All the modern translations shirk around this one! They are dishonest! They are desperately looking for a synonym for "reverend".

Look, it is talking about something that is one of God's NAMES! And "awesome" and "terrible" are simply not names ... no matter how closely they may approach the meaning of the word. The only word in this context that is a "NAME" is "REVEREND" ... that is precisely WHY the false ministers have appropriated it for themselves! They don't want to be known as "AWESOME Jones" or "TERRIBLE Jones" but as "REVEREND Jones"! Yet the translators have the nerve to offer the other words as names to God. What a brazen hypocritical cheek!

The translators, many of whom themselves lay claim to the title "reverend", clearly want to hide the fact that this title "Reverend" should be reserved for God alone.

EXAMINING GENESIS 12:3

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee SHALL all families of the earth BE BLESSED. (Genesis 12:3) KJV

I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth WILL BE BLESSED through you." (Genesis 12:3 NIV)

" I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and by you all the families of the earth SHALL BLESS THEMSELVES." (Genesis 12:3 RSV)

MOFFATT has this as "... till all nations ... SEEK BLISS SUCH AS YOURS".

Comments: Again, the KJV has faithfully translated this, which the NIV in this case also supports. MOFFATT and the RSV both pervert the intended meaning by presenting us with incorrect INTERPRETATIONS! They have not translated faithfully!

EXAMINING 1 PETER 2:2

hos artigenneta brephe to logikon adolon gala epipotesate hina en auto auxethete (1 Peter 2:2, Stephens Text)

hos artigenneta brephe to logikon adolon gala epipotesate hina en auto auxethete (1 Peter 2:2 BYZ)

hos artigenneta brephe to logikon adolon gala epipotesate hina en auto auxethete eis soterian

(1 Peter 2:2 N26)

As newborn babes, desire THE SINCERE MILK OF THE WORD, that ye may grow thereby: (1 Peter 2:2) KJV

Like newborn babies, crave PURE SPIRITUAL MILK, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, (1 Peter 2:2 NIV)

Like newborn babes, long for THE PURE SPIRITUAL MILK, that by it you may grow up to salvation. (1 Peter 2:2 RSV)

Comments: All the Greek MSS have the same wording for the first part of this verse. The Alexandrian text has, however, added the words "eis soterian", meaning "unto salvation", to the end of this verse. But they all say "to logikon adolon gala". "Gala" means "milk"; "adolon" means "without deceit", i.e. sincere; "logikon" is an old adjective formed from the word "LOGOS", which means "word".

"Logikon" does NOT mean "spiritual" ... the Greek word for "spiritual" is "pneumatikos" which is used 26 times in the N.T. and in the KJV always translated as "spiritual". "Pneumatikos" has no other meanings.

The correct translation of this expression is found in the KJV as "the sincere (or pure!) milk of the word". What the verse means is that ...

"like newborn babies we are to desire the pure or sincere milk which IS CONTAINED IN the Word of God, so that we may grow thereby."

The NIV and the RSV both disguise what that milk is and where we can find it! Notice also that in this case they have chosen to change a correct translation into a more vague format WITHOUT ANY SUPPORT FROM GREEK MSS. So what does this show about their integrity? Nothing to rave about, is it?

Let's look at another example that is very revealing about the integrity of various translators. This is a lengthy section of 12 verses in Mark 16. I'll skip presenting the transliterated Greek text here, but just give you the facts.

EXAMINING MARK 16:9-20

Here is the NIV text for these verses.

9 When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons. 10 She went and told those who had been with him and who were mourning and weeping. 11 When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it. 12 Afterwards Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country. 13 These returned and reported it to the rest; but they did not believe them either. 14 Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen. 15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.

16 Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well." 19 After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. 20 Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it. (Mark 16:9-20 NIV)

The RSV also has these verses but has a footnote which says:

"Some of the most ancient authorities bring the book to a close at the end of verse 8."

Now here are the facts:

The Alexandrian Greek Text (i.e. N26) is presented as in brackets, whereas the Received Text concludes with "Amen". The Alexandrian Text thus IMPLIES that this is not part of the original, something the RSV goes along with.

BUT:

Out of 620 ancient MSS of the book of Mark, these 12 verses are found in 618 of them! The centre column of the NKJ has a further note that explains that these verses are left out in CODEX VATICANUS and CODEX SINAITICUS! Both are of Alexandrian origin and both leave out a whole lot of other things as well, as we have already noticed. Both are KNOWN to be extremely corrupt! So every other MSS apart from Vaticanus and Sinaiticus has these 12 verses.

Critical modern translators can look at a ratio of 618 to 2 ... and then deduce that the 2 must be correct and the 618 must all be in error! Never mind that the 2 are known as unreliable, shady characters. In this particular instance the NIV is at least better than the RSV, since the NIV presents these verses without any distracting comments.

Mark 16 illustrates very powerfully just how much influence these 2 corrupt MSS have had on modern translators ... they are "willingly ignorant" of the appalling state of these 2 MSS. And they will ignore the evidence of the 618 other MSS.

EXAMINING ROMAN 14:10-12

10 su de ti krineis ton adelphon sou he kai su ti exoutheneis ton adelphon sou pantes gar parastesometha to bemati tou Christou 11 gegraptai gar zo ego legei kurios hoti emoi kampsei pan gonu kai pasa glossa exomologesetai to theo 12 ara oun hekastos hemon peri heautou logon dosei to theo (Romans 14:10-12, Stephens Text)

10 su de ti krineis ton adelphon sou he kai su ti exoutheneis ton adelphon sou pantes gar parastesometha to bemati tou Christou 11 gegraptai gar zo ego legei kurios hoti emoi kampsei pan gonu kai pasa glossa exomologesetai to theo 12 ara oun hekastos hemon peri heautou logon dosei to theo (Romans 14:10-12, BYZ)

10 su de ti krineis ton adelphon sou he kai su ti exoutheneis ton adelphon sou pantes gar parastesometha to bemati tou theou 11 gegraptai gar zo ego legei kurios hoti emoi kampsei pan gonu kai pasa glossa exomologesetai to theo 12 ara [oun] hekastos hemon peri heautou logon dosei [to theo]

(Romans 14 N26)

10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat OF CHRIST. 11 For it is written, [As] I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess TO GOD. 12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself TO GOD. (Romans 14) KJV

10 You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before GOD'S judgment seat. 11 It is written: ``As surely as I live,' says the Lord, `Every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess TO GOD.' " 12 So then, each of us will give an account of himself TO GOD. (Romans 14 NIV)

MOFFATT has for verse 10 "... before the tribunal of GOD".

RSV has this verse as "... before the judgment seat of GOD".

Comments: In all the MSS and in all the English translations verse 11 refers to "confessing to GOD" and verse 12 refers to giving account "to GOD". But they differ on verse 10.

The Received Text (Antiochian) reads "parastesometha to bemati tou Christou" ... we shall stand before the judgment seat OF CHRIST. But the Alexandrian Text has changed the last two words to read "tou theou", meaning "OF GOD". And all the new translations (RSV, NIV, MOFFATT, etc.) have accepted this minority reading as correct.

The Antiochian Text, as preserved in the KJV, is a clear proof that Jesus Christ is God because:

to appear before the judgment seat of CHRIST is equated two verses later with giving account to GOD!

The Alexandrian Texts obscure this fact by in verse 10 changing the word "Christ" for "God". The NIV and RSV also obscure this fact.

Paul also used the expression "the judgment seat of Christ" in 2 Corinthians 5:10 ... and there the Alexandrian Texts agree with the Received Text. Notice:

tous gar pantas hemas phanerothenai dei emprosthen tou bematos tou Christou hina komisetai hekastos ta dia tou somatos pros ha epraxen eite agathon eite kakon (2 Corinthians 5:10, Stephens Text)

tous gar pantas hemas phanerothenai dei emprosthen tou bematos tou Christou hina komisetai hekastos ta dia tou somatos pros ha epraxen eite agathon eite phaulon (2 Corinthians 5:10 N26)

The Alexandrian Text is the same except that it has changed the word "kakon" for the word "phaulon". They basically mean the same thing, with "kakos = evil" and "phaulos = worthless". But again, some scribe of the Alexandrian Text has just decided to CHANGE a word. But at least BOTH texts read "tou bematos tou Christou", the judgment seat OF CHRIST. Here is the whole verse in English:

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 Corinthians 5:10) KJV

For we must all appear before the judgment seat OF CHRIST, that each one may receive what is due to

him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. (2 Corinthians 5:10 NIV)

The point is this: the whole New Testament makes clear that it is CHRIST who will sit on the judgment seat. The expression "the judgment seat of God" is not used anywhere (apart from the corrupted Alexandrian Texts for Romans 14:10). Jesus Christ Himself said very clearly:

For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: (John 5:22)

The Apostle Paul understood this and didn't make a mistake in Romans 14:10. But some Alexandrian scribe of questionable integrity obviously didn't understand this and changed the text to the way he thought it should read.

The internal evidence of the Bible itself makes clear that the Received Text is correct and that the Alexandrian Text is the one that has been tampered with. And the modern translators lack the spiritual discernment to recognize this.

Let's look at one more example.

EXAMINING HEBREWS 11:11

pistei kai aute Sarra dunamin eis katabolen spermatos elaben kai para kairon helikias eteken epei piston hegesato ton epaggeilamenon (Hebrews 11:11, Stephens Text)

pistei kai aute Sarra dunamin eis katabolen spermatos elaben kai para kairon helikias eteken epei piston hegesato ton epaggeilamenon (Hebrews 11:11 BYZ)

pistei kai aute Sarra steira dunamin eis katabolen spermatos elaben kai para kairon helikias epei piston hegesato ton epaggeilamenon (Hebrews 11:11 N26)

Through faith also SARA herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child

when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. (Hebrews 11:11, KJV)

By faith ABRAHAM, even though he was past age--and Sarah herself was barren--was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. (Hebrews 11:11 NIV)

By faith HE RECEIVED POWER of procreation, even though he was too old--and Sarah herself was barren--because he considered him faithful who had promised. (Hebrews 11:11 NRSV = NEW RSV of 1989)

It was by faith that even SARA got strength to conceive, bearing a son when she was past the age for it -- because she considered that she could rely on Him who gave the promise. (Hebrews 11:11, MOFFATT)

By faith SARAH herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. (Hebrews 11:11, RSV)

Comments: There are some changes in the Alexandrian MSS but they are of no real consequence. However, all the MSS mention "Sarah" (Greek is "Sarra") and NOT ABRAHAM! Thus even Moffatt and the RSV (published in 1946) refer to Sarah.

But the NIV, published in 1984, and the NRSV, published in 1989, both change this verse as referring to ABRAHAM. There is no manuscript anywhere in existence which has Hebrews 11:11 referring to Abraham! NOT A SINGLE ONE!

And so even the editors of the computer ONLINE BIBLE make the following comment about this verse regarding the NIV and the NRSV:

"We are curious as to the rendering of Hebrews 11:11. We have talked to several Greek professors and they stated that all Greek manuscripts without exception read "Sarah" not "Abraham". If that is the case then the only ones who lacked faith were the translators. SUCH CARELESS HANDLING OF THE TEXT CASTS DOUBT ON THE ACCURACY OF THE REST OF THEIR WORK IN THE NIV AND THE NRSV. If the translators have taken such liberties here, WHAT ELSE HAVE THEY CHANGED WITHOUT WARRANT? We will pay \$100 to anyone who can produce an authentic Greek manuscript to support this reading." (See the file "MODERN.DOC", my emphasis)

That is exactly my point about the modern versions like the NIV and the NRSV ... they demonstrate an EXTREMELY CARELESS WAY OF HANDLING THE TEXT OF THE BIBLE! And here a team of editors is pointing out the same problem.

The point also is:

EVEN IF someone did actually produce ONE such Greek manuscript, would that suddenly mean that all of the other 5308 MSS are wrong??? Of course not!

This verse, Hebrews 11:11, probably illustrates the lack of integrity on the part of a number of modern translators more graphically than any other verse. Such people are simply not dealing honestly with the MSS at their disposal.

Right! That should suffice as far as examples are concerned. Otherwise we'll only do what Solomon predicted in Ecclesiastes 12:12 ...

And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books [there is] no end; and much study [is] a weariness of the flesh. (Ecclesiastes 12:12)

Let's summarize some conclusions we can draw.

POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- 1) God inspired the original authors, not the translators.
- 2) There is no perfect translation into the English language.
- 3) Personal likes should NEVER influence us in the choice of the Bible we use. Our attitude should always be: which translation does GOD like? Which one most accurately reflects what GOD inspired the original author to record?
- 4) The key questions to ask about any translation are:
 - what SOURCE documents did the translators use?

- how COMPETENT were the translators?
- the HONESTY and INTEGRITY of the translators.

5) The Bible shows that ANTIOCH became a major centre for the early Christian Church. 95% of all Greek manuscripts of the N.T. come from there.

6) ALEXANDRIA does not really feature in the New Testament. It had a large Jewish community, which was very hellenized. It was here that the very corrupt translations of the Jewish Scriptures were made into Greek, which later became known as the Septuagint Version. It also produced many pagan teachers, including Origen, the father of allegorical interpretations of the Bible. About 5% of all Greek MSS of the New Testament can be traced back to Alexandria.

7) Alexandria corrupted the New Testament in the same way it had corrupted the Old Testament earlier ... a consistent corrupter of the truth! The sloppy errors and changes that are evident in the LXX translation of the Old Testament are mirrored in the sloppy and corrupt changes introduced into the MSS of the New Testament originating from here. NOTHING HAD CHANGED!

8) The correct SOURCE documents for the whole Word of God are:

- the Masoretic Hebrew Text of the Old Testament; plus
- the Antiochian Received Text MSS of the New Testament.

9) Source documents that are flawed and to be rejected include:

- the Septuagint Greek language Old Testament Version (LXX),
- the Latin Vulgate Version of the whole Bible,
- the Alexandrian Minority MSS of the New Testament,
- specifically Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus.

10) Among English translations, it is only the KJV that is based on the correct source documents. The RSV and the NIV and MOFFATT are all based on the Alexandrian Texts for the New Testament.

11) Further, regarding the competence of the translators: no subsequent translation was so thoroughly made by such a large number of highly qualified scholars as the KJV.

12) Regarding integrity and honesty: only the KJV translators approach the impeccable integrity of the Hebrew scribes in not adding to the inspired text. God inspired John to conclude the whole Bible with a strong admonition to scribes and translators in this regard of integrity. As we already saw at the start of this article ...

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, IF ANY MAN SHALL ADD UNTO THESE THINGS, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: AND IF ANY MAN SHALL TAKE AWAY FROM THE WORDS OF THE BOOK OF THIS PROPHECY, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and [from] the things which are written in this book. (Revelation 22:18-19)

These warnings from God are addressed specifically to scribes and to TRANSLATORS!!

13) The examples we have looked at only scratch the surface. But they show that other translators time and again act presumptuously. They don't translate ... they INTERPRET. And that is precisely what God warned against in Revelation chapter 22.

14) Specifically, the system of ITALIC PRINT in the KJV is a sign of faithfulness to the original texts available to them. No other translators deemed it necessary to expose their readers to what is in the original text and what they, the translators, felt necessary to add in order to make sense in English.

NO OTHER TRANSLATION DISPLAYS THIS HIGH LEVEL OF INTEGRITY!

15) Yes, the KJV is not perfect. It DOES contain mistakes, a notable one being in 1 John 5:7-8. Other weaknesses I referred to earlier. But these mistakes and weaknesses are very minor when compared to the literally THOUSANDS of incorrect renderings found in the RSV, the NIV, the NRSV and other modern translations.

We should keep in mind that there is a hostility in the human mind towards God and His revelation. That is repeatedly evidenced in the way most translators have responded when faced with a choice ... choosing the option that diminishes and detracts from God's revelation.

Because the carnal mind [is] enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. (Romans 8:7)

16) When in doubt as to what a particular passage means, by all means consult other translations. But realize that another translation is never "PROOF". It is only "proof" if it says what the original Hebrew or Greek actually means. Without knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, and without access to manuscripts in those languages to check up for yourself, you should just look up the original word in a STRONG'S CONCORDANCE.

You can find the original word by means of a numbering system. You don't need any knowledge of Hebrew or Greek to do this. Then there is a brief dictionary that tells you the meaning of this word. That is a start.

What is more revealing is if you then, in your Strong's Concordance, look up EVERY SINGLE OCCURRENCE of that word. Many of these words will be used in various contexts. From some of those the meaning will become self-evident. That way you will see how GOD inspired the word to be used. THAT IS WHAT YOU WANT TO KNOW!

ONE FINAL SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 5:17-18

This is a Scripture that is often misunderstood and therefore also misapplied. Let's examine it closely.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, ONE JOT OR ONE TITTLE SHALL IN NO WISE PASS FROM THE LAW, till all be fulfilled. (Matthew 5:17-18)

People think that this refers to the PRESERVATION of the Scriptures. But that is just not what Christ was talking about! Notice the context:

- 1) The subject is God's law and its binding effect on mankind!
- 2) In verse 17 Christ made the point that His teachings were not in any way in conflict with God's laws. He was not destroying that binding effect on us ... that we are required to live by all of God's laws.
- 3) The expression "one jot or one tittle" means "not even the smallest or minutest part".
- 4) In verse 18 Christ made a statement to emphasise what He had said in verse 17 ... that He was in no way removing the binding effect of even the smallest part of the law of God.
- 5) Notice that Christ said that nothing ... "shall pass FROM THE LAW"! The law is as binding on us as it ever was!
- 6) That binding effect of God's laws on mankind is not dependent on whether people have God's laws in Hebrew or in Greek or in English or not at all! God's laws apply to and effect all mankind, even those who have never heard of them.
- 7) The physical jots and tittles (which the scribes thankfully preserved so meticulously!) are lost on us when we read the Bible in English ... but that doesn't make God's laws any less binding.
- 8) For the next three chapters after this statement Christ promptly explained just how BINDING God's laws still are! In fact, He showed that the spiritual intent of God's laws is FAR MORE BINDING than the letter of the law ever was!
- 9) In these verses Christ was addressing precisely what people have ASSUMED He did ... people assume He did away with God's laws and we are now "freed" from the law and only "under grace", etc.. That is what Christ is refuting here.
- 10) When ALL is fulfilled (i.e. after the new heaven and earth are in existence) THEN some of the "jots and tittles" will be removed from God's laws. God's law will continue to exist and be in force for eternity ... but the jots and tittles ATTACHED to it are THE APPLICATIONS ON THE MORTAL HUMAN LEVEL. And they will no longer be needed when there are no more physical human beings.

God's law for all eternity is very simple: Love God the Father above all else and love all other beings (fellow-members of God's Family and the righteous angels) as you love yourself, love being an outgoing concern for the welfare of others.

All the applications on the physical level of this law are mere jots and tittles ... and they will fall away when there will be "no more death" (Revelation 21:4). Spirit beings will not be keeping the Sabbath or the Holy Days, or bringing tithes or monetary offerings to God the Father, etc..

I hope this makes Matthew 5:18 a bit clearer.

Right, if you now still feel that you prefer the NIV or the RSV or the ASV or Moffatt or one of the other translations to the KJV, then that is your decision. If it is the language of one of these translations that appeals to you, ask yourself if that language also appeals to God? Are you concerned with "easy language" or with "accuracy" of translation? Realize that "adulterated truth" is in fact no longer truth! Many people prefer "easy stories" ...

For the time will come when they will not endure SOUND doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away [their] ears from

the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. (2 Timothy 4:3-4)

"Sound teachings" can only come from accurate translations. Let's be sure these verses don't apply to us!

HAPPY BIBLE STUDY!

Frank W. Nelte