

WHICH VERSION IS THE BIBLE?

**Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me
and of my words
in this adulterous and sinful generation;
of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed
when he cometh in the glory of his Father
with the holy angels.**

Mark 8:38

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FLOYD NOLEN JONES, Th.D., Ph.D.

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Which Version is the Bible?

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ABBREVIATIONS

A	Codex Alexandrinus
A.D.	<i>Anno Dei</i> (Year of God)
a	Codex Sinaiticus - pronounced aleph, the 1st letter in the Hebrew alphabet
AV	Authorized King James Version (1611)
B	Codex Vaticanus
b.	born
B.C.	Before Christ
BM	British Museum
c.	<i>circa</i> - about; approximately
ch.,chs.	chapter(s)
cp.	compare
D	Codex Bezae
d.	died
ed., eds.	edition(s); editor(s)
e.g.	<i>exempli gratia</i> - for example
et al.	<i>et alii</i> - and others
etc.	<i>et cetera</i> - and so forth
ff.	and the following (verses, pages, etc.)
fl.	<i>floruit</i> - flourished, used when birth & death dates are not known.
fn.	footnote
gen. ed.	general editor
ibid.	<i>ibidem</i> - Latin for "in the same place"
i.e.	<i>id est</i> - that is
ISBE	International Standard Bible Encyclopedia
KJB/KJ	King James Bible (1611)
LXX	Septuagint, for the "70" (72) translators
mss	Greek ms of New Testament in small cursive letters. Also called "minuscules".
MSS	Greek MSS or Codex of the New Testament written in capital letters. Also called "majuscules" and "uncials".
MS/ms	A single uncial or cursive manuscript.
MT	Masoretic Text, the God given Hebrew Old Testament
NASV	New American Standard Version (Bible) - also shortened to NAS
Nestle ²⁶	The 26th edition of Nestle's Greek N.T. (same as Nestle-Aland ²⁶ or Aland-Nestle ²⁶)
n.d.	no date
NIV	New International Version
n.p.	no place; no publisher

N.T.	New Testament
op. cit.	<i>opere citato</i> – Latin for "in the work previously cited"
O.T.	Old Testament
p., pp.	page(s)
q.v.	<i>quod vide</i> - which see (that is, see the preceding item)
rev.	revision; revised; revised; reviewed by
rpt.	reprint; reprinted
[sic]	so, thus
TR	<i>Textus Receptus</i> - the "Received Text". The Providentially preserved God given Greek N.T. Synonymous, for practical purposes, with "Traditional Text", "Syrian Text", "Byzantine", and "majority text" - although this is a simplification.
trans.	translated by; translator; translation
T.T.	Traditional Text - a text representing the "vast majority of authorities"
UBS ³	United Bible Society, 3rd edition of its Greek N.T.
Vid. supra	<i>Vide supra</i> - see above; previous pages or materials in the book one is reading.
viz.	<i>videlicet</i> - namely
vol., vols.	volume(s)
vs., vv.	verse(s)

TO THE READER - THE SOUNDING OF AN ALARM

In the King James Bible, Isaiah 14:12, 15 reads:

How are thou fallen from heaven, **O Lucifer**, son of the morning!
... Yet thou shalt be brought down to **hell**.

However, the New International Version pens:

How you have fallen from heaven **O morning star**, son of the dawn
... but you are brought down to the grave.

Indeed, the New American Standard and all the modern versions read almost exactly like the NIV (except the NKJV). Yet historically Isaiah 14 has been cited throughout the Church as the singular biography and identification of Lucifer [G.A. Riplinger, *New Age Bible Versions*, (Munroe Falls, OH: A.V. Publications, 1993), pp. 40-55]. In verse twelve of the King James, Lucifer is in heaven; in verse fifteen Satan is in hell, and the continuing context establishes that Lucifer and Satan are one and the same being. The new versions have removed the name "Lucifer" thereby eliminating the *only* reference to his true identity in the entire Bible – yet the change in these versions is not the result of translation from the Hebrew language.

The Hebrew here is *helel, ben shachar* (רַגְלָאֲבִיבִי, לְיָהוּה, which translates "Lucifer, son of the morning" (as is found in all the old English translations written before 1611 when the KJB was published). The NIV, NASB et al. read as though the Hebrew was *kokab shachar, ben shachar* or "morning star, son of the dawn" (or "son of the morning"). But not only is the Hebrew word for star (כּוֹכַב/k - *kokab*) nowhere to be found in the text, "morning" appears only once as given in the KJB – not twice as the modern versions indicate. Moreover, the word *kokab* is translated as "star" dozens of other times by the translators of these new "bibles". Their editors also know that *kokab boqer* (רַגְלָאֲבִיבִי, כּוֹכַב/k - *kokab boqer*) is "morning star" for it appears in plural form in Job 38:7 (i.e., morning stars). Had the Lord intended "morning star" in Isaiah 14, He could have eliminated any confusion by repeating *kokab boqer* (רַגְלָאֲבִיבִי, כּוֹכַב/k) there. God's selection of *helel* (לְיָהוּה, Hebrew for Lucifer) is unique as it appears nowhere else in the Old Testament.

Moreover, Revelation 22:16 (also 2:28 and II Pet.1:19) declares unequivocally that Jesus Christ is the "morning star" or "day star" (II Pet. 1:19, cp. Luk. 1:78; Mal. 4:2), meaning the sun – not the planet Venus.

I *Jesus* have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and *morning star*.

Thus it must be understood that the identification of Lucifer as being the morning star does not find its roots in the Hebrew O.T., but from classical mythology and witchcraft where he is connected with the planet Venus (the morning "star").

The wording in the modern versions reads such that it appears the fall recorded in Isaiah 14 is speaking of Jesus rather than Lucifer the Devil! The rendering of "morning star" in place of "Lucifer" in this passage must be seen by the Church as nothing less than the ultimate blasphemy. The NASV compounds its role as malefactor by placing II Peter 1:19 in the reference next to Isaiah 14 thereby solidifying the impression that the passage refers to Christ Jesus rather than Satan. But Lucifer (*helel*, לִלְיָח) does not mean "morning star". It is Latin (from *lux* or *lucis* = light, plus *fero* = to bring) meaning "bright one", "light bearer" or "light bringer". Due to the brightness of the planet Venus, from ancient times the word "Lucifer" (*helel*, לִלְיָח) has been associated in secular and/or pagan works with that heavenly body.

Among the modern versions, only the King James (and NKJV) gives proof that Lucifer is Satan. Without its testimony this central vital truth would soon be lost. This fact alone sets the King James Bible apart from and far above all modern would-be rivals. Truly, it is an achievement *sui generis*. Indeed, the older English versions (the 1560 Geneva etc.) also read "Lucifer".

The clarion has been faithfully and clearly sounded (I Cor.14:8). If the reader is not greatly alarmed by the above, it is pointless for him to continue reading. However, if concern has been aroused as to how this deception has been foisted not only upon the Christian Church, but on the general public as well – read on. The story lies before you.

**Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words
shall not pass away.
Mark 13:31**

A BIBLICAL CREDIBILITY CRISIS

adapted in part from Dr. W.N. Pickering (1990)

If we wanted to be certain that a copy of the American Constitution were perfectly accurate, we could compare it with the original hand-written document at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. However, such is not possible with the New Testament – all of its original manuscripts penned by Paul, Peter and other apostles in the first century A.D. have disappeared. Nearly all of the copies of these originals made during the early centuries thereafter were worn out, destroyed by the Roman Caesars, or remain undiscovered.

As a result of the discovery of a number of early manuscripts in the 19th century, questions arose concerning the original wording of the N.T. Although these differed significantly in many places from the Traditional Greek text, many scholars concluded they were better copies of the originals because they were "older". This new approach led to Greek texts based largely upon a handful or a minority of early manuscripts.

The original manuscripts of the books of the New Testament were hand copied over and over again and copies were made from various generations of copies. As a result, numerous variant readings came to appear in New Testament manuscripts. Some of these were merely variations of spelling. Others were far more serious: (1) additions of words or phrases; (2) omissions of words, phrases, clauses, and whole sentences and paragraphs. These variant readings arose either from the inadvertent errors of copyists, or from the efforts of "scholars" (whether well-meaning or otherwise) to correct or even to improve the text.

It is the task of textual critics to ascertain just what the original reading was at every point in the New Testament text where a variant reading exists. This they do by sifting through a massive quantity of manuscript evidence, supposedly with great care. However, there are different schools of thought among textual critics, each with its own set of presuppositions and criteria for evaluating the authenticity of a reading and the relative importance of a given manuscript. Before accepting the conclusions of a particular textual critic, one should evaluate both his theological presuppositions and criteria.

The New Testaments of the King James Bible, William Tyndale's Bible, Luther's German Bible, Olivetan's French Bible, the Geneva Bible (English), as well as many other vernacular versions of the Protestant Reformation were translated from the Greek Text of Stephens, 1550, which (with the Elzevir Text of 1624) is commonly called the *Textus Receptus*, or the Received Text (TR). It is the "Traditional Text" (T.T.) that has been read and preserved by the Greek Orthodox Church throughout the centuries. From it came the Peshitta, the Italic, Celtic, Gallic, and Gothic Bibles, the medieval versions of the evangelical Waldenses and Albigenses, and other versions suppressed by Rome during the Middle Ages. Though many copies were ruthlessly hunted down and destroyed, the Received Text has been preserved by an Almighty Providence.

This "Traditional Text" is also referred to as the "majority text",¹ since it is represented by about 95 percent of the manuscript evidence. This is in sharp contrast to the Westcott-Hort tradition (which leans heavily on two manuscripts of the unreliable Alexandrian Text type), the shaky foundation of nearly all of today's versions. In the 16th century, Erasmus and the Reformers knowingly rejected the Gnostic readings of the Alexandrian Codex Vaticanus B and other old uncial (i.e., all capital letters with no spaces between words = MSS) manuscripts, whose variant readings they judged to be corrupt. They regarded such dubious "treasures" as the products of scribes who had altered the text to suit their own private interpretations. They also rejected Jerome's Latin Vulgate as a corrupt version and as an improper basis for vernacular translations.

The earliest known portion of the N.T. is Papyrus P-52 (until 1995 when the Magdalen Papyrus was dated as A.D. 66 & found to contain TR/KJB readings! See p. 207). Also known as "John Rylands Greek 457", this 2.5 by 3.5 inch fragment is usually dated about A.D. 125 and contains John 18:31-33, 37-38. The earliest extant copy containing a complete book is Papyrus 72. Dated around 300, it contains all of I and II Peter and Jude. About 70 Greek MSS have been assigned a date earlier than 400 A.D., but almost all of them are very fragmentary. Where these do overlap, significant disagreement is usually found among them as to the correct wording. Around 190 Greek copies have been dated between A.D. 400-800. Most of these are also fragmentary, and they differ considerably where they overlap. As of 800 A.D., only eight extant Greek MSS contain all four gospels in essentially their entirety. Of these, only five contain all of Acts, five all of Romans and two all of Revelation.

Of the 3,000 plus Greek manuscripts of the N.T., about 1700 are from the 12th-14th centuries. They, along with 640 copies from the 9th - 11th centuries, are in basic agreement on approximately 99% of the words of the N.T. As a group, however, this majority disagree considerably with most of the copies from the early centuries – which also differ considerably among themselves. This, then, is the situation that has given rise to the debate over the original wording of the New Testament. Nevertheless, despite all the variations, nearly all of the words of the N.T. enjoy over 99% attestation from the extant Greek MSS/mss. Only about 2% have less than 95% support and fewer than 1% of the words have less than 80% (and most of these differ only slightly).

Yet for the past 100 years, the world of scholarship has been dominated by the view that this majority text is a secondary and inferior text. Scholars have rejected that we have had the true text of the originals all along and have thus attempted to **reconstruct** the original text of the N.T. on the basis of the few

¹ Recently, several Greek N.T.'s have been published under the designation "Majority Text". Hence, in this work the term "majority" is capitalized when referring to a single entity but is left in small letters when the word "majority" is intended with regard to the whole body of extant Greek manuscripts (i.e., as opposed to the "minority" of the mss).

early manuscripts. But as these copies differ considerably among themselves, the result has been an eclectic "patchwork quilt". The editors of the dominant eclectic Greek text of today have usually followed a single Greek MSS and in dozens of places they have printed a text not found in **any** known Greek copy! The discrepancy between this eclectic text and the majority reading is about 8%. That would amount to 48 full pages of discrepancies in a 600 page text. Around 1/5 of that represents omissions in the "minority text" such that it is about 10 pages shorter than the majority text. Nearly all modern versions of the Bible are based on this "minority text" whereas the King James is based on an identical twin brother of the "majority text". This is why so many verses, phrases, etc. familiar to users of the KJB are missing in the modern versions.

The question is which of these two Greek texts is the Word of God? There are a number of reasons for rejecting these early MSS as spurious. An inquiry reveals that the "majority text" has dominated the stream of transmission down through the centuries because the Church considered it to be the God given text. It has the greatest geographic distribution as well as the longest continuity throughout time. The "minority text" never circulated widely within the Church, and it virtually disappeared after the 4th century. Further, they have few direct descendants, demonstrating that they were rejected in their day – not deemed worthy of copying. The undisputed fact that the early minority copies not only differ from the majority but also differ significantly among themselves undermines their credibility as valid witnesses to the true text.

It is often stated that no matter what Greek text one may use no Christian doctrine is actually affected, hence, the whole controversy is but a "tempest in a teapot". Not so, for although as many as half of the differences between the "majority" and "minority" texts be termed "inconsequential", about 25 pages of significant discrepancies remain – and the "minority" omits words from the text that total 10 pages.

Moreover, the "minority text" has introduced some unequivocal errors which make the doctrine of inerrancy indefensible. For example, Matthew 1:7 and 1:10 list Asaph and Amos, two non-existent kings, in Christ's genealogy whereas the Traditional Text correctly reads "Asa" and "Amon". Luke 23:45 has a scientific error in the Minority reading. Here it is stated that the sun was eclipsed (Gr. eklipontos) at Christ's death, but this is impossible as the Passover always occurs during the time of the full moon. An eclipse of the sun can occur only during the new moon phase. The T.T. reads "the sun was darkened" (eskotisthe). The Minority Text of John 7:8 relates Jesus' telling his brothers that He is not going to the feast; then two verses later, He goes. No contradiction exists in the T.T. which records Jesus as saying "I am not **yet** going."

The result of this is that although most major Christian doctrine is not at risk (though several such as eternal judgment, the ascension and the deity of Jesus are significantly weakened), two **are**. Total havoc is played upon the doctrine of

Divine Inspiration due to the plain errors of fact and contradictions incorporated in the eclectic text of the N.T. Divine inspiration becomes relative, and the doctrine of the Scriptures being the infallible deposit of God's Word to man becomes untenable.

Thus, modern scholarship has perniciously undermined the credibility of the New Testament text. This **credibility crisis** has been forced upon the attention of the laity by the modern versions that enclose parts of the text in brackets and add numerous footnotes that are often inaccurate and slanted which raise doubt as to the integrity of the text. Moreover, this credibility crisis is being exported around the world through the translations and revisions of the N.T. that are based on the eclectic text.

FOREWORD

It was never the author's intent to produce a book or even a manuscript. The effort before you seemed to just "come about". After years of study on the subject, lectures were given at churches, Bible studies, and a Bible College. Prior to these discourses, materials had been gathered over the years from numerous sources and places – from major researchers and text books presenting both sides of the issue at hand to pamphlets, articles, library "raids", small clips and/or lengthy documents from pastors, expositors, and laymen as well as data obtained from personal conversations, telephone discourses and written correspondence from the States as well as Europe.

With no thought of ever publishing, what began to evolve was a somewhat orderly assimilation of "private notes". These consisted of what was regarded as the most germane information relevant to the question of textual criticism and Bible faithfulness. Sometimes only several sentences were taken from a source, other times a paragraph or so and, occasionally, pages. But a major portion of these notes consisted of small disjointed fragments of information gleaned and "squirreled" away from the various sources. No written creation was to be the end result of this endeavor; the only design being to become enlightened and to "get to the bottom" of the matter for one's own information and peace of mind. Thus, often no complete formal reference and occasionally no source at all was recorded in the growing stack of notes as there was no contemplation of ever producing a formal dissertation, thesis, apologetic etc.

The author then began to better organize his "accumulated ignorance". It was during this time that opportunities to lecture began to "crop up". The next phase was to have the taped addresses transcribed into the computer's word processor for permanent storage, additions, rearranging and subsequent referral and retrieval. It was hoped that this would also facilitate "trying to locate" essentials for, with the passing of time, it is easy to forget sources.

Prior to and concomitant with this project, a steady stream of inquiries began to be received relevant to written material on the subject other than those recommended at the lectures and on the numerous tapes given away. All seemed clear. Upon request, we would simply send out copies of our personal notes directly from the computer. However, about half way through editing the transcribed tapes, it became apparent that with only very minor effort (a personal statement or challenge here and there) a more vital manuscript could be produced. It could then be freely distributed to those at our Bible studies as well as those requesting from hearsay or having heard the tapes. Again, no formal treatise was ever contemplated hence formal documentation with regard to footnotes, references etc. was not always cited. Indeed, this became well near impossible for during a move prior to the inception of the project the box containing most of the said notes and citations was misplaced and believed lost. Most of those few that remained or could be recalled were incorporated being

mainly intended for the benefit of this author. Recently, however, a folder was found so that after nearly six years many of the missing references were recovered and have been included in the seventh edition onward. Thus, the story lies before you.

Appreciation by the author is herewith expressed to the many from whom I have gleaned, compiled and adapted information. In view of the above, the author trusts that any omission of a source will be accepted as being neither intentional nor with malice. To have done more was not only too long after the fact but the several European libraries from whence much of the research was conducted were no longer feasibly accessible. Still it is hoped that the original intent of sounding the alarm and alerting the unsuspecting church may be met in some small measure by the effort contained herein. The student wishing to more fully acquaint himself with the issues found within this treatise should consult the materials listed in the bibliography, especially those of Burgon, Hoskier, Nolan, Hills, Pickering, Fuller, Van Bruggen, Waite, Green, Moorman, and Letis. Several others are also exceptional but very difficult for most to locate.

Floyd Nolen Jones

I. PRESERVATION OR RESTORATION?

THE KEY ISSUE - PRESERVATION

Gentle reader, may the LORD grant you patience and grace to perceive the issue which will be unfolded before you to the end that you may be grounded and established.

The following small sampling depicts **omissions** that are commonplace in modern versions. These omissions often diminish basic doctrines. The New International Version, which we have used as a representative, has somewhat fewer omissions than the New American Standard, Revised Standard, New English, etc. Yet even in the NIV, the deletions are considerable and noteworthy. The earnest inquirer can determine for himself whether the NIV has the same authority and reverence as the Authorized Version. None of the emboldened/underlined words in that which follows appear in the NIV text (1978 edition, as to the untrustworthiness of the NIV, see page 128).

King James Bible

COL 1:14 In whom we have redemption **through his blood,** even the forgiveness of sins:

MAT 5:44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, **bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you,** and persecute you;

MAT 9:13 ...for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners **to repentance.**

1CO 5:7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed **for us:**

New International Version

In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

...For I have not come to call the righteous but sinners.

Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast as you really are. For Christ our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

King James Bible

New International Version

MAT 19:9 ... Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: **and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.**

... anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness and marries another woman commits adultery.

MAT 20:16 So the last shall be first and the first last: **for many be called but few chosen.**

So the last will be first, and the first will be last.

MAT 23:14 **Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.**

MAR 10:21 ...and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, **take up the cross,** and follow me.

...give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.

MAR 10:24 ...Children, how hard is it **for them that trust in riches** to enter into the kingdom of God.

...Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God.

MAR 11:26 **But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.**

JOH 6:47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth **on me** hath everlasting life.

I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life.

1TI 6:5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: **from such withdraw thyself.**

And constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

One need neither know Greek nor consult scholars or pastors to discern that the underlined words in the preceding passages are indeed Holy Scripture. The disparity revealed is obvious, real, shocking, and significant. The purpose of this book is to expose their existence as well as the story of how these and many more God-given words have been deleted, transposed, etc. in today's "Bibles".

Even in fundamental circles the issue relating to the various modern translations of the Bible is controversial. It is not merely the question of "inspiration". The crux is that of **preservation**. Has God preserved His Word perfect for us today, or was it only perfect in the "original" autographs? If God has not preserved His Word perfectly, we must assume that we are preaching and teaching from a book that is not completely reliable as the "original" autographs are no longer accessible.

If we believe that the Bible is **still** the inerrant Word of God, we must then deal with the problem of determining which version is the true Word of the Living God. Logic dictates that two opposing statements cannot both be true (we reject the Hegelian Dialectic). Therefore, two contradicting "Bibles" cannot both be the inerrant Word of God. This author proclaims from the outset that the "King James" or "Authorized Version" is the Word of God translated into the English language to the extent that it is the final authority in all matters of conduct and faith. Furthermore, as the modern translations since 1881 often differ significantly from the King James Bible in wording as well as doctrine, and since two conflicting texts cannot be infallible, perfect and inerrant, the reader must of necessity make a choice. That which follows is intended to assist the seeker to clearly discern the truth of the matter for himself.

Moreover, that which follows is not intended to be an intellectual treatise. The uncompromising stand is taken herein that God gave us His pure Word in the original autographs, and that He has preserved it in its pure form unto this day – and will continue so doing forever. Indeed, preservation is the only issue separating the *Biblicist*¹ from other

¹ Floyd Nolen Jones, *A Chronology of the Old Testament: A Return to the Basics*, 14th ed., rev. & enl., (The Woodlands, TX: KingsWord Press, 1999), p. 4. By "Biblicist", this author does not merely refer to a fundamentalist or a Biblical scholar as many dictionaries so define. Much more is intended. The word connotes one who, while taking both the immediate and the remote context into account, interprets and believes the Word of God literally. This necessitates that the person so designated has chosen to believe God's many promises that, despite all textual criticism objections to the contrary, he would

professing Christians in this matter; yet, the traditional viewpoint has always been that God not only gave mankind His pure Word but that He also assumed the oversight of its preservation as well. Over the years, this position has deteriorated and the contemporary view is that God has not protected the Scriptures, that they are not available in a pure form, and that this necessitates their recovery by reconstructing them from the Greek manuscripts which have survived to this day.

SCRIPTURAL JUSTIFICATION FOR THIS STUDY

The purpose of this study is biblically oriented for the Lord tells us that we must contend for the faith.

Beloved, ... it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith ... (Jude 3)

This is what we, by God's grace, are going to do – contend for the faith. No one has to defend Jesus or the Word of God. God is perfectly capable of defending Himself and His Word. Nevertheless, He tells us to contend for the faith as there is a great issue before us today. The question is – where is the Word of God? Which version is the real Bible? Why do the different versions not read the same? These are good questions and they beg to be answered.

Other Scripture pertinent to this inquiry may be found in II Tim. 2:23-26:

But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

Many Christians have been taken captive by the devil concerning the Bible manuscripts. As will be revealed, the questions regarding the reliability and authenticity of the Word of God are neither foolish nor unlearned. The ultimate purpose in all of this is to restore – to meekly

forever preserve His infallible Word. Moreover, the meaning intended to be conveyed by this word carries with it the concept that such a person trusts that the Hebrew and Greek *Textus Receptus* (the Authorized Bible) which is today at his disposal is a fulfillment of those promises. Sadly, even among the pastors and seminary professors, most of today's conservative evangelical Christians do not qualify to bear this appellation which many in the not too distant past bore, counting the cost while enduring the shame.

instruct those who are either in error or simply do not understand the issue with regard to the various translations, in order to bring them to the truth:

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: (Eph.4:14-15)

So that everybody may grow up – we are attempting to assist in that process but in so doing some things have to be said which may seem hurtful for the moment. It is not our intent to do so.

THE ISSUE - JUST WHAT IS AT STAKE?

God teaches us that the **purpose** of Scripture is **to lead us to Christ** and then **to guide our lives** (John 5:39-40). God did not give the Scriptures for the purpose of scholarly intellectual exercise. Yet that is what they are being used for by many. This is one of the major problems plaguing the Church today. As we enter this study, we need to consider carefully the following questions:¹

1. Would God inspire a text and then allow it to become lost?

Within our diverse denominational backgrounds are found various confessions of faith. These statements of faith concerning the Holy Scriptures, particularly within conservative evangelical backgrounds, always say something to the effect that we believe that God gave the original Scriptures inerrant. We profess to believe in the **originals**, that they were divinely inspired by God – God breathed. Now we say that intending it as a statement of faith, but we shall soon come to see that it is in reality **a statement of unbelief!** This study is designed to bring us to grips with this issue. But first, the second question:

2. If God did inspire a text, would He not preserve it?

The New Testament was written in Greek whereas the Old Testament was mostly authored in Hebrew. It may surprise many to learn that there are *no original manuscripts* of the Bible available today. The Old

¹ Peter S. Ruckman, *The Christian's Handbook of Manuscript Evidence*, (Pensacola, FL: Pensacola Bible Press, 1970), p. 29.

Testament scribes destroyed the scrolls upon which Scripture was written as they became worn, and "dog eared" from so much handling. When they copied out a new one, they destroyed the old so that the earliest Old Testament manuscript now in existence is dated about 900 A.D. This is called the Hebrew Masoretic Text. It was the earliest witness to the text of the O.T. that we possessed until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls which contain some parts of the Old Testament, especially Isaiah. **Likewise, we possess no "original" New Testament manuscripts** – none of the "autographs" which the apostles wrote have been preserved. This brings us to the third question.

3. Could we expect counterfeits of the originals to be in circulation?

Is there someone who has always hated God's Word, wanted to destroy it, and has attempted to cloud man's mind and heart about its validity? In other words, as we read the Bible, is there any evidence that somebody has founded a "Yea, has God said" society? According to Genesis 3:1, Bible corruption began with Satan. Satan is the original Bible revisor. When he confronted Eve in the garden, he added to God's Word, he subtracted, he diluted and finally substituted his own doctrine for that which God had said. We find this occurring today. People are trying to add books to the Old and subtract words from the New Testament. Nothing has changed. We need to understand that the devil is promoting this continuing attack on the Word of God.

THE ORIGINAL "AUTOGRAPHS" AND "PRESERVATION"

We are expected to believe in the "**INSPIRATION**" without believing in the "**PRESERVATION**" of the Scriptures. We are being asked to believe in the inspiration of the "originals" without believing in the preservation of the text of the Scriptures. It is a statement of unbelief when we say that we only believe that the original autographs were inspired. What we really are saying is that we do not believe that we have the infallible Word of God on this planet, or at least in our hands, at this moment. Let us consider that statement scripturally:

¹⁵And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: ¹⁷That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (II Tim.3:14-17).

Here God tells us His purposes in giving us the Scriptures: "... for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Do we actually believe that God allowed them to become lost after giving them? If so, how could He use them to accomplish these purposes?

Now we know that we do not have an original. The question is has God preserved His Word – *the original text* – although not the original piece of paper or vellum on which it may have been written?

The observant reader will note that in the above cited verses given through Paul to Timothy no reference is being made with regard to the "ORIGINAL" Scriptures. Look at verse 15. Paul says to Timothy, "from a child you have known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise unto salvation." Paul is obviously not speaking of the "ORIGINAL" New Testament Scripture. Second Timothy was penned about A.D. 65. Further, Timothy was old enough to join Paul and Silas c.53 A.D. (Acts 16:1-4). Thus, **when Timothy was a child, there was no New Testament collection of Scripture anywhere.** Nor was Paul speaking of the "ORIGINALS" of the Old Testament for there was not an original Old Testament piece of paper or vellum extant at that time. Wrestle with this! Come to grips with it! These are the verses upon which many of us base our faith and say we believe in the "ORIGINALS". Yet these very verses are *not* speaking of the original manuscripts!

But are the copies inspired? The Bible itself clearly teaches that faithful **copies** of the originals **are** also **inspired**.¹ The word "Scripture" in II Timothy 3:16-17 is translated from the Greek word "graphé" (graphē). Graphé occurs 51 times in the Greek New Testament and at every occurrence it means "Scripture" – in fact, it usually refers to the Old Testament text.

A perusal of the N.T. reveals that the Lord Jesus read from the "graphé" in the synagogue at Nazareth (Luk.4:21) as did Paul in the synagogue at Thessalonica (Acts 17:2). The Ethiopian eunuch, returning home from worshipping at Jerusalem, was riding in his chariot and reading a passage of graphé (Acts 8:32-33). These were not the autographs that they were reading; they were copies – moreover, copies of copies! Yet the Word of God calls them graphé – and every graphé is "given by inspiration of God" (II Tim.3:16). Thus, the Holy Writ has testified and

¹ Edward W. Goodrick, *Is My Bible the Inspired Word of God*, (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1988), pp. 61-62.

that testimony is that faithful copies of the originals are themselves inspired. Selah!

Therefore, it all comes down to a promise given by God – that He would preserve the text which He gave us. Timothy never saw an original when he was a child of either the Old or New Testament, yet in verse 16 God says that what Timothy learned as a child was given by inspiration of God and **is** profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Now if God were talking about something which had been lost and/or is no longer true and accurate, why did He give verse 17?

WHAT DOES GOD HIMSELF PROMISE CONCERNING THE SCRIPTURES?

Let us examine some verses where God has promised both to give and protect His Word.

"Then said the Lord unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it." (Jer.1:12)

Here God says He is watching over His Word to perform it – to make all that He has said come to pass.

Jesus said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away." (Mark 13:31)

God did not promise to keep the original piece of material upon which His words were given. He says His Words **SHALL NOT PASS AWAY**. Therefore, this promise demands that we still have them on planet earth.

Jesus also says, "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." (Mark 8:38)

Why this verse if God has not preserved His Word?

"But the word of the Lord endureth forever." (I Pet.1:25)

This is a direct quote of Isaiah 40:8. God has said that His Word will endure forever! He did not promise that the original piece of paper, rock or vellum would exist forever **but that He would preserve the Word – forever.**

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever." (Isaiah 40:8)

".. for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name." (Psalm 138:2)

Look at that! God says He has magnified His Word above His name! That is incredible for supposedly THE name was so sacred to the Jews that they did not even pronounce it.

Jesus said "... and the Scripture cannot be broken." (John 10:35)

Thus, on the basis of God's many promises we declare and proclaim to you that we have in our hands the absolutely infallible inerrant Living Word of Almighty God – that God has promised to keep His Word as revealed through these Scriptures. But there is more!

"The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shall keep them, O Lord, **thou shall preserve them from this generation forever.**" (Psa.12:6, 7)

This is a promise from God! Christian, do you believe it? He says He will preserve it. He did not just promise to give the originals pure and free from error – He promised **to preserve the text forever!**

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John 12:48)

Since God's Word will judge us, are we to believe that God will judge us by something which He meticulously gave us and then lost along the way? Would it be just and fair of God to judge us with these words if they are no longer trustworthy – to hold us accountable when our guide is not 100 percent reliable?

In Matthew 5:18, Jesus said not "one jot or one tittle" shall change in the Word of God. Specifically, He was speaking of the Old Testament. We are being taught today that perhaps the Old Testament is not true, that it is full of contradictions, scribal errors, etc., but Jesus said that it was true and unerring – even to the smallest detail – and He was not referring to the originals, but to copies of copies of copies.

"Do you not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" (John 5:45-47)

Was Jesus speaking of the "originals"? No, for they did not have the originals. They had copies of copies of copies of the originals yet Jesus said "not one jot or one tittle" had been changed. If God has only promised the "ORIGINALS" to be pure then Jesus erred in His assessment of the Scriptures. Should these statements of Jesus concerning the Scriptures be inaccurate then He is not Lord, no longer all knowing, no longer all God.

"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." (John 5:39-40)

Again, the ultimate purpose of the Scriptures is to lead us to Christ – and then to guide our lives. If the Scriptures are not accurate, if they have been changed or altered, if they have been lost so that we no longer have the Word of God, how can we come to Christ for they are the Holy Spirit's implement to testify of the Lord Jesus.

As set forth in the preceding paragraphs, we have Scripturally demonstrated that **faith in the preservation of the text is a basic Bible doctrine**. Furthermore, the context of these many promises is not that God's Word is to be preserved in a jar somewhere in a cave or desert, lost for hundreds of years waiting to be found and **restored** to the believing remnant of the Church. The context is very clear in Second Timothy 3:16-17 that the inspired Word was given by God as a deposit to the Body of Christ "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works". Therefore, for God to accomplish this stated purpose for His having given us His Word – it must remain accessible to the disciples of the Lord, Christ Jesus!

GOD'S METHOD OF PRESERVING THE SCRIPTURES

In selecting Hebrew and Koine¹ (κοινή = common or everyday) Greek for the languages in which He would originally give the Bible, God revealed His wisdom, foreknowledge and power. Both of these tongues became "dead languages" within several hundred years after each respective canon was established. By this, the words became "frozen in time". None of the words or their meanings could change. They were, as Latin, dead

¹ A dialect of the Greek language that flourished from the time of Alexander the Great to the barbarian invasions which overtook the Roman Empire after the 4th century A.D. It was replaced by "Byzantine" Greek until 1453 at which time the "Modern" Greek stage superseded it. Koine is singularly the language of the N.T.

languages from which one cannot subtract or add. In contrast, English is a living language and as such new words are constantly being added and old words remain in a state of flux. Their meanings may change or take on new or different connotations.

In Old Testament days, the Levitical priests copied and preserved the Living Words of God. Throughout Scripture, the scribes were of the tribe of Levi (Mal.2:7; Deu.31:25; Deu.17:18). Ezra the priest was also "the ready scribe" of Israel (Ezr.7:1-11). This method of preserving the text was extremely successful as the Lord Jesus bore witness that not "one jot or tittle" had been altered in the 1500 years from Moses to His day.

As to the accuracy of the Hebrew Old Testament in our day, Bishop Kennicott did a study of 581 manuscripts of the Old Testament which involved 280,000,000 letters.¹ Out of that 280,000,000, there were 900,000 variants. Although seemingly large to the reader, it is only one variant in 316 letters which is only 1/3 of 1%. But there is more. Of those 900,000 variants, 750,000 pertain to spelling – whether the letter should be an "i" or "u". This has to do with vowel points for the purpose of pronunciation which were supposedly added c.600 A.D. by a group of Jewish scribes known as the Masoretes. Thus we are left with only 150,000 variants in 280,000,000 letters or only one variant in 1580 letters, a degree of accuracy of .0006 (six ten thousandths). Indeed, most of those variants are found in only a few manuscripts; in fact, mostly in just one corrupted copy.

The Dead Sea Scrolls of Isaiah agree with the Hebrew Masoretic Text (the Hebrew Old Testament along with the vowel points to aid in pronunciation). The earliest extant Masoretic Text is dated c.900 A.D. Almost no changes have occurred in the Book of Isaiah. Isaiah 53, for example, contains only *one word* of three letters which is in doubt after nearly eleven hundred years of copying. In a chapter of 166 words, only 17 were different – 10 were spelling, 4 were conjunctions.

Actually, the Masoretic Text is the true text, not the Dead Sea Scrolls, even though the Scrolls are more than a thousand years older. The Dead Sea material was not written by Jews who were given the charge by God to protect them. They were not of the tribe of Levi. They were Essenes, a Jewish cult of ascetics whose teachings were rife with heresies.

¹ Rene Pache, *Inspiration and Authority of Scripture*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Bible Institute, 1969), pp. 189-190.

Similarly, the Septuagint¹ manuscripts exhibit considerable significant differences among themselves and disagree with the Hebrew Masoretic Text in many places. Both cannot be correct. As the Hebrew Masoretic text is the inerrant, infallible Word of God – the Septuagint should be seen as spurious and rejected. We cannot even be certain that the LXX which we have extant today (c.350 A.D.) is a faithful reproduction of the c.260 B.C. original (if such an early translation actually ever existed in the first place).

But in the New Covenant, all become priests through the new birth in Christ Jesus. As in the Old Covenant, God gave the New Testament text into the hands of the *priesthood* of believers, both laymen and elders. The early Christians copied, wrote and preserved it. Most of the early Christians were not wealthy. They often wrote on paper which would be comparable to that of a daily newspaper. Most were not trained scholars or scribes, but they copied with fear in their hearts. They knew that God had warned four times that there would be a curse on anyone who added, subtracted or altered in any way the Word of God (Deu.4:2; Prov.30:5-6; Psa.12:6-7; Rev.22:18-19).

As believers, they would never deliberately alter the Holy Scriptures for they would have believed in the curse that these verses proclaimed. The only persons who would deliberately change the true text would be blasphemers who did not believe the warnings. In context, these verses forewarn not so much of accidental miscopying but of willful alterations.

Although the New Testament scribes may have left out a "thee" or an "and" as they copied, they copied as carefully and meticulously as possible for they believed with all their hearts and souls that these were God breathed words. They had made a commitment to follow the Lord Jesus under great persecution from the emperors. Many of the scribes gave up their very lives as well as the lives of their whole families, keeping that commitment while being crucified, fed to the lions, etc. For modern scholars who sit comfortably in air conditioned surroundings to accuse these dedicated souls of deliberately altering the Scriptures is almost unforgivable. Poor writers, some may have been, but the high degree of

¹ Floyd Nolen Jones, *The Septuagint: A Critical Analysis*, 6th ed., rev. & enl., (The Woodlands, TX: KingsWord Press, 2000). Designated LXX after the 70 translators reputed to have produced the translation, it is a spurious Greek Old Testament supposedly written for the library of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, 285-246 B.C. The story of its origin abounds in legend.

accuracy found in their work is not present in those writings which are being put off on the church today as being the "oldest and most reliable" manuscripts.

WOLVES PARADING AS SHEEP

In Acts 20, Paul warned that wolves would come in amongst us and not spare the flock; that from among our own selves men would arise with perverse things to say drawing away disciples unto themselves. With tears in his eyes, Paul cautioned us to beware, and he did not cease issuing this warning day and night. Indeed, Jesus taught that there would be wolves coming into the flock of God in sheep's clothing (Mat.7). Such a wolf cannot be recognized easily. It looks like a sheep. Revelation 13 speaks of a false prophet with horns of a lamb but when he opens his mouth, he speaks with the voice of the dragon. So these wolves appear as sheep in order to deceive and to devour.

The church at large is inattentive and dulled to these warnings. We tend to think because someone has been to the seminary, has on a white collar with robe, holds his hands in a pious manner with a devout look upon his face, says he is a minister, perhaps speaks in tongues, and says nice things about Jesus, that he is a man of God.

But even demons say nice things about Jesus. The first demonic person encountered by Jesus in the Book of Mark was at the synagogue (church). The demon possessed person said, "I know who you are. You are the Holy One of God." He spoke well of Jesus but did not speak the whole truth.

Jesus is Jehovah God – the Creator – come in the flesh! (Isa.9:6) The demon did not give forth the full import as to Jesus' personage, but he did say something nice about Him. Today we often get lulled to sleep by people who say some nice things about Jesus. But both Jesus and Paul said to beware for there are wolves in sheep's clothing. Today these wolves are in the flock as preachers, scholars, seminary professors, teachers etc., and they are attacking the Word of God while the unsuspecting sheep graze on unaware.

WHEN DID THE WOLVES BEGIN TO DEVOUR THE WORD?

Corruption of the New Testament text had begun by the time of Paul. The following was preserved for us by the Holy Spirit through Paul in

II Corinthians 2:17: "For we are not as *many*, which corrupt the word of God" Bible corruption, beginning in the garden of Eden, was out of control as early as the time of Paul. In other words, when the original apostles were here, they had trouble over the purity of the Bible text. This is confirmed and enlarged upon in II Corinthians 4:2:

"But we have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully"

Thus even in Paul's day, when it was still possible to appeal to the New Testament "autographs", there were those who were handling the Word of God deceitfully and *many* were corrupting it. Peter adds that all of Paul's writings were Scripture and that men were wrestling against them at the cost of the destruction of their own souls (II Peter 3:16).

If many were corrupting the Word of God during the days of the Apostles, it is possible that we could find a first century document which did not contain the original reading. It could have been altered and thus be corrupt even though very old for Paul and Peter said many were corrupting the Word of God in the first century A.D (also see II Thes.2:2).

People today are reading from so many different translations that they begin to believe that they can translate or interpret the Bible in any way they desire. The King James Bible says that there is but "one" interpretation of Scripture (although there are many applications).

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not at any time by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were ***moved by the Holy Spirit*** (II Peter 1:20, author's emphasis).

God says there is only one interpretation – and that is His. Man does have a free will and he may chose to believe anything he wishes, but he will answer and give an account to God for it.

BEWARE - "A LITTLE LEAVEN ..."

In Matthew 16:6 and 12, Jesus said unto his disciples "... Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." The Pharisees and Sadducees were very religious people yet enemies of God. The disciples finally understood in verse 12 that Jesus was not speaking of the bread which the Pharisees and Sadducees had made. He was warning of their doctrine – to beware of that which the religious leaders

were teaching. Today, the warning is still valid. Religious, pious devout men who attack the Scriptures are wolves (or have been deceived by wolves) in sheep's clothing; beware of their leaven for a little leaven leavens the whole lump.

Mark 12:37 contains these words – "... *And the common people heard him gladly.*" Nothing has changed. This is still true. The common people still hear Jesus and the Word of God gladly, but more and more in churches and seminaries it is no longer believed that we have the Word of God. We are being told in conservative seminaries and Bible colleges that we do not have the infallible Word of God and that we have lost its text. Are we to believe that God has preserved **the canon** of the Bible but **not the text**?

If you are born again of God by the blood of Jesus Christ, through simple faith in Jesus Christ – believing in His virgin birth, His death to pay for our sin, and His resurrection which confirmed that He is God Almighty come in the flesh – then it follows that you believe that God gave the canon (the books which belong in the Bible). Are we now to believe that He did not give or preserve for us the text – that is, what those God chosen books actually said?

NOT AN "AD HOMINEM"

In order to fully expose the wickedness of these wolves within the flock of God, we shall have to review the story of the 1881 revision and contrast it to that of the 1611 King James translation. It is quite a story and in order to disclose it, we shall have to examine the lives and beliefs of some of the men involved. As a result, some might say that our thesis is an "ad hominem" and therefore not valid, for it draws on emotions and feelings – that it is a personal attack upon the men involved. Such is not the case. We have not erected any "straw men" to attack. Rather our account is that of an exposé, an exposé which will reveal that the Church has, for centuries, been intimidated into following the scholarship of brilliant – yet habitually unregenerate – men.

However, no unsaved person can teach us ANYTHING about the Bible that we really need to know. They may be brilliant scholars of Greek and/or Hebrew. They may be able to explain how to conjugate Greek and Hebrew verbs, but they cannot explain or clarify Scriptural context because they do not understand it. They may know all about Assyriology, Egyptology, Astronomy, the History of Babylon, the archaeology of Israel,

etc., but such information is not really necessary to the understanding of the Holy Writ. **The Scripture is a fully self contained revelation.** Were other data necessary to its comprehension, God would have included it in The Word.

With reference to these bold assessments, the Scripture proclaims that the natural (unregenerate) man **cannot** receive the things of God ... "nor can he know them" (I Cor.2:9-14). Ephesians 4:18 says that their "understanding has been darkened". Romans 1:28 teaches that they have reprobate and depraved minds. Matthew 13:14-15 says that they hear with their ears, but they do not hear with their understanding and their hearts. Despite their scholarship and their brilliance, they do not see and hear – they cannot perceive. However, by virtue of the new birth the Christian may have his perception opened **by revelation** from the Living God.

This is thus not an ad hominem. We need to understand that the men who have led us into today's position have been, for the most part, lost and godless (albeit "religious and devout") and that we are blindly following their erroneous logic of textual criticism.

THE GREEK STRONGHOLD

For the past several decades most conservative fundamental Bible colleges and seminaries have been perpetuating a significant weakening of the faith of their students with regard to the inerrancy of the Scriptures. The result is that today most Church pulpits are now filled by these students who have since become pastors. The scenario is similar and familiar almost no matter where one goes. As the young impressionable man of God enrolls for study and preparation to become a pastor, he is soon informed that the New Testament was written in Greek. Consequently the student eventually finds himself enrolled in a first year Greek course.

The moment the student enters the class, a peculiar phenomenon occurs. Not yet knowing Greek, he immediately finds himself placed at a great disadvantage. What is the effect upon him from the spiritual standpoint? Very soon, the professor will subjugate the young man under his authority – not merely as an older man or as a teacher, but with regard to all spiritual matters by virtue of his knowledge of the Greek language. The clear impression that is conveyed toward the student is "You don't have the Word of God. It is written in Greek. You just don't know the

'Holy' language. I do." So at the onset, the student is placed in submission under a teacher who may or may not love the Lord or believe in the verbal inspiration *and preservation* of the Scriptures.

Having been thus subjugated to a Greek scholar, further adverse ramifications will follow shortly. The mind tends to accept as fact that the student never knows as much as his teachers. If he did, most teachers would soon convince him to the contrary. We tend to elevate teachers to a high intellectual pedestal, and many teachers assist us in so doing. In the mind of the learner, his Greek or Hebrew professor usually remains a spiritual authority, and the professor feels likewise.

Being thus subjugated to a Greek faculty, the young impressionable student is unaware of what is transpiring. The final authority for his life is no longer the Holy Scriptures which brought him to the Lord and set his soul on fire. Final authority has become the Greek lexicons and his Greek professor, the scholar, rather than the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. This is accomplished by subtly convincing the inexperienced student that he doesn't have the Word of God at his disposal. He soon begins to wonder if it even exists.

The real issue here is that of authority. Authority is the controversy of the universe. If the Bible is not really the infallible Word of God, then what is final authority? Is it the Greek/Hebrew instructor? "Mother Church"? the Pope? the head of one's denomination? one's local preacher or Bible teacher? Thus someone has placed himself between the laity and God by virtue of his knowledge of Greek. The church at large is being told: "You laymen simply do not know the language and therefore cannot understand God or doctrine as we who know Greek and/or Hebrew."

This is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans (found in Revelation chapter 2), a doctrine which Jesus Christ says He hates. The term "Nicolaitan" was originally applied to a group of people who plagued the first century church by its pretensions to having divine authority. Although some have speculated that it could have referred to a group named after the early deacon, Nicolas of Antioch (Acts 6:5), there exists no reliable record of such a cult. The name itself comes from the Greek words "Nikao" ("to conquer" or "overcome") and "laos" ("people", especially in context here of the laity, the laymen). Thus, we have a clergy priest class taking authority over and dominating the people, the laymen.

The Roman Catholic Church in particular has exercised such a practice for years. One of the means by which Rome has accomplished this unbiblical dominion has been that of continuing to use the Latin language – a language which laymen no longer understand – during the conducting of the various ceremonies, especially mass.

Today most Protestant Churches and their seminaries are guilty of the same sin and, again, the means is that of language. When the laity attend church and/or Bible studies, they hear preachers and teachers say "The ORIGINAL Greek says" or "Your Bible may say thus and so, but the ORIGINAL Greek says something different." As mentioned previously, this is occurring at the seminary where the professor affirms "You just don't know the language."

Gradually something happens in the heart and mind of the student. He wonders "how do I know that I am reading that which the LORD actually inspired and gave through the prophets, apostles and other men of God? After all, most of the preachers, teachers and the commentaries are saying 'but the **original** Greek says'."

Some seeking to circumvent the problem may reply – "Well, the final authority is Jesus, only Jesus." The problem with such a statement is that Jesus has not physically shown up at anyone's home for nearly two thousand years and audibly said what He meant (Mat.24:23-27). It sounds very spiritual to say that Jesus is the final authority. After all, He is – and thus the statement is "true truth". But what many people mean by such an affirmation is that since no one alive today has spoken to the Lord Jesus physically and heard Him reply audibly, if the Bible is not the Word of God – then there is no final authority on the earth. Again, the real issue at stake is that of final authority.

And so, again, we say, would God inspire a text and then allow it to become lost? Would He not preserve it as He promised so many times? And if He preserved it would He not keep it in the hands of His followers for their use and instruction? Would He only preserve it within jars in caves and the like or in the obscure inner recesses of the vast library of a harlot church, having been lost there for centuries? Are we to understand His promises to preserve the Word as being fulfilled in such a context – really?

Today most seminary instructors ridicule or play down the King James translation to the student at the onset by statements such as "The

original Greek says this or that. The King James is really not so bad but of course we have learned a lot since it was written", etc. Amazingly, we have been blinded in believing that we know more about Greek today than people did four hundred years ago. But is that a reasonable position? Does not all logic, common sense and experience tell us the farther one goes from the original source, that less will be certain?

So after the student's confidence in the King James Bible has been totally diminished, he is informed that the original Bible was given in Hebrew and Greek and that the *original* was inspired. The learner is then reminded that all he has is a translation and as such, it is not inspired. After a little more time in the class during which the teacher continues harping on the *originals*, suddenly the student is informed "There are no *originals*! We don't have an *original*. We don't have a single first century document of the Bible." (but see the new findings, p. 207 ff.) This is devastating to the faith of the young inexperienced would-be man of God. He has been told that the King James isn't the faithful Word of God; that the *originals* were the only true, accurate, authentic Word; and then he is informed that there are no original manuscripts of either the Old or the New Testament.

This is soon accentuated by introducing the student to the "variant readings" between the existing Greek MSS (we shall discuss this subject later). How can the young pastor now face his congregation and say, "Almighty God says", or "thus saith the Lord". His faith in God's Word has been demasculated by such wicked faculties. The man of God who cannot quote Scripture with an assured "thus saith the Lord" is but a shorn Samson, not yet aware that the Philistines have already had their way with him. Young men with hearts on fire for God walk into the classroom and a Greek scholar belittles the Word of God and destroys their faith in the Bible. These same professors then incredulously tell us "Despite all the changes we have made in translation recently, not one single basic doctrine has been altered in any way."

But they have! By their tactics, they have altered two of the most important doctrines of all. They have altered the crucial doctrine of "**preservation**" to that of "**restoration**" – and most text critics do not believe that such restoration is even any longer possible. Moreover the fall out from this places another of the most basic doctrines under attack, the doctrine of the divine inspiration of the text. Consequently, in so doing, they have destroyed the faith of many such that they no longer are certain that they have God's Word in their hands. The teacher has

perpetuated that which happened to him years before when he was the student. The evil cycle is now complete. We have turned full circle to a different pope.

Again, we are being asked to believe in the inspiration of Scripture without believing in the preservation of the sacred Writ. We are being taught at nearly all the conservative fundamental seminaries that God gave an inspired text but could not (or did not) quite protect or preserve it. As a result, part was lost somewhere along the way and text critics are supposedly engaged in the arduous process of restoring to the world the original readings.

Whereas that which follows may at times seem somewhat complicated, the only question the inquiring reader need ask himself is: "Is it reasonable that God gave man His pure infallible Word and then allowed it to become so corrupted over time that He (we) was left to call and rely upon unregenerate men to restore it?" One can but wonder how a believing Christian scholar, pastor, or layman could allow himself to become so deceived as to fall into the snare of considering only the "originals" to be trustworthy. Most assuredly, their faith did not begin there. God "lost" portions of His Word? Was not that rather awkward of Him?

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth:

but the word of our God

shall stand for ever

Isaiah 40:8

II. BIBLICAL COMPARISONS DEPICTING THE MAGNITUDE OF THE PROBLEM

But enough talk – how serious can the problem be? After all, the Church is constantly being reassured from all quarters that regardless of which translation we use, no doctrines are at stake; hence, it does not matter which version one uses. Let the reader examine the following examples for himself peradventure God will grant him grace and insight to perceive the magnitude of the deception. Bear with us gentle inquirer, for we shall be bold as a lion. Remember that what lies before you represents some of the most significant discrepancies and alterations, but there are many many more. These few have been selected that the student may ascertain quickly and with certainty the nature and proportion of that which has been done. Most of the comparisons will be between the King James and the NAS and/or the NIV because these two are being touted as the best versions available in most circles today. Forewarned is forearmed.

Colossians 1:14

Regarding the son, Jesus, from verse 13, we read:

In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: **(KJ)**

In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (NAS,NIV,RSV)

Comment: "Through his blood" is deleted – a major difference! Beloved, if your "Bible" does not contain these three words, someone has tampered with it such that it is no longer the Word of God. If it is wrong here how can you be certain that many other such omissions do not exist?

First Timothy 3:16

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. **(KJ)**

This verse, as recorded in the King James, clearly teaches that Jesus is God!

And by common confession great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Beheld by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory. (NAS,NIV,RSV,NEB)

Comment: There is a great difference between someone named "he" being manifest in the flesh and "God". By changing "God" to "He who", the fact that Jesus is God is removed. This is one of the most powerful and clear verses in all of Scripture concerning the deity of Christ Jesus – the alteration therefore is seen as a direct attack upon His deity.

Over 300 mss read "God was manifest", only 8 mss say something else; of those 8, five say "who" instead of "God" and three have private interpretations. This means that of the extant Greek manuscripts of the New Testament that bear witness to the true reading of this verse, 97% agree with the King James as opposed to 2% that read "who".

The verse should read as the 1611 KJB has rendered it, but the question that should be burning in the mind of the reader is "why did the other translations chose the minority text"? The reason will be forthcoming in later chapters – but for now, let us continue with the exposé.

Isaiah 7:14

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. **(KJ)**

"A young woman is going to have a baby." (Jerusalem Version)

"A young woman who is pregnant will have a son." (Good News)

"Behold a young woman shall conceive ..." (RSV)

Comment: There is nothing new about a young woman's having a baby, yet this is supposed to be a sign whereby God is promising deliverance in an almost impossible situation!

The Hebrew word "almah" (hml u) occurs only seven times in the O.T. It should be rendered "virgin" here for although "almah" could mean "young woman", every time it is used in the Old Testament the context demands that it means "virgin". The other six times it is translated "virgin" in most of the various versions. One wonders why the sudden departure in the verse before us. The miracle was going to be that a virgin was going to conceive!

Furthermore, the New Testament confirms the fact in Mat.1:23 that Mary was a virgin: "Behold, a virgin (Greek = "parthenos" = parqeno") shall be with child and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

All languages contain both "weak" and "strong" words. By "weak" is meant a word that has many shades of meaning or even widely different meanings, i.e., the word "cool" in today's English. Such words can defy etymological studies. "Strong" words, on the other hand, are words which have a very limited narrow meaning – often only one possible sense. We begin to see the manifold wisdom of God in choosing to reveal His Word to man in two tongues. Weak words in one which could lead to confusion could be covered by strong words in the other by cross references and quotations. Such is the case before us. The "weak" Hebrew word "almah" (though we have already shown that by its Biblical usage it is not so weak) is covered in the N.T. by the "strong" Greek word "parthenos" which can only be translated one way – "virgin".

Moreover, *context* is the decisive factor for determining the final connotation of any word or phrase, not the dictionary definition or etymology. Etymology, though often helpful, is not an exact science. It should be used for confirmation, not as the deciding factor.

The translators of the modern versions are well aware of the incontrovertible decisive nature of "parthenos" hence the translation of Isaiah 7:14 into any other word represents deliberate willful alteration of the Word of God. In denying the virgin birth of Christ, they are saying:

- (a) Jesus was a bastard as Mary was unmarried when she conceived;
- (b) Mary was a fornicator;
- (c) God has lied to us in Mat. 1:22-23;
- (d) Christ was not God, not deity (having a physical father, He was only human); and
- (e) Christ was a sinner as he would then be a descendant of Adam and inherit Adam's nature as in Rom. 5:12.

The three verses placed before us thus far should serve as an excellent barometer for the reader to use in determining whether a given version is trustworthy or not.

Zechariah 9:9

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. (KJ)

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout aloud O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, your King comes unto you; triumph and victorious is He; humble and riding on an ass, on a colt the foal of an ass. (RSV)

Comment: "And having salvation" is left out. This verse clearly declares the purpose for the Messiah's coming. The Bible believer must not allow himself to be lulled into complacency. If he concedes these changes, eventually he will have little left! This will not be the only editorialization to be put upon us! Given time, other words will be eliminated.

The law of God is perfect. It is so perfect that if a nation, a people or an individual takes just one away or adds one to it, given enough time, anarchy will ensue. The place to stop and stand fast is to give not one word away!

Matthew 1:25

And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS. (KJ)

But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus. (NIV, NAS)

Comment: "A" son and her "firstborn" do not necessarily mean the same. Furthermore, "firstborn" reveals that Mary had other children, correcting the Roman error that Mary was a perpetual virgin. (which demands that Joseph be a perpetual virgin also, unless he was an adulterer!? – cp. Mk.6:2-4; Joh.7:2-6, cp. 2:12; Psa.69:8; Luk.21:16)

Matthew 4:10 (9:18; 20:20; Mk.5:6; Lk.24:52)

Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. (KJ)

Comment: In the above verse, Jesus clearly endorsed Deuteronomy 6:13 and 10:20, declaring that all worship and service should be directed toward God and Him alone – yet Jesus Himself received and accepted

worship on many occasions. In marked contrast, Peter (Act.10:25,26) and an angel (Rev.22:8) refused to accept worship, insisting that only God should be worshipped.

Thus by Jesus' act of accepting worship, He was proclaiming that He was and is God! Moreover, that He was indeed Jehovah come in the flesh. Yet many of the newer versions render the Greek verb "proskuneo" (proskuneo) as "bowed down", "paid homage", "knelt", "made obiesience" etc. (See below.)

MAT 9:18 (KJ) 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.

MAT 9:18 (NAS) While he was saying these things to them, behold, there came a synagogue official, and bowed down before him saying, "My daughter has just died; but come and lay Your hand on her, and she will live." (knelt, NIV)

MAT 20:20 (KJ) Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him.

MAT 20:20 (NAS) "Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Him with her sons, bowing down, and making a request of Him." (kneeling down, NIV)

MAR 5:6 (KJ) But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, ...

MAR 5:6 (NAS) And seeing Jesus from a distance, he ran up and bowed down before Him. (fell on his knees, NIV)

LUK 24:52 (KJ) And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:

LUK 24:52 (NAS) "And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy." (**worship omitted**)

The preceding changes should alarm the Bible believer who is constantly being told that the NAS and the NIV are the best translations available, often by well meaning conservative men of God. Yet in these verses, the NAS and NIV read almost exactly as the New World Translation published by the Jehovah's Witness cult (Watchtower Bible and Tract Society).

Again, this represents a direct attack on the deity of Christ Jesus, and it is not warranted in the Greek language. "Proskuneo" (proskuneo) appears 59 times in the N.T. In **all** of the other places, it has historically been rendered as "worship", "worshipped", or "worshipping" without challenge. It is by far the most prominent Greek word for worship in the Scriptures (the second largest occurring only 3 times). It is used to describe that which the people offer to: Satan (Rev.13:4), the Beast (Rev.13:15; 14:11; 16:2), demons (Rev.9:20), idols (Act.7:43), and God throughout the N.T. In these verses, the translators of the NAS, NIV etc., had no difficulty in translating "proskuneo" as "worship". Why do they suddenly find themselves compelled to offer a different wording when the same word is used in reference to the Lord Jesus Christ?

Moreover, the Hebrew equivalent of "proskuneo" is "shachah" (Hebrew = Shiyn-Cheyth-He = hj v). Shachah occurs 174 times in the Old Testament, and it too is normally translated by some form of the word "worship" – being so rendered 99 times. Furthermore, shachah is the same word that is used with reference to the worship of God, idols, images, demons, etc. throughout the entire Old Testament.

Oh reader, can you not see the danger? Does not your heart already tell you – does not the Holy Spirit bear witness to the true reading of the verses already cited? And yet there is much more.

Matthew 6:13

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. (KJ)

Comment: This is the end of the "model" prayer given by Jesus. Nearly all the modern translations either omit or footnote the underlined portion above. The Roman church as well as post-millennialist want this ending deleted because they teach that there will not be a thousand year kingdom with Jesus enthroned on the earth. The church, according to the post-millennial precepts, will evangelize the world and thus it will bring in the kingdom.

The Roman position is that as the Pope is ruling on the throne in the Vatican State in Christ's stead, this is the Kingdom here and now. Rome teaches that through the Church's efforts all will be converted, that Satan was bound when Jesus rose from the dead and all Scripture that clearly teaches otherwise is spiritualized away by labeling it as allegory. It also

maintains that the Church has replaced Israel in all the prophetic verses – that God has forever abandoned the nation Israel, never to use it again.

Of course, Romans 9-11 and a multitude of other Scripture proclaim that God will again use national Israel to His Glory. Moreover, the Scripture declares that King Jesus is going to physically (Rev.19) return, bring in the kingdom and **give it to the saints** (Luk.12:32)! God's ultimate plan is that all saved Jews and Gentiles for all time will be together as one flock, having one Shepherd, and in one fold (Jn.10:16).

This conclusion of the Lord's or "model" Prayer is found in almost all the Greek New Testament manuscripts yet it is universally rejected by modern critics. Perhaps it is time the Church rejected the modern critics.

Matthew 19:17

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. **(KJ)**

"Jesus said unto him, Why are you asking me about what is good? There is only one who is good but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments." (NAS; NIV is similar)

Comment: The rich young ruler had asked the Master what good thing might he do to have eternal life. Jesus' reply was one of the greatest statements in the New Testament on the depravity of man and the deity of Christ. The question was about eternal life! The issue was Jesus! The young man was not asking "what is good", but "what good thing shall I do"?

Jesus' answer paraphrased would be "Young man, you just called me good! Do you realize what you are saying, for the Scripture teaches that there is only one good and that is God. Now do you still want to call me good?" If he now acknowledges that Jesus is "good" it would be tantamount to a confession that Jesus was God come in the flesh. Jesus was confronting the rich young ruler concerning His person. In so saying, Jesus is making a positive claim to Deity!

Jesus' answer must have deeply stung the pride of Origen (A.D. 185-254 – See Ch. V, p. 92) who is the source of this adulteration in the Holy Writ. As a gnostic Alexandrian Greek scholar and philosopher who had already castrated himself and gone around barefoot for years in order to earn

"heavenly merits", Origen could not accept such as an authentic reading. He changed it to appear that the rich young ruler had asked Jesus to answer the great question of Greek philosophy – what is the "Summum Bonum" (highest good)? The reading as it appears in the NAS, NIV etc. is thus exposed as a gnostic depravity!

Mark 1:2-3

As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. (KJ)

As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way; The voice of one crying in the wilderness, make ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. (NAS; NIV is similar.)

Comment: Verse 3 is from Isaiah 40:3, but Verse 2 is not found in the Book of Isaiah. It is from Mal.3:1 – "Behold, I will send *my* messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me ...". Thus the King James is correct in saying "prophets". Why is this distinction so important? Because Malachi gives the Hebrew precise original quote. If we know to look for the Mark text in more than one O.T. prophet, the reader may learn the great truth that lies couched in these verses.

When we read the last part of Malachi 3:1 and compare this to verse 6, we find that the "my" and "me" of verse one is Jehovah (LORD in all caps). When the New Testament quotes the Old, the word for Jehovah is not in all capital letters but in the Old Testament the word "LORD" is the English rendering of the Hebrew YHWH (Yod-He-Vav-He, *hwhy*) which we call "Jehovah".

Jehovah is speaking, hence Malachi is saying that the God of the Old Testament, Jehovah Himself, is coming – in the flesh! There is only *one* God and His principal name is "Jehovah". He manifested Himself in three persons, one in the flesh in order to die for man's sins. As Mark 1:1-3 applies to Jesus, we see that this becomes a declaration as to the person of Jesus – that He is Jehovah come to earth. This identification cannot be pieced together from Isaiah alone. Origen did not believe that Jesus was Jehovah come in the flesh so he altered the verse to fit his gnostic beliefs, obliterating the connection to Malachi. Modern translators are using Origen's private interpretation from which to translate.

The King James makes it clear that Jehovah was coming in the flesh whereas the NAS and NIV do not. This is a major doctrinal point for the person and deity of Christ Jesus are at issue.

Mark 9:43-44

And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: 44: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. (KJ)

RSV and NIV both omit verse 44. By so doing, man is not warned; he does not have to be concerned about eternal fire.

Comment: To learn what Jesus says about hell, read Chapter 9 beginning with verse 42. Jesus taught more about hell and its realities in the Gospels than is found in the rest of the Bible put together. Jesus repeats verse 44 again in verse 46. A church or person not believing in hell fire prefers the deletion of verse 44, but the original perverter of the Mark Scripture overlooked that it was a quote from Isaiah 66:24 and omitted to alter the teaching there. Man may try to eliminate hell in the New Testament, but the truth of the terrible consequence of man's sin if left unatoned by not receiving Jesus as one's personal Savior is preserved for us in the Old Testament.

It does not alter the truth or fact of hell if one says he does not believe in hell. One may declare that he does not believe in gravity, but if he walks off a twenty story building he will find that mind over matter does not work. Cults teach "mind over matter", as do some Christian circles regarding the subject of faith, but it is not a Scriptural concept – not when context is considered. The fact of hell as a literal place is Scriptural (Luk.16:19-31 etc.).

Mark 10:21

Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. (KJ)

Jesus looked at him and loved him. "one thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." (NIV; NAS is similar.)

Comment: The words "take up the cross" have been left out. That doctrine admittedly makes Christianity sound more appealing, but Jesus says there is a cross that comes with the new birth. The cross is a place of death. It is where man's will "crosses" God's will in opposition, rather than agreeing and lining up with the will of the Lord. It is the place where "self" dies to its own will, desires, goals, ambitions etc., and bows its head in humble submission to its Lord and says "not my will Lord but thine".

Mark 16:9-20

⁹Now when *Jesus* was risen early the first *day* of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. ¹⁰And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. ¹¹And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not. ¹²After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. ¹³And they went and told *it* unto the residue: neither believed they them. ¹⁴Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. ¹⁵And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. ¹⁷And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; ¹⁸They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. ¹⁹So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. ²⁰And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen. (KJ)

Comment: Most versions have a footnote to the effect that "these verses are not in the oldest, best, most reliable Greek manuscripts." In laymen's terms this means that Mark 16:9-20 are not in the two 4th century Greek manuscripts, Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus Aleph which were derived from Origen's (185-254) edited New Testament (a 12th century minuscule also omits the verses). Satan has always wanted to strip the church of its power, authority, and commission. These verses are the Great Commission spoken by Jesus as recorded by Mark. It is an apostolic commission delegating great power to the body of Christ that it may continue the ministry of the Lord Jesus.

Of the approximately 3,119 Greek manuscripts of the N.T. extant today, none is complete. The segment of text bearing Mark 16 has been lost from many, but over 1,800 contain the section and verses 9-20 are present in all but the 3 cited above.¹ The footnote is thus unveiled and laid bare as dishonest and deliberately misleading in intimating that these verses are not the Word of God.

The external evidence is massive. Not only is the Greek manuscript attestation ratio over 600 to 1 in support of the verses (99.99%) – around 8,000 Latin mss, about 1,000 Syriac versions as well as all of the over 2,000 known Greek Lectionaries contain the verses.² They were cited by Church "Fathers" who lived 150 years or more *before* B or Aleph were written i.e.: Papias (c.100), Justin Martyr (c.150), Irenaeus (c.180), Tertullian (c.195), and Hippolytus (c.200).³ Further, the Vatican MSS has a blank space exactly the size required to include the 12 verses at the end of the 16th chapter. The scribe who prepared B obviously knew of the existence of the verses and their precise content. Indeed, as Tischendorf observed, Sinaiticus exhibits a different handwriting and ink on this page, and there is a change in spacing and size of the individual letters in an attempt to fill up the void left by the removal of the verses. These circumstances testify that the sheet is a forgery.

Do we really believe that God would have the greatest story ever told end at verse 8: "And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulcher; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid." Would God allow the good news of the Gospel to end with his disciples cringing in fear? Would Mark conclude his Gospel without any reference to the appearance of the risen Christ to His disciples? I think not! The reader should feel a deep sense of righteous anger upon learning of the unscrupulous manner in which these verses have been presented by various publishers.

¹ Even in 1871 A.D., 620 of the then extant mss were known to contain Mark 16; **only** Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus Aleph did not have verses 9-20; John W. Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel According to S. Mark*, (Oxford and London: James Parker & Co., 1871), p. 71. Since 1871, hundreds more of the 3,119 mss have been discovered.

² Only one Latin mss, one Syriac and one Coptic version omit Mark 9-20. Much of the material in this paragraph has been gleaned from Dr. Wilbur N. Pickering's taped interview before the Majority Text Society in Dallas, Texas (Summer of 1995).

³ John Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, (London: John Murray, 1883), pp. 422-423.

Luke 1:34

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? (KJ)

Then Mary said to the angel, How shall this be since I have no husband? (RSV)

Comment: These verses are not declaring the same thing. Do not women have children without having husbands? God was declaring that Mary was a virgin. This verse also corroborates that Isaiah 7:14 should read "virgin". Again, Jesus did not inherit Adam's sin nature – He (with regard to His humanity, not His eternal deity) inherited the sinless nature of His Father God as a result of the miraculous conception of Mary! The Scriptures teach that one receives his "nature" (we are not referring to character traits) from one's father, not the mother.

Luke 2:14

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. (KJ)

Glory to God in the highest (heaven), and on earth peace among men with whom he is well pleased. (AMP; NAS & NIV read similarly except say "peace among men of good will."

Comment: The Scriptures teach that there are no men of good will, that the heart is desperately wicked and that none are righteous – no, not one – that all are sinners. The humanist trite offered as Scripture in the NAS, NIV, and AMP above is **not** the message which God brought the night the Messiah was born. The message delivered by the angels to the shepherds near Bethlehem was that God was presenting a gift of His good will toward **all** men, not merely to men of good will.

The reading contained in the newer translations reflects the view of the ancient Greek philosophers Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Having a "good will" to them was the major factor in approaching life; some even considered it to be the "summum bonum" (supreme good). This "stale crumb" of Greek Philosophy¹ was introduced into the N.T. when Origen altered "eudokia" ("good will" - nominative case) to "eudokias" ("of good will" - genitive case) thus producing the result he desired (though he

¹ Edward F. Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, 4th ed., (Des Moines, IO: Christian Research Press, 1984), p. 144.

admitted in his critical apparatus that he was divided in his mind over the correct reading).

The truth of the matter is assured by the context (context often ignored or missed by many so-called Greek and Hebrew scholars in their determined penchant for altering the King James and its Greek foundation – the *Textus Receptus*), for verse 10 precedes with "and the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." The angels were bringing the good news to all people, not just to men of good will – for as there are no such creatures, such would not be "good tidings". Moreover, the "new" reading spoils the three-fold meter of the verse by doing away with the last of the three subjects (glory, peace, good will), and "men of good will" is grammatically left without any qualifying genitive.¹

Luke 2:33

And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. (KJ)

And His father and His mother were amazed at things which were being said about Him. (NAS; NIV)

Comment: God is meticulously affirming that Joseph was not the father of Jesus by the King James wording "Joseph and Jesus' mother". The NAS and NIV reduce Jesus to a mere human, born with a sin nature inherited from Adam. The alteration is another assault upon Jesus' deity.

Luke 4:4

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

Jesus answered and said, Man shall not live by bread alone. (NAS)

Comment: Omitting "but by every word of God" is a major doctrinal point of contention. The King James reading protects the believer from over dispensationalism which tends to negate the importance of the Old

¹ Edward F. Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, 1st ed., (Des Moines, IO: Christian Research Press, 1956), p. 73. The page of this reference has changed in Dr. Hills' later editions and to date I have not been able to locate it in his 1984 publication. All other references to this work of Hills (except that on page 141) is to his 1984 4th edition.

Testament. Jesus corrects that error as the O.T. was also given by the Word of God. The whole point of the verse has been left out! Yet the Church is constantly being taught and persuaded that the NAS and NIV are the best translations available.

Luke 9:54-56

The setting of the story here is that Jesus and his disciples are enroute to Jerusalem through Samaria and the Samaritans will not welcome them to their cities.

⁵⁴And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? ⁵⁵But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. ⁵⁶For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save *them*. And they went to another village. (KJ)

⁵⁴And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, Do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them? ⁵⁵But He turned and rebuked them. ⁵⁶And they went to another village. (NAS; NIV is similar)

Comment: None of the underlined KJ verses appears in the NAS or the NIV. Some of the other versions relegate them to a footnote. Had the Roman Catholic Church read and believed verse 56 there would never have been the inquisition where between 50 to 60 million people were murdered! By omitting these portions of Scripture, one could justify killing those disagreeing with his doctrine!

Luke 22:64

And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee? (KJ)

They blindfolded him and demanded, Prophecy! Who hit you? (NIV, NAS)

Comment: "They struck Him on the face" was omitted. Not only is it important to know the fact that the Lord Jesus suffered such indignity and cruelty, this is prophecy being fulfilled which points to the fact that Jesus is the Messiah. Micah 5:1 records: "... *they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek.*"

Luke 23:38

And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. (KJ)

There was a written notice above him, which read: this is the king of the Jews. (NIV; NAS is similar)

Comment: The words "of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew" were omitted!

Luke 23:42

And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. (KJ)

The word "Lord" is omitted. (NIV, NAS)

Comment: Not one Greek manuscript omits this word! Calling Jesus "Lord" indicates that the thief was converted before his death which establishes several important points. First, that God will receive a wicked man even at the last moments of his life; that it is never too late to become reconciled to God while there is life. This serves to reveal the nature and heart of God – that it is toward man and that He desires that none should perish doomed.

Secondly, it demonstrates that God will receive a man apart from any religious rituals such as water baptism or extreme unction. There is absolutely no Greek authority for this omission; it is a private interpretation of those responsible for the newer Greek New Testaments which alter the Greek text upon which the King James is based.

Luke 24:6

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

Remember how He told you while He was still in Galilee. (RSV)

Comment: The most important part of the verse (see the underlined portion) – **the entire resurrection – is omitted!**

Luke 24:42

And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. (KJ)

They gave him a piece of broiled fish. (NIV, NAS)

Comment: The words "and of an honeycomb" were omitted. The point that is being made is that when the reader uses the other versions, how is he to know what has been edited or deleted – whether it be concerning a major detail or not as in the above cited case? From now forward, the reader will always wonder, "has anything been omitted"?

John 1:18

No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. (**KJ**)

Nestle's Greek Text gives the following literal reading (NAS, AMP, NIV are similar): God, no man has seen never – the only begotten God, the One, being in the bosom of the Father, that One declared Him.

Comment: Instead of "only begotten Son" we find "only begotten god". That means that Jesus is a created god – a lesser god – a god with a little "g" and thus not eternal. This Scripture is dealing with the dual nature of Jesus, the humanity of Jesus versus His deity. Some Scripture reveals one and some the other. Not always realizing that He is 100% both, many people become confused.

Sonship, in connection with Christ Jesus, always refers to His humanity – never to deity. As a man, He was begotten, had a beginning – became a son (cp. Luk.1:35; Act.13:33; Psa.2:7; Heb.1:5-6; Mat.1:18-25 etc.), **but as God – He had no beginning!**

Micah 5:2, in speaking of the Messiah, declares "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.**"

That Jesus is merely a created being, a lesser god, is the original Arian heresy! Arius (died 336) was an early "Church Father" who put forth this heresy. Emperor Constantine I and Eusebius promoted the teaching.

The Holy Scripture teaches that there is ONE God who has revealed Himself in three different Persons – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. God, who is a spirit, became a Son for the purpose of dying to redeem fallen man. When this occurred, God also remained in heaven becoming a Father as He had "begotten" (imparted life) a son.

The most important single issue regarding Jesus is – Who is He – not what He did! Even though what He accomplished in His finished work of redeeming fallen man through His blood atonement for man's sin and sins was of major and majestic significance, it is secondary when compared to His person. What we are saying is, that the Church has proclaimed that men should give their hearts and lives to Christ – that we should faithfully follow adore and worship Him – because He gave His life for our sins. Wrong! We should do all of these – first and foremost because of **WHO HE IS**, God Almighty – the Creator! Because He is God we should worship Him and Him only should we serve, not because He did something for us. He is worthy of worship for Himself! For His own personal worth He deserves man's total being and allegiance. Then, secondarily, out of gratitude for His voluntarily humbling Himself in taking on the nature of flesh and for sacrificing Himself on our behalf – we should give Him all our loyalty, all our love and obedience.

Whenever the Scripture speaks of Jesus as the Son, it is always referring to the 33 years which He spent on the earth as a genuine human, although He never ceased being God. Thus God begat **a Son!** In other words, before the incarnation, before the virgin Mary's egg was supernaturally fertilized without intercourse (Luk.1:35) when He became "the Son of God", "the only begotten Son of the Father" – before all of this and from eternity past – who was Jesus? He was God in His own right. He was **always** God. "In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God and the Word was God" (Joh 1:1).

God is a Spirit (Joh.4:24 KJ). The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one and the same eternal Spirit from eternity past. Jesus, the Messiah, is thus the Creator of heaven and earth – the God of the Old Testament whose principal name is Jehovah – come in the flesh.

ISA 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Christianity is **monotheistic** – we do not believe in three Gods. There is **ONE** God (Isa.43:10-11; 44:6, 8b; 45:5, 21-22; Mk.12:29-33; Rom.3:30; I Cor.8:6; Eph.4:5-6; I Tim.2:5; and Jas.2:19) who, for the sake of redeeming fallen man (and that plan via foreknowledge was from before the foundation of the world), has revealed Himself in three distinct persons.

We do not argue or debate the above concerning the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. We proclaim it – though much of Christendom be ignorant of these basic Bible tenets.

The Greek text that most of the Bible Colleges and Seminaries use today which has replaced the Greek text underlying the King James translation denies all of this by its reading – as does the NAS, NIV, AMP etc. which follow it. This is of preeminent importance. This is not error or mistranslation – it is heresy! It attacks the person of the Lord Jesus the Christ at the very foundation. O' Church, awake! The Philistines are upon us!

John 3:36

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. (KJ)

Whosoever believes in the Son has eternal life; but who does not obey the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on him. (NAS)

Comment: The verse has been changed from God's clear declaration that eternal life is the result of faith in Jesus, of believing in Him – to salvation is obtained by *obedience*. Obedience (other than that of repenting and receiving Jesus) is a "work of righteousness".

Being a child who pleases his father is desirable, but when a person is first saved he does not have complete understanding. It is the work of the Holy Spirit within him to bear witness as to right and wrong and it usually takes time to discern His voice and leading. Titus 3:5 says "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;". The NAS offers "another gospel" in the above verse.

John 6:35

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. (KJ)

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that comes to me shall not hunger; and he who believes on me shall never thirst. (NAS)

Comment: Why was "never" changed to "not"? It alters the whole force of Jesus' words. Upon eating a large meal, one could say he was *not* hungry

but it would not mean that he would *never* be hungry again. He would probably be hungry again within five hours. The doctrine of Jesus is centered upon Himself – "He who comes **to Me** ..."

John 6:47

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. **(KJ)**

Truly, truly, I say to you he who believes has eternal life. (NAS, NIV)

Comment: He who believes what? They leave out in whom to believe and trust – upon whom to rely. Jesus said "He that believeth on ME ...". Is not this a grave matter?

John 8:1-11

The story of the woman taken in adultery – see APPENDIX A, p. 219. As the explanation is lengthy and technical, it has been placed so as not to cause the reader to lose sight of the issues.

Acts 8:36-37

36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?
37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
(KJ)

RSV; New English Bible: Both omit all of verse 37 (underlined). Verse 37 is omitted and relegated to a footnote in the NIV and NAS.

Comment: What church or churches have always taught salvation by water baptism? If verse 37 is part of the Word of God, it would establish that baptizing a baby would not save him. Children are covered by covenant until they are old enough to make a decision. Only Jesus can save the soul – not water baptism. For those believing in infant baptism for salvation, it would be necessary to remove verse 37. Galatians 3:26 declares: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Thus if you do not have faith in Christ Jesus you are not a child of God. So it is pointless to baptize a baby who does not have faith in Christ Jesus. This verse teaches that faith in Jesus' deity is a prerequisite to water baptism. It is cited by Irenaeus (c.180) and Cyprian (c.250) and is found in the Old Latin and the Vulgate translations.

Acts 20:28

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. (KJ)

Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God which he obtained with the blood of his own Son. (RSV 1971 NCC)

Comment: Perceive the difference! The King James declares that God's church was purchased by God's blood – therefore *Christ is God*. It was Jesus Christ whose blood was shed. The RSV separates Christ from God when it changes "his own blood" to "the blood of his own Son".

Romans 8:1

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (KJ)

Comment: All modern versions *omit* the underlined portion of the verse. This is because they have as their foundation the Greek uncials Aleph and Vaticanus (see p. 106) whereas the King James was based upon a different Greek text which reflects the reading of over 95% of all the known Greek manuscripts (see p. 50). These two uncials are supported by a few others (C,D,F & G) as well as a few cursives and versions. However, the vast mass of Greek cursives testify to the inclusion of these words. Even the much vaunted uncial "A" (see p. 108) contains "who walk not after the flesh".

The critics pretend that this portion was inserted from the end of verse 4 in the course of transcription and that this mis-copied mss had its novel reading copied more than all the others. Strangely, such men claim for themselves insight and wisdom far greater than the whole of England (see p. 66 ff.). Such critics tell us what God **ought** to say rather than what God **has** said.

Most Calvinists favor its omission fearing the doctrinal implications toward Arminianism if the portion is included. However such concern is of no force when one realizes that the ending is not a *qualifying* remark but rather serves to *define* what is meant by being "in Christ Jesus". Verses 8, 9, 13, 7:25 and 9:8 clearly define the terms "after the flesh" and "after the Spirit". Verse 4b is a refrain for emphasis. Scripture is rife with similar redundancies for the same reason – accentuation of important themes.

Romans 14:10b, 12

... for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ ... So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. **(KJ)**

... for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God ... So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God. (NAS)

Comment: The logic as preserved by the King James Bible is irrefutable! When we stand before the judgment seat of Christ – we are giving account to GOD. Therefore – Christ Jesus is God! Observe the subtle difference in the NAS! Just one small word is changed, yet there is no proof left that Jesus is God in these verses!

Second Timothy 3:16

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: **(KJ)**

Every inspired scripture has its use for teaching the truth and refuting error, or for reformation of manners and discipline in right living, so that the man who belongs to God may be efficient and equipped for good work of every kind. (NEB)

The NAS footnote reads: "or, every Scripture inspired by God is also profitable ..."

Comment: These renderings imply that there are Scriptures not given by inspiration of God. There is a problem if some are whereas others are not! A Pope or pastor would accordingly be necessary to determine which verses were inspired (job security for the clergy)!

Hebrews 1:3

Who [God's son, cp. v.1-2] being the brightness of his [God's] glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high: **(KJ)**

... After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand ... (NIV; NAS similar).

Comment: "By himself" has been removed. By removing these words, perhaps Mary or some saint helped Jesus remove our sins! It is clear from the KJ that no one helped Jesus redeem. He is God come in the flesh and does not need any help. This is a major doctrinal point!

Hebrews 2:11

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,

For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brethren.

Comment: The RSV adds "origin". By saying that Christ had the same origin as man, they are teaching that Christ is not God! Christ did not have an origin, as the Scriptures clearly proclaim, i.e.:

PSA 90:2 ... even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. (KJ)

MIC 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. (KJ)

"All of one" is clearly defined in the context of the last part of the verse, namely the context of "family" via the new birth. Hence "all of one **Father**" is the sense of the matter, not "origin"!

Micah 5:2

But you, O Bethlehem Ephratah, who are little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days (RSV; NIV similar).

Comment: They continue this blasphemy in demeaning the deity of Christ whereas the King James honors it.

Hebrews 2:16

For verily he took not on *him the nature of angels*; but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham. (KJ)

For indeed He does not give aid to angels but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. (NKJ; NAS, NIV, AMP & RSV similar)

Comment: First, we remind the reader that here both of the above translations are being made from the exact Greek words as contained in the *Textus Receptus* (the original Greek reading of the New Testament). This is one of the many cases where the translation is facilitated by the context. The **immediate** context of verse 16 is unmistakably revealed in the verse that follows:

HEB 2:17 Wherefore in all things **it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren**, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

Although the Greek is admittedly difficult if verse 16 alone is considered, the translators had their job clarified by the Holy Spirit. That which follows in verse 17 has nothing to do whatever with "giving aid" to angels. Furthermore, verse 14 both confirms and precedes the "problem" verse with the correct context:

HEB 2:14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

Clearly the subject being presented is that of the human nature of the Messiah, and as the letter is addressed to the "Hebrews" it is of special relevance to those who proceeded from the loins of Abraham. Moreover, verse 16 amplifies verse 5:

HEB 2:5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.

The writer of the Book of Hebrews is being led by the Holy Spirit to demonstrate, beginning with the "**remote**" context concerning familiar Old Testament fundamentals, why the Messiah had to be a man and could not be an angel.

The 1611 King James translators recognized the importance of bringing this "remote context" (or distant context) to bear upon this verse, the literal Greek itself being cryptic and obscure. As all linguists well know, some interpretation is necessary when engaged in translating from one language to another, sentence structure, word order, etc. often being different. The object is to be faithful to the original wording and meaning such as to do as little interpretation as possible. Thus, guided by the Spirit of God, the King James translators correctly rendered verse 16 with regard to the remote context as well as with regard to the *immediate context* of the verses surrounding it. They signified that they had done this by placing "him the nature of" and "him" in italics. This clearly distinguishes between the words of man and of God. All other translations contain similar word insertions (many more than found in the KJ), but unlike the King James translation, they do not let the reader know this by so indicating.

Moreover, the verse as rendered in the KJ shows Jesus as the true fulfillment of mankind's only hope as revealed in the Old Testament prophecies – that He is the promised "seed of the woman" (Gen.3:15). This prophetic application of the verse is completely missed in the other translations.

Further, He is pictured by the KJ translators as especially being the fulfillment of the continuation of the Genesis 3:15 promise as given to Abraham.

And in thy (Abraham) seed (**singular!** Greek = spermati {spermati}, LXX - cp. Gal. 3:16) shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice. (Gen. 22:18, KJB)

But we are not left at the mercy of some mere man or modern Greek or Hebrew authority to divulge that the word "seed" in the above verse is not speaking of the Jewish nation but is in the singular and as such is a unmistakable reference to Messiah. The Holy Spirit reveals this truth to him in English elsewhere in Scripture.

Now to Abraham and his seed (spermati = spermati - singular in Greek) were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds (spermasin = spermasin - plural as does the root sperma, = sperma; see the LXX), as of many; but as of **one**, And to thy seed (spermati - singular), which **is Christ**. (Galatians 3:16, KJB)

All of the rich setting and overview that has preceeded is completely lost in the modern reading of Hebrews 2:16.

Equally alarming, the reading as found in the NKJV et al. **introduces a conspicuous error** into the Word of God – namely, that God does not give aid to angels.

This contradicts Daniel 10 wherein the prophet for whom the Book is named was told by an angel that he had been dispatched from the throne of Heaven to come to strengthen him. Nevertheless, the heavenly messenger had been withstood for a period of 21 days by the demon prince who oversaw the kingdom of Persia. It was not until God dispatched the archangel Michael to come to the aid of the angelic messenger that he was able to successfully battle through and reach Daniel.

Thus, the *internal evidence* of other Scripture lays bare this inaccurate rendering of the Word of God and shows all translations which so follow

as being erroneous and inferior. The Monarch of Books, the true English rendering of the Holy Writ as preserved in the 1611 King James Bible, is thereby demonstrated to be conspicuously superior and preeminent.

First Peter 2:2

As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: **(KJ)**

Like newborn babes, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation. (RSV; NIV is similar)

Comment: This perversion teaches (1) that salvation occurs over a period of time and (2) that it is by *works*. Salvation is a free gift and the Word teaches that we neither "grow up" to it, "work for it", nor "obtain it gradually". Deliverance from sin comes by faith in Christ Jesus, e.g.:

ACT 16:31 ... Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved ... **(KJ)**

(3) The phrase "of the word" has been *omitted*, leaving us to wonder what "spiritual milk" is. The King James tells us the answer.

First Peter 4:1

Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind ... **(KJ)**

Therefore since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose (NAS; NIV is similar).

Comment: Why did Christ Jesus suffer? For us! Note its complete removal from the text. Is not this "doctrinal"?

First John 5:6-8

See APPENDIX B, p. 231. As the explanation is lengthy and technical, it has been placed so as not to cause the reader to lose sight of the issues.

Acts 9:6

The following comparison is a clear capsule specimen depicting the character and degree of the alterations that have been made upon the Holy Scripture.

(speaking of the conversion of Saul [Paul] on the Damascus Road)

"And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." (KJ)

"Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."
(NIV; NAS etc., is similar)

Comment: Surely by now the reader has seen enough that any elucidation on our part is superfluous. We therefore with some reluctance mention that without the above underlined words, one cannot be certain if Saul were converted.

If these words are allowed to stand as faithfully recorded in the King James Bible, Saul – fully aware of the identity of the person with whom he is speaking – acknowledges Jesus as his Lord. That the verse likewise teaches the fear of the risen glorified Christ, as well as His boundless grace, is also manifestly evident.

Psalms 8:4-5

Lastly, a dramatic example depicting the serious inconsistencies found in the other translations may be seen in the following:

What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. (KJ)

HEB 2:6-7

But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour ... (KJ)

PSA 8:4-5

What is man, that Thou dost take thought of him? And the son of man, that Thou dost care for him? Yet Thou hast made him a little lower than God, And dost crown him with glory and majesty! (NAS, RV, et al.).

HEB 2:6-7

But one has testified somewhere, saying, "What is man, that thou rememberest him? or the son of man that thou art concerned about him? Thou hast made him for a little while lower than the angels; thou hast crowned him with glory and honor ..." (NAS)

Comment: The highly touted NAS has rendered the Hebrew word "Elohim" as "God" in the eighth Psalm, creating within itself a conspicuous contradiction in the Hebrews 2 quotation of that O.T. passage. The "weak" Hebrew word (which can mean God, angels, judges, magistrates etc.) is protected by the "strong" Greek word "aggelos" which can only be translated "angels".¹ The KJB is faithful to the LORD and to its readers by correctly rendering both passages as "angels".

The NAS reading in the 8th Psalm is not merely wrong, it fails to comprehend the immeasurable chasm existing between the Creator and the creature. It is humanistic, insulting to GOD and as such represents a blasphemous heretical translation having ignored God's New Testament Greek shelter and defense mechanism.

* * * * *

By now the perplexed inquirer must be wondering just how such radical changes have come about in the text of the Holy Scriptures. We remind him of the many times he surely has heard or read from various sources words to the effect that "the oldest", "the best" or "the most reliable" manuscripts read so and so – or "omit" or "add" to the verses he has read. On and on the footnotes go in the various "Bibles" on the market today, crushing the faith of layman and pastor alike.

But how can they read so dramatically different in the relatively few yet numerically significant places that they diverge? After all, when the translators translate, it is understandable how one group may select different adjectives, conjunctions, synonyms etc., but our reader wonders – how can an entire word, indeed – a phrase, clause, sentence, verse and even a prolonged series of verses, be missing from one version to another? This is especially true when the King James (and all the many English versions prior to the KJB) is compared to all the newer versions. What is the basis for the many words which are present in the 1611 Authorized

¹ Two connecting g's in Greek are pronounced as "ng", i.e., "angelos".

Version that are not to be found in these modern versions? Surely the 1611 translators did not just make them up out of thin air.

The ordinary reader naturally assumes that the changes have resulted from supposed advances made in the ongoing study of Greek which have sharpened the revisor's skill in translating. However, the shocking answer to these questions lies in the fact that there are two distinctly radically different Greek texts upon which the New Testament in English (or any other language) is based. Moreover, the Church for centuries has honored only one of these as the Holy Word of God. The other was rejected by the early Church during the 3rd to 5th centuries as a depraved gnostic alteration of the true text. The early Church's rejection of this second text relegated it to an early grave. However, with the advent of modern archaeology and the so-called "sciences" of higher and lower text criticism, it has arisen inexplicably from its sandy Egyptian grave (Beware of returning to Egypt!). Thus that which was rejected as a spurious text by the early Church and its successors down through the centuries is today being accepted as genuine.

Strangely, in the past one hundred years, this "mummy" has been resurrected and once again has been offered to the Church as authentic – only this time the sleeping Church has not seen the danger. Yea, most are totally unaware that such an entity exists.

The following chapters will trace and explain the entire sorry state of affairs from its inception to the present. Brace yourselves, oh gentle reader, for the Amalekites are not nipping at the rear of the column this day – the danger is far worse (Exo.17:8-16; Deu.25:17-19). Today, the valley is full of Midianites – the Assyrians have enclosed the people of the Living God within the wall of Jerusalem (Jud.6:33, 7:12; and II Ki.18:17ff). The siege mounds have been raised against us on all sides. Perhaps it is too late for a Gideon, Isaiah, Hezekiah, or a mere shepherd watchman.

Oh that **thou** would rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down,
that the mountains might flow down at Thy presence. Come Lord Jesus,
come quickly!

III. THE 1881 REVISION

A BRIEF HISTORICAL SYNOPSIS

In 1881 A.D., part of the Church of England (Anglican) decided to revise the King James Bible (the Authorized Version).¹ The Greek New Testament upon which this translation had been based was the result of years of study and work by the brilliant scholar, Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536 A.D.). Being satisfied with the King James Bible, the northern convocation of the Church of England did not want a revision. However, the southern convocation favored a change and proceeded alone. A committee of Hebrew and Greek scholars was selected and charged to change the obsolete spelling, update punctuations, change archaic words like "concupiscence" to "unholy desires", etc. and thus update the language. As the Southern convocation was content with the text itself, no real overhaul of the version was intended. All changes were to be of minor significance.

That is not what the committee did. The men composing the revision committee went against the directive which the Anglican Church had given them. Without authorization and in total direct insubordination, rather than merely improve the *English* they produced a *radically different Greek text* – a very different New Testament! They did not even use the Greek text upon which the King James was based. Cast aside as worthless were the Greek manuscripts upon which the King James had been founded, yet these very mss were the basis for the many other English bibles which had preceded the King James (Great Bible, Bishops', Matthew's, Geneva etc.). The committee thus produced an entirely different "Bible". This is one of the least known facts and greatest guarded secrets within the confines of Christendom. Few people, laymen or pastors, are aware of these happenings.

We must understand that if we have a version other than the King James, it has been based upon a Greek text different from the one used to produce the King James Bible. Although it was misleadingly named the "Revised" Version, it was not a revision. Instead, the committee altered the *original* Greek and *substituted a radically different Greek text* – introducing c.5,337 alterations – yet almost no one is cognizant of this!

¹ Jasper J. Ray, *God Wrote Only One Bible*, (Junction City, OR: Eye Opener Pub., 1980), pp. 23-24.

From whence came this new Greek text? To answer and unravel this calls for a look into the past. Several diverse paths must be followed and examined. Strengthen yourself gentle reader. That which follows is a dreadful account of compromise, deception, and betrayal – all directed against the Living God, His Word, and His people.

WHAT ARE THE MATERIALS AVAILABLE TODAY?¹

It might be well to begin by considering what manuscript evidence is available today as to the true text of the New Testament. We have **no** New Testament manuscripts which are complete. We only have pieces, fragments, chapters, books etc. Until 1995, no first century manuscripts of the New Testament had been discovered (see p. 207). We have 88 Greek papyri manuscripts. The papyri are of newspaper type quality, usually rolled but sometimes in book form. Most papyri consist of small fragments and thus do not exhibit much text. Of the 88, only an estimated thirteen (15%) support Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus Aleph which are the two foremost manuscripts supporting the above mentioned radical new Greek text; about seventy-five (c.85%) support the Greek Received Text upon which the King James was founded (hereafter designated "TR").²

We have 267 Greek Uncials (text written in capital letters, also called "majuscules", designated by "MSS"), none of which is complete. Pages, chapters, and even books are missing. Of course some are in much better condition than others. Only nine of these support the Westcott-Hort critical text upon which the new radical Greek text was based (merely 3%) whereas 258 (97%) support the Greek Received Text.³

There are 2,764 Greek cursive manuscripts (written in small letters, designated by "mss"), often called "minuscules". Thus most of the Greek witnesses to the true text of the New Testament are the Greek cursives. Merely twenty-three (1%) sustain the W-H readings which are the Greek

¹ Kurt Aland, "The Greek New Testament: Its Present and Future Editions", *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXXVII (June, 1968), p. 184. Aland is Europe's leading textual critic and director of the center at Munster, West Germany where c.80% of the extant Greek MSS, mss and papyri are stored on microfilm. At the writing of his book, Aland listed 81 papyri; however, a few more have been located since the 1968 publication cited here, bringing the total to 88.

² D.A. Waite, *Defending the King James Bible*, (Collingswood, NJ: The Bible For Today Press, 1992), p. 54.

³ *Ibid*, p. 55.

foundation of nearly all the modern translations while 2,741 (99%) uphold the Received Text.¹

We also have 2,143 Greek lectionaries (from a Latin root meaning "to read", manuscripts containing Scripture lessons which were read publicly in the churches from at least A.D. 400 until the time of the invention of printing).² All (100%) of them support the Received Text which underlies the King James Bible.³ This gives us a total of 5,262 Greek witnesses to the true text of the New Testament of which 5,217 or ninety-nine percent are in agreement. This group dates from the fifth century on. The remainder not only disagree with the 99% majority – but disagree among themselves. Nevertheless, these few have controlled the camp of academia for the past one hundred years. The question, of course, is how can this be – how did such come to happen? This will be answered in the following chapters, but first a proper foundation must be laid.

BASIC DEFINITIONS

It is important to understand the meaning of "lower" and "higher" textual criticism with regard to the Bible. In Biblical studies the word "criticism" is not faultfinding, but in the etymological sense it refers to distinguishing, deciding, judging or forming a judgment.

- Higher criticism is a study of the origin and character of the individual books of the Bible which seeks to determine by whom, under what circumstances, at what time, and with what design and/or purpose they were written. By a study of historical facts and the internal evidence of the various books, the higher critic seeks to find the circumstances of their origin or source. Higher criticism can readily go wrong if the critic is purely subjective or governed solely by his imagination.
- Lower criticism (or textual criticism) means that we attempt to determine **the text** itself from a study of the various Greek manuscripts, old versions, lectionaries etc. currently available, and their history. Because it is the foundation, it is referred to as "lower criticism". It is the first task. With the aid of these ancient manuscripts and versions, the textual critic seeks to bring the text to the highest possible level of accuracy. In sharp contrast to higher criticism, lower criticism deals with the concrete phenomena of actual readings found in manuscripts.

¹ Waite, *Defending the King James Bible*, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

² John W. Burgon, *The London Quarterly Review*, (October): 1881.

³ Waite, *Defending the King James Bible*, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

ERASMUS RESTORES THE RECEIVED TEXT (GREEK)

The Greek upon which the King James translation was based was first printed in A.D. 1516 at Basle, Switzerland, under the editorship of the famous Dutchman, Desiderius Erasmus. As a Scholar, Erasmus was without peer – the intellectual giant of Europe in his day. Erasmus was ever at work, visiting libraries, collecting, comparing, writing and publishing.¹ Europe was rocked by his works which exposed the ignorance of the monks, the superstitions of the priesthood, and the general bigotry and wickedness within the Roman church.

He classified the Greek manuscripts and read the "Fathers" (letters etc. written by the early Church pastors which taken as a whole contain almost the entire New Testament). Today, many who deprecate the pure teachings of the Received Text sneer at Erasmus and pervert the facts in order to belittle his work. All this by men who could never have intellectually tied Erasmus' boot straps. While he lived, Europe was at his feet. Several times the King of England offered him any position in the kingdom, at his own price! The Emperor of Germany likewise. Indeed, the Pope offered him the position of Cardinal. Not being willing to compromise his beliefs or conscience, Erasmus resolutely declined. France and Spain beckoned him to their realm while Holland proudly claimed him as her most distinguished son.

Book after book came from his labors. The demand for them was overwhelming. His crowning work was the New Testament in Greek. At last, after one thousand years, the New Testament was printed in its original tongue (A.D.1516). Astonished and confounded, Europe – the intellectual, civilized cradle of the world – deluged by superstitions, coarse traditions, and monkeries, read the pure story of the Gospel. In a letter dated 13 August, 1521 to Peter Barbirius, Erasmus wrote:²

"I did my best with the New Testament, but it provoked endless quarrels. Edward Lee pretended to have discovered 300 errors. They appointed a commission, which professed to have found bushels of them. Every dinner-table rang with the blunders of Erasmus. I required particulars, and could not have them."
(Lee afterwards became Archbishop of York)

¹ D.O. Fuller (ed.), *Which Bible?*, 3rd ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: International Pub., 1972), pp. 225-226. The material in the next two paragraphs are also derived from these same pages of Dr. Fuller's classic exposure.

² James Anthony Froude, *Life and Letters of Erasmus*, (London: Longman's, Green and Co., 1906; rpt. of 1894 orig.), p. 294.

Consider and reflect upon this – the foremost scholar in the entire civilized world said the work was his "best". Such men have both egos and detractors. Erasmus would never have put his name on an undertaking which would have left him exposed and defenseless before his enemies and critics.

When Erasmus came to Basle in A.D. 1515 for the purpose of assembling a complete Greek New Testament, he had only five Greek cursive minuscules of the New Testament at his disposal.¹ For the most part, he utilized a 15th century manuscript for the Gospels but used an 11th or 12th century manuscript on occasion. He used a 12th or 13th century manuscript for the Acts and the Epistles. Erasmus had a 15th century manuscript of the Acts and the Epistles which he also used occasionally, and he had a 12th century manuscript of Revelation. The last six verses of the Revelation manuscript were missing so he used the Latin Vulgate version to complete the chapter.

Erasmus' Greek New Testament has been often criticized on the grounds that he had so little data at his command from which to draw and that they were "late" copies. However, Erasmus did not go to the task unprepared. Although he had only five late minuscules, he had already translated a Latin New Testament and in preparation for this labor had collected and gathered variant readings from many Greek manuscripts. He journeyed all over Europe to libraries and to anyone from whom he could gather readings from manuscripts.² Erasmus organized his findings and made notes for himself concerning the different readings. These travels brought him into contact with several hundred manuscripts and Erasmus divided them into two camps, i.e., those he considered spurious and those he deemed genuine and trustworthy.³ The spurious group was a small percentage of the whole and mainly agreed with the Latin Vulgate readings. Of the several hundred, between 90 to 95% had the same text. This group Erasmus judged to contain the true God given text.

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 198. Dr. E.F. Hills, a distinguished Latin major and Phi Beta Kappa graduate from Yale, completed his Th.D program in New Testament text criticism at Harvard. A conservative Presbyterian Christian scholar, he was called home by the Lord in 1981.

² *Ibid.*

³ Frederick Nolan, *An Inquiry into the Integrity of the Greek Vulgate or Received Text of the New Testament*, (London, England: F.C. and J. Rivington Pub., 1815), p. 413.

Naturalistic critics think that the presence and availability for Erasmus' use of these five Basle minuscules was merely an unhappy accident. But these men do not reckon sufficiently with the *providence* of God – that God has *promised* to overlook His Word. The text which Erasmus published was really not his own. It was taken virtually without change from these few manuscripts which God providentially placed at his disposal. The text contained in these manuscripts eventually came to be known as the "**Textus Receptus**" (the Received Text).

To emphasize and demonstrate the above, we quote the late Herman C. Hoskier. Hoskier gave thirty years to the task of collating a majority of the available manuscripts containing the text of Revelation. Based upon the 200 plus extant manuscripts he examined, Hoskier concluded:¹

"I may state that if Erasmus had striven to found a text on the *largest number* of existing MSS in the world of one type, he could not have succeeded better ... "

As Moorman relates, this is truly a powerful example of God's guiding providence in preserving the true text though but one late mss containing the Revelation was available to Erasmus at Basle.²

AN ASSESSMENT OF WESTCOTT AND HORT - THEIR CHARACTERS

The naturalistic critics say that Erasmus could not have been providentially guided in the editing of the *Textus Receptus* because he was a humanist and a Roman Catholic. They purport that Westcott and Hort were epoch making scholars directly guided by God's providence to restore the New Testament, having completed their assignment in 1881. However, if we compare the character of Erasmus to those of Westcott and Hort, we shall see that such a declaration is vacuous and specious. It thus becomes necessary to draw a contrast between the lives of Messers B.F. Westcott and F.J.A. Hort with Erasmus in order to evaluate these charges and claims of the critics as well as to grasp the full impact of this exposé.

¹ Herman C. Hoskier, *The John Rylands Bullentin*, 19-1922/23, p. 118. Hoskier stood with Burgon & Scrivener against the Revised text. He produced the two famous comprehensive works *Codex B and its Allies* and *Concerning the Text of the Apocalypse*.

² Jack A. Moorman, *When The KJV Departs From The "Majority" Text*, (Collingswood, NJ: Bible For Today Press, #1617, 1988), p. 26.

Westcott, an Anglican Bishop and professor at Cambridge University, and Hort – also an ordained Anglican priest and professor at Cambridge – came to participate on the 1881 Revision Committee of the King James Bible under the guise of being Protestant scholars. Actually, they were very Roman Catholic in doctrine, belief, and practice. Both conservative and liberal branches of Christendom hold Westcott and Hort in high esteem as if God had greatly used these men to reestablish and restore the text of the Bible. However, it is most difficult to believe that God would use two men to perform such a task who did not believe that the Bible was the verbal Word of God.

Westcott and Hort maintained that they had raised New Testament textual criticism to the level of an exact science. Thus when they concluded that the Traditional Text was late and a composite reading resulting from combining older text-types, they affirmed that this should be regarded as the true explanation with the same degree of reliance as one would esteem a Newtonian theorem.¹ Indeed, they asserted that their work had been so scientifically and carefully executed that there could never be more than one change per thousand words.² Nevertheless, today most liberal (or lost) modern scholars say that they no longer agree completely with the Westcott-Hort theory. Kurt Aland, a foremost leader of the modern school, is representative when he admits to this in saying:³

"We still live in the world of Westcott and Hort with our conception of different recensions and text-types although this conception has lost its *raison d' être*, or, it needs at least to be newly and convincingly demonstrated. For the increase of the documentary evidence and the entirely new areas of research which were opened to us on the discovery of the papyri, mean the end of Westcott and Hort's conception."

Still, these same liberals always begin their own investigations with the acceptance of most of the basic W-H tenants. Sadly, most conservative scholars have accepted the W-H theory of textual history – largely because most Christian scholars fear scholastic and intellectual ridicule.

¹ Westcott, B.F. & F.J.A. Hort, *Introduction to the New Testament in the Original Greek*, (NY: Harper & Bros., 1882), p. 107.

² *Ibid.*, p. 2.

³ Kurt Aland, "The Significance of the Papyri for Progress in New Testament Research", *The Bible in Modern Scholarship*, J.P. Hyatt ed., (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1965), p. 337.

To stand against the tide carries with it the stigma of appearing uninformed and non-progressive, resulting in the loss of credibility and status among one's peers. The man of God should never allow his faith to be intimidated by so-called "scholarship" – for God promised to preserve His Word.

From published letters written by Westcott and Hort, either to each other or to family members, the following has been gleaned. On one occasion, Mr. Westcott was near a monastery and, upon going into the chapel, found a pieta.¹ In writing from France to his fiancée in 1847 concerning the event he wrote: "Had I been alone, I could have knelt there for hours." As he was not alone, he had to refrain for to have so done would have revealed just how Roman his beliefs actually were. On November 17, 1865 he wrote to Archbishop Benson remarking, "I wish I could see to what forgotten truth Mariolatry bears witness."² He stated that the fall of man was an allegory covering a long succession of evolutions. He rejected Genesis 1-3 as a literal history and also denied the fall of man. Westcott felt all women should be named "Mary" so that his wife Sarah, at his request, added "Mary" to her name and he ever so addressed her.³ Does that sound like a Protestant?

With regard to spiritual authority in general and especially the Bible's being the final authority, Mr. Hort said: "Evangelicals seem to me perverted rather than untrue."⁴ On October 17, 1865 Hort wrote "I have been persuaded for many years that Mary-worship and 'Jesus-worship' have very much in common in their causes and their results".⁵ Hort praised his "prayer boxes" which he carried about with him. These

¹ Arthur Westcott, *Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott*, (London: Macmillan, 1903) Vol. I, p. 81. The Pieta was a life sized statue of Mary holding Jesus' dead body. For a detailed documentation of W-H's beliefs see: George H. Coy, *The Inside Story of the Anglo-American Revised New Testament* (Dallas, OR: Itemizer- Observer, 1973), pp. 79-88.

² *Ibid.*, Vol.I, p. 251. Mariolatry is the Catholic doctrines concerning Mary and her veneration.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 8, cp. 81.

⁴ A.F. Hort, *Life and Letters of Fenton John Anthony Hort*, 2 Vols. (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1896), Vol. I, p. 400. This is from an October 21, 1858 correspondence to Rev. Rowland Williams.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 50.

contained statues (idols) to which he prayed.¹ Confessing in a 26 October, 1867 letter to Dr. Lightfoot that he was a staunch sacerdotalist,² Hort wrote to Westcott regarding the Protestant's teaching of the "priesthood of the believer" as being a "crazy horror!"³ He believed neither in a literal Garden of Eden nor that Adam's fall differed in any degree from that of any of his descendants.⁴ In a March 4, 1890 letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury on Old Testament Criticism, Westcott gave his "amen" to Hort's last sentiment by penning: "No one now, I suppose, holds that the first three chapters of Genesis, for example, give a literal history – I could never understand how any one reading them with open eyes could think they did."⁵

Although not wishing to be under the dominion of the Pope, in writing to Rev. John Ellerton on July 6, 1848, Hort said: "the pure Romanish view seems to me nearer, and more likely to lead to, the truth than the evangelical view. ... We dare not forsake the sacraments or God will forsake us."⁶ In a December 14, 1846 letter to his father, Hort wrote " ... Methodism ... is worse than popery ... being more insidious",⁷ and in an 1864 correspondence to Bishop Westcott he stated his conviction that "Protestantism is only parenthetical and temporary".⁸ Indeed, Hort wrote Westcott (December 4, 1861) of preferring Greek philosophy and "its precious truth" to the Christian revelation in which he said he found "... nothing, and should be very much astonished and perplexed to find anything".⁹

¹ Ruckman, *The Christian's Handbook of Manuscript Evidence, op.cit.*, p. 39. In his fns. on page 186, Dr. Ruckman cites *Life and Letters of Fenton John Anthony Hort, op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 50; yet the material is not there. He adds that he is referencing Dr. Edward F. Hills lecture in March of 1969. Although the above statement attributed to Hort by Ruckman is considered accurate, I have thus far been unable to independently confirm the citation in any of Hort's work at my disposal.

² A.F. Hort, *Life and Letters of Fenton John Anthony Hort, op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 86. Belief that by virtue of ordination into the priesthood, one is given supernatural powers.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 51.

⁴ A.F. Hort, *Life and Letters of Fenton John Anthony Hort, op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 78.

⁵ A. Westcott, *Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott, op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 69.

⁶ A.F. Hort, *Life and Letters of Fenton John Anthony Hort, op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 76-77.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 49.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 31.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 449.

Both W&H came under the influence of J.H. Newman, an Anglican Bishop who returned to the Roman church and was made Cardinal. Newman held a doctrine of angelology in which he taught the gnostic view that there were many intermediates between God and His creation. Westcott and Hort also fell under the spell of Coleridge and Maurice, two Unitarians who were pantheistic and metaphysical, holding low estimates of "inspiration of Scripture". Coleridge said "Reason was the divine logos." Frederick Maurice was the son of a Unitarian minister and a brilliant student of Oxford and Cambridge. Having become a clergyman in the Church of England, he was dismissed as principal of King's College, London, on charges of heresy. Maurice had a commanding influence on many of the leaders of his day, especially Dr. Hort who wrote of him November 8, 1871: "... Mr. Maurice has been a dear friend of mine for twenty-three years, and I have been deeply influenced by his books".¹ Westcott also admitted he owed much to the writings of Maurice,² and Hort's son wrote of his father: "In undergraduate days, if not before, he came under the spell of Coleridge".³

Thus we have two Anglican priests whose stated beliefs were strongly Roman. Both accepted Darwin's theory of evolution. Writing to Rev. John Ellerton, April 3, 1860, Hort declared: "But the book that has engaged me most is Darwin. ... it is a book that one is proud to be contemporary with. ... My feeling is strong that the theory is unanswerable."⁴

Denying that the death of Christ Jesus made the once for all vicarious atonement for the sinner, W&H choose instead to emphasize atonement through the **incarnation** rather than through the **crucifixion**. This view was an attempt to exalt Mary's position as, of course, she was prominent at the conception and birth of Jesus. Such posture upholds the Roman Catholic Mass. So their view was that of atonement through Jesus' conception and birth rather than his shed blood!

Further, Westcott doubted the Biblical account of miracles. Writing in his diary, August 11, 1847, Bishop Westcott penned:⁵

¹ A.F. Hort, *Life and Letters of Fenton John Anthony Hort*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 155.

² A. Westcott, *Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 11.

³ A.F. Hort, *Life and Letters of Fenton John Anthony Hort*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 42.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 416, also p. 414.

⁵ A. Westcott, *Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 52.

"I never read an account of a miracle but I seem instinctively to feel its improbability, and discover some want of evidence in the account of it."

Indeed, Westcott and Hort did not even believe the original autographs of the Scriptures were God inspired! Writing in their "*Introduction*", they impiously stated:¹

"Little is gained by speculating as to the precise point at which such **corruptions** came in. **They may be due to the original writer, or to his amanuensis** if he wrote from dictation, or they may be due to one of the earliest transcribers." (emphasis author's)

WESTCOTT AND HORT'S INVOLVEMENT IN SPIRITISM

Westcott and Hort belonged to what Westcott's son referred to as "The Ghostly Guild." Westcott took a leading role in this society and its proceedings, the purpose of which was the investigation of ghosts and other supernatural appearances.² They believed that such things existed. Concerning this society, Hort wrote to Rev. John Ellerton on December 29, 1851:³

"Westcott, Gorham, C.B. Scott, Benson, Bradshaw, Lauard, etc., and I have started a society for the investigation of ghosts and all supernatural appearances and effects, being all disposed to believe that such things really exist, and ought to be discriminated from hoaxes and mere subjective disillusions."

Such is spiritism and is absolutely forbidden by Scripture.

Westcott's son wrote of his father's communing with "saints" especially at a great cathedral at Petersburg where "there was much company."⁴ On that same page he wrote that his father said, in speaking of the chapel at Auckland Castle, it was "full" and that he was "not alone" in the darkness. He was, of course, communing with demonic spirits supposing

¹ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction to the New Testament in the Original Greek*, op. cit., p. 280.

² A. Westcott, *Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott*, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 117.

³ A.F. Hort, *Life and Letters of Fenton John Anthony Hort*, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 211.

⁴ A. Westcott, *Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott*, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 312-313.

that they were ghosts (the souls of men who had lived formerly). However, the Word of God clearly teaches that "familiar spirits" are demons impersonating people. They are not the spirits and/or souls of people who have lived previously.

Both of these men denied the deity of Christ Jesus and they denied the verbal plenary inspiration of Scripture. Moreover, Hort spent the last eight years of his life working with Westcott in translating the Books of Wisdom and Maccabees, two uninspired writings.

AN ASSESSMENT OF ERASMUS¹

Erasmus was a "Christian" humanist, the illegitimate son of a Roman Catholic priest, and was himself an ordained priest. He taught Greek at Cambridge University from A.D. 1510 to 1514. He was not a "great" man of faith – but he was completely committed to the truth and reality of the Christian faith. Moreover, compared to Westcott and Hort (and a few others to be mentioned later) Erasmus was a giant of faith in that he humbled himself and his intellect, professing that the Bible was the absolute Word of God.

As to the criticism that Erasmus was a Roman Catholic – in his day, almost all of Christendom was Roman. He flourished before and at the onset of the Reformation. He did not oppose the teachings of the Roman Church, but he vehemently protested the abuses within the Church. Erasmus decried the emphasis on ritual as opposed to a simple godly life as wrong and believed that such could be corrected by placing into every man's hand the Bible in his own language. He did not want to do away with the ritual of Rome, but he wanted a genuine spirituality to accompany it. He disapproved of Protestantism, viewing it as an evil because of all the division it brought.

The Christian humanistic elements in Erasmus' thought were completely dissimilar from the contemporary connotation of "humanism", meaning instead "men eminent for human learning" – especially in relation to the revival of learning in literature and language (notably Latin and Greek). In his day the term "humanist" designated a member of a distinct 'international intellectual club' that was dedicated to studying the humanities or liberal arts. Due to his great erudition, depth of thought,

¹ Edward Freer Hills, *Believing Bible Study*, (2nd ed., Des Moines, IO: Christian Research Press, 1977), pp. 189-194.

elegance of style and biting irony, Desiderius Erasmus stood forth among these intellectuals as the unrivaled "prince of humanist". Erasmus' humanism found expression in his insistence to return to the original sources in order to uncover truth. Thus, his edition of the Greek N.T. was a natural manifestation of his Christian humanistic bent. By means of this text he hoped to see the Roman Church renewed from within.¹

As a Christian humanist, Erasmus was naturally not always consistently Christian in his thinking, nevertheless, we maintain that God providentially used Erasmus – much as God used Erasmus' contemporary Martin Luther even though Luther became bitterly anti-Semitic in his latter years.² At least Erasmus was not untrue to his ordination vows as were Westcott and Hort.³ They neither believed nor held to the thirty nine articles of the Anglican church in which they had been ordained. They actually espoused the cause of Romanism and modernism.

Moreover, neither Erasmus' theology nor his being a Roman Catholic has anything whatsoever to do with his Greek text. In producing it, he merely followed the manuscripts which had been preserved by the usage within the Greek Orthodox Church. Thus, Erasmus did not create the *Textus Receptus*. He only recovered it from within a Roman Catholic setting after years of neglect imposed upon it by that cult. Before this, throughout Europe the true text had been preserved intact primarily in Latin, and it circulated outside the Roman Church among small groups of true believers (see p. 167 ff.). Erasmus knew the Vulgate was a corrupted

¹ I am indebted to a 2-11-1991 personal correspondence from Dr. Theodore P. Letis for many of these insights on Erasmus, especially with regard to his "humanism". Letis taught a course on Erasmus at New College, Edinburgh University in 1990. This view on Erasmus' humanism also comes across clearly throughout Froude, *Life and Letters of Erasmus*, *op. cit.*

² David Rauch, *A Legacy of Hatred*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1990), pp. 28-29. As early as 1523 Luther spoke well of the Jews, expecting them to convert en masse when they heard the gospel message free from "papal paganism", but by the 1530's he had become irritated over their continued resistance against conversion. By 1543, near the end of his life (1546), he wrote 3 derogatory treatises against them. In *On The Jews And Their Lies*, Luther referred to the Jews as "venomous", "bitter worms", and "disgusting vermin" – that they all were thieves and should have their synagogues, schools and homes burned while deporting them to Palestine. He added that the Talmudic writings should be taken from them, their rabbis forbidden to teach "on pain of loss of life and limb", safe conduct be disallowed them on the highways, and that they no longer be able to charge interest on money. Also see *Luther The Reformer* by James Kittelson, (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House), pp. 273-274.

³ Hills, *Believing Bible Study*, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

version of this original older Latin translation, and his humanist values led him to believe that he was getting to the source of God's truth by turning to the manuscripts of the Greek Church.

One of Erasmus' greatest mistakes was his belief that the Roman Catholic Church could be reformed from within. The Lord Jesus said that you cannot put new wine into old wine skins. If Jesus the Christ could not reform the religion of Israel which originally had been the only God-ordained religion on the earth, who are we to think we can change for the better the traditions of any denomination or religious organization? By the power of the Holy Spirit we can influence and cause a positive change in the hearts of individuals be they priests, preachers or laymen – but *organizations* – organizations are married to their doctrines and traditions!

One recent example of such a change of heart is that of Dr. Frank Logsdon, Co-founder of the New American Standard Version (NASV), who stated before his recent death:¹

"I must under God renounce every attachment to the New American Standard Version. I'm afraid I'm in trouble with the Lord...I wrote the format; I helped interview some of the translators; I sat with the translator; I wrote the preface. When questions began to reach me, at first I was quite offended...I used to laugh with others...However, in attempting to answer, I began to sense that something was not right about the New American Standard Version. I can no longer ignore these criticisms I am hearing and I can't refute them...The deletions are absolutely frightening...there are so many...I wrote my very dear friend, Mr. Lockman, explaining that I was forced to renounce all attachment to the NASV. The product is grievous to my heart...I don't want anything to do with it. [T]he finest leaders that we have today...haven't gone into it [the new version's use of a corrupted Greek text], just as I hadn't gone into it...that's how easily one can be deceived. [Y]ou can say the Authorized Version [KJB] is absolutely correct. How correct? 100% correct!...I believe the Spirit of God led the translators of the Authorized Version. If you must stand against everyone else, stand..."

¹ D.W. Cloud (ed.), "From the NASV to the KJV", *O Timothy Magazine*, Vol. 9 Issue 1, (Oak Harbor, WA: 1992): pp. 1-14.. Also see G.A. Riplinger, *New Age Bible Versions*, (Munroe Falls, OH: A.V. Publications, 1993), on the un-numbered endorsement page at the beginning and immediately before the Table of Contents.

IV. THE "TEXTUS RECEPTUS"

ERASMUS AND THE WORK HE PRODUCED

Erasmus knew almost all of the important variant readings known to scholars today – more than 470 years ago.¹ This may be proven from a perusal of his notes. Dr. Frederick Nolan (1784-1864 A.D.) was a Greek and Latin scholar who, as an eminent historian, researched Egyptian chronology and spent twenty eight years tracing the Received Text to its apostolic origin. After surveying Erasmus' notes, Nolan recorded:²

"With respect to manuscripts, it is indisputable that he was acquainted with every variety which is known to us; having distributed them into two principle classes, one of which corresponds with ... the Vatican manuscript ... the church, he was aware, was infested with Origenists and Arians; and affinity between any manuscript and that version, consequently conveyed some suspicion that its text was corrupted."

In producing his first edition, Erasmus was under an incredible work load. Due to publication problems and deadline pressure, his first edition had many typographical errors, misprints, and misspellings. This led to much undue criticism. His work was greatly disfigured only in the sense mentioned, but the Text was providentially protected. God has not preserved the Text miraculously for then there would have been no such glosses, and all the various uncials and cursives would read the same, word for word. In the case of providential guidance, we can see that there is a human as well as a divine side to the preservation of the Text.³ For the most part, these errors were eliminated by Erasmus in his later editions. Such things as these are, however, not factors which need to be taken into account insofar as evaluating the "**Textus Receptus**" – a designation by which his work later came to be known.

The year after Erasmus published, Luther used the *Textus Receptus* (TR) for the basis of a German translation of the New Testament. Shortly

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, op. cit., p. 198.

² Nolan, *An Inquiry into the Integrity of the Greek Vulgate*, op. cit., pp. 413-415.

³ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, op. cit., 202.

thereafter, God – using Luther and his translation, brought about the Reformation.

Luther and Erasmus knew each other. They did not always agree. One of the chief areas of disagreement between them was Luther's conviction that the Roman church was incapable of being reformed and he thought that Erasmus should join him in leaving. However Erasmus believed that he could better bring about reform by working from within the system. He was quite wrong.

TYNDALE TRANSLATES THE TEXTUS RECEPTUS INTO ENGLISH

William Tyndale, a godly young English priest (A.D. 1494-1536), left Oxford to study Greek at Cambridge under the influence of Erasmus. Tyndale was so gifted and fluent in seven languages (Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, English, and French) that one would think each was his native tongue. It was Tyndale's great desire to put the Bible into the language of the English speaking people. Relying c.99% on the 1522 3rd edition of Erasmus' Greek text, in 1526 A.D. Tyndale fulfilled that longing, producing the first complete printed N.T. in the English tongue.

As a result of his publication, the Roman Church despised, hated and persecuted Tyndale. In A.D. 1535 at Antwerp, Belgium, he was betrayed by Henry Phillips and made the prisoner of Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor. Found guilty of heresy for translating and publishing the Bible, in October 1536 Tyndale was tied to the stake whereupon he cried out in a fervent loud voice: "Lord, open the King of England's eyes". He was then strangled and his body publicly burned.

Following the completion of the New Testament, most of the men who translated the Bible manuscripts into the language of the common people were put to death. History reveals the surprising fact that it was members of the clergy, those who were supposed to be the ministers of Christ, who directed and carried out nearly all of the deeds of martyrdom and the cruelties which accompanied them. For the past 150 years the attack has become more "civilized". Now members of the clergy and ecclesiastic scholars merely carry out these cruelties and atrocities against their translations, while safely sitting in air conditioned offices – often supported by tithe money.

LATER EDITIONS OF THE TEXTUS RECEPTUS

Later, Stephens (Stephanus) updated Erasmus' work with several editions, the best being his third in 1550. It is this form of the *Textus Receptus* that is generally preferred by English scholars. The difference between Stephens' undertaking and the last edition of Erasmus is almost imperceptible such that for practical purposes, Erasmus' and Stephens' texts are the same.

In 1598, Beza published his fifth edition, again using Erasmus' Greek text as his foundation. Beza's fifth is the actual edition upon which the King James was principally based. It reads almost the same as the last update of Erasmus.¹ Finally in 1624, the Elzevir brothers of Holland produced an edition. It was at that time the text was given the designation of "*Textus Receptus*" which means the "Received Text" (i.e., received from God). They said they had not altered the manuscripts in any way and that they considered the text in their hands to have been received directly from God. The second Elzevir edition (1633) was generally adopted as the TR on the European Continent. All of these men believed they were working with the infallible Words of God as He had given them.

How much do the editions differ over the span from 1550 to 1624? Elzevir differed from Stephens, for example, in Mark only 19 times. Compare that with Codex Vaticanus B (a 4th century uncial MSS which is currently accepted as the most reliable, almost to the exclusion of all others, of the Greek manuscripts by most modern text critics). B differs with Sinaiticus Aleph (Hebrew designation = a) 652 times in the Gospel of Mark and with another uncial manuscript (D) in 1,944 places. In fact, there is *only* a total of 287 variants from Stephens' 1550 work to the Elzevir brothers' work of 1624. These few differences are almost negligible for they are all spelling. The issue becomes one of whether one spells "colour" or "color"? Thus, the text has been protected by God. Again, God's preservation of the New Testament text was not by a miracle but providentially. It is not God breathed and God inspired in the same exact sense that the "originals" were but it was, beyond all reasonable doubt, God guided and God preserved.

¹ A.T. Robertson, *An Introduction To The Textual Criticism Of The New Testament*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1925), pp. 18-20; Robertson says all 9 of Beza's editions are practically reprints of Stephanus – which was almost that of Erasmus' [George Ricker Berry, *The Interlinear Literal Translation of The Greek New Testament With the Authorized Version*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 1977), p. ii.]

There were hundreds of manuscripts which Erasmus could have examined and he did, but he only used a few. That did not matter because the vast bulk of all the Greek manuscripts is practically the *Textus Receptus*. If the ones which Erasmus used were typical then he had what the vast majority said. As a matter of fact, the manuscripts which Erasmus used differed only in insignificant detail from the total bulk. Basically it is Erasmus' work which is the foundation of the King James Bible.

We are not saying that the "thous, thines and thees" are infallibly God breathed words. The scribes and printers who produced the copies were not "inspired" as was Moses, Isaiah, Paul, John etc., but they were God-guided. So by faith in God's promises to preserve His Word, we *know* that the *Textus Receptus* is the God-guided revision of the majority text. What we *are* saying is that the **Greek Text** upon which the King James was founded, **is the Word of God**. Moreover, that God providentially watched over that Text, and that the King James is the only English translation in the world today which is faithful to that Greek Text.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE

Many detracting inferences have been made in recent years such as, "Well, you know how the King James came into being ... It was all done by royal decree of King James ... a politically motivated private enterprise etc." Or they tell us "You can't trust the King James – it is so full of mistakes and scribal errors." But such statements are simply not the truth and do not reflect the historical facts.

To begin with, King James did not initiate the idea of a new translation. After a forty five year reign, Elizabeth – only hours before her death, named her cousin James VI, Monarch of Scotland, to succeed her as James I on the throne of England. The year was 1603 A.D. There was at this time in the Church of England a number of reformers called "Puritans" because of their avowed purpose to purify the English church by removing from it all the remnants of Catholicism. The Puritan leadership was under Dr. John Reynolds (Rainolds) who was president of Corpus Christi College at Oxford. In 1604, he suggested to King James that there be produced a translation which all the people could understand, read and love. Himself a theologian and student of the Scriptures from Presbyterian Scotland, James I subsequently approved the suggestion.

The undertaking began when approximately a thousand ministers sent a petition, which later came to be known as the "Millenary Petition", to

King James.¹ Dr. Renyolds was made spokesman for the thousand ministers who represented about one-tenth of the clergy of the Church of England. They requested several "reforms" and eventually, at a meeting at Hampton Court, Renyolds proposed the undertaking of a new translation of the Bible on the grounds that the "Great Bible" of 1539 was a very corrupt translation. Although raised up using the Geneva Bible, King James was troubled over the many "notes" or comments contained in that translation. It was finally agreed that a new translation, absolutely true to the original Greek text, be made which would not have any footnotes or comments.² Thus, James I acceded to their request, but he did not initiate the procedure. It was not launched by the "throne" but at the request of a thousand ministers. Further, clergy and laymen from both the Anglicans and Puritans were included in its translation.

Thus, with King James' blessings, Bishop Bancroft (soon to become Archbishop of Canterbury) met with the Dean of Westminster and the Professors of Hebrew at Oxford and Cambridge for the purpose of suggesting the names of the men who should work on the translation. Fifty-four of the best scholars in England were selected, but some died before the work began whereas others could not participate in the undertaking because of previous work commitments. Thus, only forty-seven³ actually engaged in the task (plus nine others whose participation seems to have been somewhat limited). None of the translators was paid for his work.

When the work began the forty-seven were divided into six groups: two at Westminster, one for the Old Testament and one for the New; two at Oxford, one for each Testament; and two at Cambridge, one for the Old Testament and one for the Apocrypha. For three years, from 1604 to 1606, each man in the group first worked out his own translation on the chapters assigned to him, guided by fifteen specific rules. Some of the most important of these rules were:

¹ Alexander W. McClure, *The Translators Revived*, (Litchfield, MI: Marantha Bible Society, 1858), p. 57.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59.

³ Of the 47, 4 were college presidents, 6 were bishops, 5 were deans, 39 had master's degrees, 30 held doctorates, 41 were university professors, and 13 in Hebrew as well as 10 in Greek were skilled to a rarely attained extraordinary magnitude: Eldred Thomas, *Bible Versions*, (Dallas, TX: Research Educational Foundation, Inc., 1978), p. 12.

1. The Bishops' Bible (1568) was to be followed as a guide with as little alteration as the truth of the original texts would permit.
2. No marginal notes were to be attached except for the explanation of Greek or Hebrew words or for providing cross-references.
3. Tyndale's translation (c.1526), Matthew's (1537), Coverdale's (1535), The Great Bible (1539), and the Geneva (1560) were to be used when they agreed better with the text than the Bishops' Bible.

The same portion of Scripture was translated by each of the other men of that company. Afterward, all the members of the group came together and thrashed out the differences. When a book was completed in this manner, it was sent to the other five groups for review and suggestions. Two men from each group formed a special screening committee to examine the final product. The meetings of the three companies took another three years (1607-1609). Each of these men believed that the text at his disposal was the infallible Word of God. There has never been a committee working on a translation of the Bible with such scholarship and dedication. Regarding this, McClure states:¹

"As to the capability of those men, ... by the good providence of God, their work was undertaken *in a fortunate time*. Not only had the English language, that singular compound, then ripened to its full perfection, but the study of Greek, and of the oriental tongues, and of rabbinical lore, had then been carried to a greater extent in England than ever before or since. This particular field of learning has never been so highly cultivated among English divines.

Most were professors and/or preachers. The 12th rule required every Bishop to have small portions of the project circulated and displayed in public places throughout his diocese as it came from the translators' pens and to encourage recommendations.² This placed the entire work open to the populace so that the whole nation of England could take part in its production. Hundreds of laymen, priests, and preachers who knew Greek and/or Hebrew offered suggestions.

Whereas the King's translators were instructed that the Bishops' Bible was to be their main guide and it to be altered only "as the truth of the

¹ McClure, *The Translators Revived*, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-64.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 66 & 69.

original will permit", only about four percent of the King James Bible is, in fact, drawn from that version. The new translation agreed much more with the Geneva than with any other.¹ Over ninety percent of the language of the New Testament is from Tyndale's translation. The rhythmical diction and style imparting literary grace, majesty, and character found throughout the KJB came from this martyr's pen.

For the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, they used the four Hebrew Bibles then available. For the New Testament Greek text, they used the work of Theodore Beza, the associate of John Calvin, who had revised the Greek texts of Erasmus and Stephens (Stephanus). Besides these, many other ancient translations were referred to and considered. Words which were not in the original language but which the translators found necessary to add in order to complete the sense, were especially flagged and appear in our modern King James Bibles in italics.

When all the books had been translated, two men from each company at Westminster, Cambridge, and Oxford came together and carefully considered the completed work of each of the three companies. Finally, two men reviewed that product; thus each Scripture was examined at least 14 times. Consequently, we have seen that the revision of 1611 was neither a private endeavor nor was it an enterprise of King James VI (I) as Sir Frederick Kenyon aptly reminds us:²

"The revision [of 1611] was the work of no single man and of no single school. It was the deliberate work of a large body of trained scholars and divines of all classes and opinions, who had before them, for their guidance, the labours of nearly a century of revision. The translation of the Bible had passed out of the sphere of controversy. It was a ***national undertaking*** in which no one had any interest at heart save that of producing the best possible version of the Scriptures." (author's emphasis)

Thus, when the final product was brought before the church in published form, there were no surprises. All was done in the open and above board. There were no smoke filled back room decisions made with regard to the ultimate translation. Indeed, profit was of no consideration. Over the years, several editions have been issued to correct typesetting errors, spelling, the addition of marginal references, italics in place of the

¹ McClure, *The Translators Revived*, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

² Sir Frederick Kenyon, *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, 5th ed. (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1958), p. 306.

original Roman typeface, and so forth. As these editions have been largely misreported, we must now address this matter.

WHAT ABOUT ALL THE CHANGES IN THE KING JAMES BIBLE?

It has often been asserted that the King James Bible has been **revised** four times in the past. This is offered as proof that no valid objection should be forthcoming to continued revision and endless new translations. The reality is that there have been several **editions** of the text but no revisions have been made. We shall elaborate and clarify on this important issue.

The printing press was invented in 1450 by the German Johann Gutenberg. Although this was 161 years before the 1611 KJB edition, the printing apparatus had changed very little. The type was set by hand, one character at a time. The process was quite slow, difficult and tedious, hence frequent errors resulted in all publications. The first edition of the King James also contained such printing errors, but these were not the kind of textual alterations which freely occur in modern versions. These were obvious and simple printing oversights. The second printing published later in 1611 corrected about 100 such textual differences. Of course, such errors do not render a Bible or any other book worthless – they merely need to be removed in subsequent editions.

The first two alleged "major revisions" of the King James Bible took place within 27 years of its first edition. The 1629 edition was but a careful correction of earlier printing errors. Only nine years later, a second so-called major revision was distributed. Dr. Samuel Ward and John Bois,¹ two of the original translators, participated in both of these undertakings. However F.H.A. Scrivener (see footnote below) describes this as merely being a reinstatement of words, phrases and clauses overlooked by the 1611 printers – thereby amending these errors. Thus, 72% of the approximately 400 textual corrections in the KJB were completed by

¹ Much of that which follows has been adapted from *The King James Version of 1611, The Myth of Early Revisions*, David F. Reagan, Pastor of Trinity Baptist Temple, Knoxville, TN. Also see McClure, *The Translators Revived*, *op. cit.*, p. 194 (Bois read the entire Hebrew O.T. at age 5 and wrote Hebrew at 6, p. 200). Dr. Reagan utilized data from F.H.A. Scrivener's *The Authorized Edition of the English Bible (1611), 1884*. Dr. Scrivener was a conservative and godly member of the 1881 Revision Committee (see page 119).

1638. Hence, we find that instead of two major revisions, there were two stages of a single process – namely, the purging of early printing errors. Similarly, the last two "major revisions" were but two stages in standardizing the spelling. Very few textual corrections were necessary for these two publications (1762 and 1769). Thus, the term "four major revisions" is a misnomer, and as such, is grossly misleading.

Much is made by the detractors of the KJB claiming as many as 75,000 changes in the King James Bible since 1611. At first glance, this does seem to be a problem. However, before citing examples, the reader is enjoined to keep in mind that **the real issue at hand is that of final authority**. Further, the reader needs to be appraised that the original King James Bible is very different in appearance than those published today. Were one to go to a museum to view an original, he would find that he could hardly read it. Indeed, many of the words that were legible would be strangely spelled. The changes fall into three categories: (1) printing changes, (2) spelling changes and (3) textual changes.

The printing type used for the original edition was Gothic. The type style or font that the reader has before him and that with which he is familiar is Roman. Although the Roman type style originated fairly early, Gothic had been the predominate form for many years in most European countries. The printers of the original King James chose the Gothic because of its beauty and eloquence. Several of the letters are noticeably different in appearance.

The Gothic "s" looks like the Roman "s" when used as a capital letter or at the end of a word, but when it occurs as a lower case "s" at the beginning or in the middle of a word, the letter looks similar to our "f". Over 30,000 changes were of this kind, as in Mofes to Moses. The Gothic "v" looks like a Roman "u" and vice versa. Now we can see why our "w" is called a "double-u" rather than "double-v". The "v" was changed to "u" 45,281 times (i.e., Dauid to David, wiues to wives, vnto to unto). The Gothic "j" looks like our "i", hence Iudah becomes Judah, iudged to judged etc. Remember, these are not spelling changes – they are simply type style changes. These changes reflect a large percentage of the "thousands" of alterations in the KJB, but obviously such modifications do not corrupt or in any way harm the actual text.

As to the changes in orthography (spelling), we remind our reader that most histories date the beginning of Modern English around 1500. Hence, by 1611 the grammatical structure and basic vocabulary of

present day English had already been firmly established. However, the spelling did not stabilize at the same time. In the 1600's spelling was largely phonetic as standards had not yet been established. Even among the well educated, an author would spell the same word several different ways, often in the same book and even on the same page. It was not until the eighteenth century that spelling began to be uniform. Therefore, in the last half of that century, the spelling of the 1611 KJB was standardized.

Over 30,000 additional changes involved dropping the final "e" off of the old English spellings such as – sunne to sun, fowle to fowl, goe to go, shee to she, nowe to now etc. Double vowels and double consonants were more common such as mee to me and ranne to ran. Other changes included farres to stars, ynough to enough, moneth to month, yeeres to years grinne to grin; flying to fleeing; neezed to sneezed etc.

These typographical and spelling changes account for almost all of the so-called "thousands" of alterations since 1611. Obviously none of them can be truly said to in any way alter the text. Thus they cannot honestly be compared with the thousands of actual textual changes which blatantly appear in the modern versions. The significance of this simply cannot be overstated.

As to the actual textual differences between the 1611 edition and our present editions, there are some variations – but they are not of the magnitude of a revision. Rather, they are merely the correction of early obvious printing errors. They are not textual changes made to alter the reading. This may be readily ascertained by (a) the character of the changes; (b) the frequency of the changes throughout the Bible; and (c) the time the changes were made.

In the first printing, words were occasionally inverted. A plural may have been in singular form or vice versa, and at times a word was miswritten for one that was similar. A few times a word or even a phrase was inadvertently omitted. The omissions were obvious and did not portray the doctrinal implications of those found in modern translations.

Dr. F.H.A. Scrivener compiled a list of the variations between the 1611 edition and later printings. A random sampling giving the first textual correction on consecutive left hand pages is depicted in the following chart.

1611 Reading	Present Reading	Year Corrected
1 this thing	this thing also	1638
2 shalt have remained	ye shall have remained	1762
3 Achzib, nor Helbath, nor Aphik	of Achzib, nor of Helbath, nor of Aphik	1762
4 requite good	requite me good	1629
5 this book of the Covenant	the book of this Covenant	1629
6 chief rulers	chief ruler	1629
7 And Parbar	At Parbar	1638
8 For this cause	And for this cause	1638
9 For the king had appointed	for so the king had appointed	1629
10 Seek good	seek God	1617
11 The cormorant	But the cormorant	1629
12 returned	turned	1769
13 a fiery furnace	a burning fiery furnace	1638
14 The crowned	Thy crowned	1629
15 thy right doeth	thy right hand doeth	1613
16 the wayes side	the way side	1743
17 which was a Jew	which was a Jewess	1629
18 the city	the city of the Damascenes	1629
19 now and ever	both now and ever	1638
20 which was of our fathers	which was our fathers	1616

Gentle reader, in the preceding chart you have seen 5% of all the textual changes made in the King James Bible in 375 years. Only one (#10) has serious doctrinal implications. Here, the 1611 reading of Psalm 69:32 has

"seek good" where the correct reading should be "seek God". But the spelling similarity of the words "good" and "God" reveal the problem to be merely that of a weary type setter's having misread the proof. This error was so obvious that it was caught and corrected in 1617, only six years after the first printing and well before the first so-called 1629 revision. Dr. David Reagan reports (p. 11) that his examination of Scrivener's entire appendix resulted in this as being the only doctrinal variation.

Both the character and the frequency of the changes disclose them to be but printing oversights. Yet scholars, even fundamental conservatives, refer to the thousands of modifications made to the 1611 over the years as if they were on a par with the changes in recent versions. They are not. Again, the overwhelming majority is either type style or spelling changes. The few that remain are clearly corrections of printing errors made due to the tedious nature involved in the early printing process. These few printing errors serve to demonstrate that God chose to preserve the text of His Word, not by continuous miracle, but providentially.

The sample list given heretofore demonstrates how meticulously Scrivener was in compiling all the variations. Yet, even with such great care only approximately 400 variations between the 1611 edition and the modern copies could be identified and listed by him. Remember, there were c.100 variations found and corrected between the first two Oxford editions which were both printed in 1611. The average variation (after c.375 years) is but one correction every three chapters. And as we have seen, these are "chief rulers" to "chief ruler", "And Parbar" to "At Parbar" etc. The early date at which they were corrected also bears witness that they were merely corrected printing errors.

Moreover, the great majority of the 400 corrections were made within a few years of the original printing. For example, from our sampling of the twenty corrections (see p. 73), one was made in 1613, one in 1616, one in 1617, eight in 1629, five in 1638, one in 1743, two in 1762, and one in 1769. Hence, 16 out of 20 corrections, or 80%, were made within twenty-seven years of the 1611 printing. Such is hardly the long drawn out series of revisions that the scholars would have us believe. Another study detailing every other page of Scrivener's appendix revealed that 72% of the textual corrections had been made by 1638. Thus, there is no "revision" issue. As previously stated, the main purpose of the 1629 and 1638 editions was the correction of earlier printing errors. The main purpose of the 1762 and 1769 editions was the standardization of spelling.

To illustrate the import of all this, the 1638 edition of the entire book of Ecclesiastes reads exactly like our present edition. All that has changed in Ecclesiastes during the past 350 years is that the spelling has been standardized! By the time of the 1638 edition, all the printing errors in that book had been corrected and the Roman type applied.

To summarize, the character of the textual changes is that of obvious printing errors, not changes made to alter the reading. The frequency of the textual changes is meager, averaging only one every three chapters. The time frame of the textual changes is early, about three-fourths occurring within twenty seven years of the first printing. These particulars establish that there were no true revisions in the sense of updating the language or **correcting translation errors**. There were only editions which corrected early typographical errors.

Other such textual changes have been: saveth to "and he saveth"; to be joyful to "and to be joyful"; flix to "flux"; upon the house to "housetop"; unperfect to "imperfect"; have care to "have a care"; sometimes to "sometime"; forsomuch to "forasmuch"; such wrong to "such wrongs"; will fat to "fatten"; northwards to "northward"; cheweth cud to "the cud"; noondays to "noon day"; nor scales to "and scales"; disallow to "disallowed"; in power to "of power"; I start to "I started" etc.

Also, some later printing errors occasionally did creep in, e.g., "Printers" instead of Princes – Psa.119:161, 1701 edition; "place makers" instead of peace makers – Mat.5:9, 1807 edition; from "good" works instead of from dead works – Heb.9:14, 1807 edition, etc.

Over 5,000 of the remaining changes were in substituting periods for commas, colons for commas, semi-colons for colons and capital letters for lower case.

In stark contrast, the 36,191 changes we are supposed to accept in the new Greek texts of Nestle, Aland, and Metzger include attacks on the Deity of Christ (I Tim 3:16), the Virgin Birth (Luk.2:33), the Ascension (Luk.24:51-52), the Bible (Luk.4:4), and the Resurrection (Acts 1:3; see Ch. II). Significantly, *the spelling* (orthography) of Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus does not agree with that of first century Greek, yet even the tenth century *Textus Receptus* manuscripts do so concur. Furthermore, the King James is by far the translation *easiest from which to memorize* because it is written in prose. It is most difficult to memorize Scripture from any of the other translations.

As to the KJB proper, there are problems. As to the problems and how significant they are depend upon whom one asks. The solutions run a gamut of incredible differences of opinion with no consensus in sight. The learned New Testament text critic Herman C. Hoskier claimed to know of **only one serious problem**.¹ Hoskier said that the Greek word "poinna" (poimnh) should be translated "flock", not "fold", in John 10:16:

"This I consider to be the only matter of any great consequence which must be amended in any revision, but as everybody knows about this, it is not likely to mislead" (p. 697).

All other problems,² this great scholar regarded as merely "academic".

¹ Herman C. Hoskier, "The Authorized Version of 1611", *Bibliotheca Sacra* 68; (October, 1911), pp. 693-704.

² A typical "problem" or "unfortunate translation" offered against the KJB is found in Acts 12:4 where the Greek word "pascha" (πάσχα) is rendered "Easter" instead of "Passover". Although "Passover" is the usual correct rendering, the context of Acts 12:1-4 is unmistakable that it should not so be translated in this instance. Modern versions translate "pascha" as "Passover" here and in so doing rather than correcting a mistake, they actually insert one. As the King James is the only English translation available today that has made this proper distinction, this apparent error sets it clearly apart from and above all others (the 1534 William Tyndale, the 1557 Geneva Bible, the 1539 Great Bible [Cranmer's] as well as other pre-King James English versions also read "Easter").

To explain, our computer reveals that the word "pascha" occurs 29 times in the New Testament. The KJB translators rendered it "Passover" the other 28 places in which it appears. The reader is reminded of the meticulous procedure to which the King James Bible was subjected and the large number of different scholars throughout England that viewed its production all along the way (see p. 66 ff.). The point that is being made is that these learned men clearly knew that "pascha" normally should mean "Passover" – for they so translated it the other 28 times. Therefore, Acts 12:4 is neither a mis-translation on their part nor an oversight! It is the result of a deliberate clear calculated decision on the part of many, many dedicated Christian scholars of the first rank. What did the 1611 translators (and their predecessors) perceive that led them to this obviously intentional choice which modern scholars have failed to observe?

They were guided by the Holy Spirit to correctly discern the context and not merely blindly follow vocabulary and lexical studies. The Passover was to be slain on the 14th of Nisan and the seven days following were the feast of unleavened bread (Nisan 15-21). Verse 3 informs us that Peter was arrested during the "days of unleavened bread". Thus, the Passover had already come and gone. Herod (Agrippa) could not possibly have been referring to the Passover in this citation. The next Passover was a year away and the context of these verses does not permit that Herod intended to keep Peter incarcerated for so prolonged a period and then to put him to death a year later. No – it is clear that Herod purposed to slay Peter very soon thereafter. The next key is that of Herod himself (12:1). Herod Agrippa was not a Jew. He was a pagan Idumaeon (Edomite) appointed by Rome. He had no reason to keep the Jewish Passover. But there was a religious holy day

The point we have labored to clarify is that the King James Bible has not been revised, only purified. We have no valid reason to doubt that the one we hold in our hands is the very Word of God preserved for us in the English language. The authority for its veracity lies neither in the original 1611 printing nor in the character of King James VI (I), the scholarship of the 1611 translators, the literary accomplishments of Elizabethan England, nor even in the Greek Received Text. Our authority for the infallibility of the English Bible lies in the promise of God to preserve His Word.

WHY THEN ARE NEW TRANSLATIONS THOUGHT NECESSARY?

The question should be asked, "Why in 1881 (and even today) did we need a new Bible?" There are at least five reasons for this rational:

1. The many archaic words, the "eth's" as in doeth, knoweth, heareth etc., and the "thee's" and "thou's";
2. The existence of the many variant (different) readings in the extant Greek manuscripts;

that the whole world honored and does to this day – the ancient festival of Astarte, also known in other languages as Ishtar (pronounced "Easter").

This festival has always been held late in the month of Nisan (c.April). Originally, it was a commemoration of the earth's "regenerating" itself after the "death" of winter. It involved a celebration of reproduction and fertility, hence the symbols of the festival were the rabbit and the egg – both being well known for their reproductive abilities. The central figure of worship was the female deity and her child (see p. 98 ff.). The Scriptures refer to her as the "queen of heaven" (Jer.7:18; 44:15-27), the mother of Tammuz (Ezk.8:14), and Diana (or Artemis, Acts 19:23-41) and they declare that the pagan world worships her (Acts 19:27). These perverted rituals took place at sunrise on Easter morning (Ezk.8:13-16) whereas Passover was celebrated in the evening (Deu.16:6).

Thus, the Jewish Passover was held in mid-Nisan and the pagan festival Easter was held later that same month. As we have shown, Acts 12:4 cannot refer to Passover for the verse tells us that "then were the days of unleavened bread". Thus, in context, it must be referring to another holy day (holiday) that is at hand, but after Passover. This suggests that Herod was a follower of that world wide cult and thus had not slain Peter during the days of unleavened bread because he wanted to wait until Easter. As the Jews had put Jesus to death during Passover, Herod's reason for delaying the execution certainly was not fear of their objection to such a desecration of their religious holy days. The King James translators realized that to render "pascha" as "Passover" in this instance was both impossible and erroneous. They correctly discerned that the word could include any religious holy day occurring in the month of Nisan. The choice of "Easter" was methodical, exact, and correct.

3. The finding of a significant number of ancient Greek manuscripts of the Bible in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries older than those used by Erasmus and believed, by many scholars, to be closer to the text of the apostles' autographs;
4. Itching ears – winds of doctrine; and
5. Greed for Money.

We shall address each of these five, the first three being the so-called "justification" for the "need" to modernize and revise the King James Bible.

(1) ARCHAIC WORDS

There are only several hundred obsolete or archaic words remaining within the 1611 King James Bible – words such as "incontinent" (lack of self control, I Cor. 7:5) and "concupiscence" (unholy desires, Rom. 7:8). These few could and should be brought up to date. The "eth" endings could also easily be changed ("doeth" to "do") although care must be taken as to its rendering else many times the actual meaning may be lost. This is due to Greek verb tenses which do not exist in English. For example, often the Greek word rendered "doeth" reflects continuous action. In such cases, a simple changing to "do" would not represent a faithful translation from the Greek. The "eth" ending which allows for such meanings thus has served a vital function in the King James Bible.

With regard to "ye" (plural), "thee" (singular) and "thou" (singular) which we find dispersed throughout the 1611 Bible, it is shocking to discover the great value that these 2nd person pronouns serve. O.T. Allis informs us that these were *not* contemporary words even in 1611!¹

"It is incorrect to claim that the 'thou' represents the usage of the 1611 period when the AV was prepared and that that usage is out of date and should be rejected for that very reason. Such a claim misrepresents the facts. The AV usage is not Jacobean or 17th century English. **It is biblical English.** The Greek of the New Testament like the Hebrew of the Old Testament distinguishes between the singular and the plural forms of the second person. The AV makes this distinction simply because NT Greek does so, and because **that is the only way to translate the Bible correctly.**" (author's emphasis)

¹ Oswald T. Allis, *The New English Bible, The New Testament of 1961, A Comparative Study.* (n.p., 1963), p. 69. Dr. E.F. Hills concurs (*The King James Version Defended, op. cit.*, p. 218).

The second person in English is rendered "you" in both the singular and the plural. Thus, when "you" is employed in a modern translation, one does not know if it is to be understood as singular or plural. However, "you", "ye", and "your" are *always* plural in the King James Bible whereas "thy", "thou", "thee" and "thine" always denote the singular – how easy.

	Singular	Plural
1st Person	I	We
2nd Person	Thou, Thee, Thy, Thine	Ye, You, Your
3rd Person	He, She, It	They

In Luke 22:31-32, for example, the King James Bible reads:

22:31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you [plural! all of the apostles] ... 32 But I have prayed for thee [singular - Peter] ...

Other translations if desiring to indicate such would have to supply a footnote to convey this, and the reader might well not notice it. Another example is in Acts 13:47.

Thus by allowing "you" to stand for both, the pronounal singular/plural distinction has been lost in the new translations. Tyndale knew of such subtleties, and he deliberately revived words that had already passed from common usage to handle faithfully the translating into English. In doing so, he actually **created** a special variety of English – a Bible English – for the purpose of clearly conveying the precise meaning. Tyndale thereby **elevated** the English usage **by Scripture** rather than *accommodating* Scripture to the English vernacular.¹

(2) VARIANT READINGS

It was Luther's translation of Erasmus' Greek text into German that was the main weapon which the Holy Spirit used in bringing about the

¹ Jacob Van Bruggen, *The Future of the Bible*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1978), pp. 48-49. Also see: T.P. Letis, *The Majority Text: Essays and Reviews in the Continuing Debate*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Institute for Biblical Textual Studies, 1987), pp. 84-104. That there is a great difference between AV English & the wordy, pretentious Elizabethan style may be readily seen by comparing the KJB's preface with its text. Thus, the worth of the AV is not due to 17th century English, but to its faithful translation of the original. Its style is that of the Hebrew and of the New Testament Greek (again, see Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 218).

Reformation.¹ The impact of the written Word was devastating to the teachings and traditions of the Roman Church. The 16th century Reformers placed their faith in the precious truths contained in these Living Words and the battle cry "Sola Scriptura" (Scriptures alone) became, as it were, their creed and rallying point upon which they rested for final authority. God had breathed these Scriptures. Now each man could read them, and account to God for himself without the dogma and rituals of Rome. In matters of conduct and faith the Word of God was the final court of appeal – not the priest or Pope. Indeed, as McClure rightly reminds us:²

"The printing of the English bible has proved to be by far the mightiest barrier ever reared to repel the advance of Popery, and to damage all the resources of the Papacy."

This aggressive, vigorous move by the Protestants placed Roman Catholicism on the defensive resulting in its having to rethink many issues and regroup.³ It was forced to define itself at the Council of Trent in 1546 A.D.

Eventually, as the Greek manuscripts came under close scrutiny by its Catholic opponents, it became clear that they differed somewhat in text and that variant readings existed. This gave the Roman Church the impetus it needed to launch a counter offensive to recapture the minds and allegiance of its own as well as those who had departed – "there are variants in your Sola Scriptura – therefore return to Sola Pope."

Placed on the defensive by this assault, the 17th century Protestant church was forced into defining itself. This resulted in the doctrine of Providential Preservation of the text based upon God's many promises to preserve His Word. That which emerged from this point-counterpoint scenario was a clarification delineating the antithesis between the two positions. The defining process forced both sides to their logical conclusions.

¹ Theodore P. Letis, *The Majority Text: Essays and Reviews in the Continuing Debate*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Institute for Biblical Textual Studies, 1987), pp. 145-190. I am indebted to Dr. Letis' fine research for the material under this subtitle.

² McClure, *The Translators Revived*, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

³ Letis, *The Majority Text: Essays and Reviews in the Continuing Debate*, *op. cit.*, p. 147 ff.

Initially, all of the various Protestant Confessional statements (such as the Westminster, the Philadelphia etc.) containing statements concerning the preservation of Scripture were written in response to text critical problems and challenges.¹ These creeds descriptively **appealed to the consensus of history** for determining the boundaries of the texts of Scripture. Two examples are the Helveticus Consensus and the Philadelphia Confession, as follows:

THE HELVETICUS CONSENSUS (1675 A.D.)

"God, the supreme Judge, not only took care to have his word, which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, committed to writing by Moses, the prophets, and the apostles, but has also watched and cherished it with paternal care ever since it was written up to the present time, so that it could not be corrupted by craft of Satan or fraud of man."

THE PHILADELPHIA CONFESSION (Baptist - 1742 A.D.)

"The Old Testament in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek, being immediately inspired by God, and **by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages**, are therefore authentical; so in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them" (taken from the 1646 Westminster Confession, I, 8 - author's emphasis)

The texts these confessions had in view as "authentical" were the Masoretic Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek *Textus Receptus* New Testament.

It is important that the Christian understand that the previously mentioned struggle continues behind the scenes in textual criticism today. At the same time we must keep in mind that the battle over final authority began with Lucifer's rebellion (Isaiah 14, Ezek. 28) followed by his attack on God's Word in the Garden of Eden.

Yet one may inquire, "just what is the nature of this providence, and how did it actually operate in manuscript transmission?" Some of the more important and vital canons included in the "doctrine of preservation" are:²

¹ Letis, *The Majority Text: Essays and Reviews in the Continuing Debate*, op cit., p. 173 ff.

² John Owen, "Of the Integrity and Purity of the Hebrew and Greek Text of the Scripture", *The Works of John Owen*, Vol. XVI, ed. by William H. Goold, (Edinburgh, Scotland: The Banner of Truth, 1968; rpt. of 1850-53 ed.), pp. 356-358.

- (a) As God promised many times to preserve His Words, by faith in God's Character we trust that He has kept His word.
- (b) As God used the priesthood to preserve His Word in the Old Testament, He has done likewise in New Testament times through the priesthood of born again believers.
- (c) By *multiplying copies* to such a large number it would be impossible for anyone to corrupt them all, willfully or by negligence.
- (d) The familiarity with Scripture by people from all walks of life assured that any alterations in wording would have been detected.
- (e) Students (especially of Hebrew) were conscious of every letter of the texts.
- (f) Unanimity exists of Old Testament readings in the Mishna, Gemara and the Talmud with the Masoretic text.
- (g) *Jesus* accused the Jews of His day of many sins, but not once did He charge them with corrupting their copies – rather, He attested to their purity (Mat.5:17-19).
- (h) The checks and balances that the Jews and Christians afforded each other would prevent corruptions.

Basically, God's method of preservation may be summed up in that there are many common readings which must and should be accepted as correct because they exist in hundreds and even in several thousand copies. This occurrence of common readings is found because God has providentially intervened in the scribal copying of Scripture, unlike the copying of non-Biblical literature.

(3) ANCIENT GREEK MANUSCRIPTS

It is true that several thousand mss have been discovered since 1611. This is the major factor that has been used to justify to the church at large the need for a major revision of the King James. It seems logical that if a vast amount of data not available to the King James translators has been brought to life – these new materials must be considered. This especially seems reasonable as some of these mss were dated between 350-380 A.D. whereas Erasmus' five mss were from the 10th to 15th centuries. Admittedly this rhetoric seems very compelling. However, of the several thousand manuscripts discovered since 1611, the great majority (90-95%) **agree** with the Greek text of those five mss which Erasmus used. Nevertheless, the new translations are rife with footnotes informing the reader that "the oldest, the best manuscripts read such and

such" as opposed to the King James. But is it not devastating to realize that what has been kept from the church at large is the fact that the vast majority (c.90-95%) of these more recent finds read the same as the Traditional Text which underlies the Reformers Bibles and the King James translation?

The Alexandrian manuscript (Codex "A") arrived in London in 1627. Consequently, we often hear how unfortunate that was for the King James translators as it arrived sixteen years too late for their use.¹ Being untrue, this serves as an example of the unreliable manner in which most of the history concerning the Authorized Version is reported. In the first place, Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus Aleph² were well known not only to translators of the King James but to Erasmus. The Old Testament portion of Vaticanus was printed in 1587 so the King James translators in 1604 knew all about Vaticanus insofar as the Old Testament was concerned.

Thus the men working on the 1611 publication of the King James Bible knew the variant readings in Vaticanus B and since they knew about B, they already knew about Sinaiticus and its variant readings even though the first portion of it was not discovered until 1844 (the remainder in 1859) as the two of them read so similarly. In fact, the translators of 1611 had available all the variant readings of those vaunted manuscripts – and they rejected them! They also knew the readings of the codices of Alexandrinus A, B, C and D (the "old uncials"), where they differed from the Received Text and they denounced them all. How can this be so? The readings of those much boasted manuscripts recently made available are **essentially the same as Jerome's Latin Vulgate**³ which finds its foundation in the works of Origen. The Reformers knew all about the variant readings of the Vulgate and they rejected them which is the same thing as rejecting Origen. In rejecting Origen, they rejected Codex Vaticanus as it was copied from his work. Thus, the Reformers had all the material necessary for the task at their disposal.⁴

¹ Benjamin C. Wilkinson, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, (Washington, DC: n.p., 1930), pp. 78-83.

² A 4th century uncial MSS closely akin to Vaticanus (see p. 107).

³ Wilkinson, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-83; completed around A.D. 405, Jerome's Vulgate contains a revision of the Latin New Testament.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 83-85; also Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, pp. 198-199.

As to the oft heard claim that since much of the newly discovered material was older than that used by Erasmus and subsequently the Reformers, they were more reliable, the reader is reminded that the mighty Apostle Paul testified to the corruption of the Word in his day. Hence "oldest" is not necessarily the best. This point will be more thoroughly dealt with later in our exposé (pp. 155 ff.).

Furthermore, Erasmus was in regular correspondence with Professor Paulus Bombasius, the Papal librarian, who sent him any variant readings which he desired.¹ In fact, in 1533, a correspondent of Erasmus (a Catholic priest named Juan Sepulveda) sent Erasmus 365 selected readings from Vaticanus B as proof of its superiority to the *Textus Receptus*.² He offered to make the entire document available to Erasmus for use in his latest edition of the TR. However, Erasmus rejected the readings of the Vatican manuscript because he considered from the massive evidence of his day that the *Textus Receptus* data was correct. Thus Erasmus knew about Vaticanus nearly *one hundred years* before the King James Bible ever saw the light of day!

(4) WINDS OF DOCTRINE

A fourth reason Christendom is drawn to the new translations is that of its having "itching ears". Sadly, man does not want to believe the Bible – he wants a "bible" that he *can* believe – and he will keep searching until he finds one. The Spirit of God has warned:

1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves ... 5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof 7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. 8 so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. ... 13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived (II Tim. 3). ... 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*; ... (II Tim. 4:3).

¹ Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, *An Account of the Printed Text of the Greek New Testament with Remarks on Its Revision upon Critical Principal Together with a Collation of Critical Texts*, (London: Samuel Bagster and Sons, 1854), p. 22.

² Marvin R. Vincent, *A History of the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, (New York: MacMillan, 1899), p. 53; F.H.A. Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, 4th ed., ed. Edward Miller, 2 Vols., (London: George Bell and Sons, 1894), Vol I, p. 109.

Dr. Letis¹ reminds us that Bible publishers are always advertising that the Reformers wished to put the Bible in the "language of the people" ... in a "tongue they could readily understand". However, the Reformers did *not* mean that the Bible should be in "conversational dialect" or in the language of the street; rather they meant that the Bible should be available in the spoken languages of the European nations and not merely in the Liturgical *Latin* of the Roman Catholic Church.

The King James translators make this very clear in their dedicatory to King James, where they intended for "God's holy Truth to be yet more and more known unto the people," whom the Roman Catholic Church desired "still to keep in ignorance and darkness." These men² desired the Bible be accessible in German for the Germans, in French for the French, in Dutch for the Dutch etc. – not just restricted to Latin, as it was no longer "the language of the people." Those with vested interest in promoting "plainer and more relevant" (and more fleeting) translations always present this out of context to justify the latest, easier-to-read (and to forget) translation.

Relevant to the duties, techniques, and responsibilities of the translator, the following excerpts extracted from an article by Dr. F.R. Steele, himself trained by "one of America's outstanding scholars in the field of Assyriology" and an experienced translator of Babylonian and Sumerian documents, are instructive sober truths worthy of reflection:

"A translation should convey as much of the original text in as few words as possible, yet preserve the original atmosphere and emphasis. The translator should strive for the nearest approximation in words, concepts, and cadence. He should scrupulously avoid adding words or ideas not demanded by the text. His job is not to expand or to explain, but to translate and

¹ Letis, *The Majority Text: Essays and Reviews in the Continuing Debate*, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-77.

² McClure, *The Translators Revived*, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-64. Writing in 1858 regarding the capability of the 1611 translators, McClure notes that the work was undertaken at a most auspicious period of history. Not only had the English language ripened to its full glory, the study of Greek, Oriental tongues, and of rabbinical lore had crested to a greater extent in England than ever before or since. By the good Providence of God, the study in these disciplines has never been so highly cultivated among English speaking scholars as it was in that day. These studies had captured the imagination of that generation's young schoolmen much as that of the computer among today's youth. As a result, their level of acumen was such that, despite the proud boasting in this day, all the colleges of Great Britain and America combined could not bring together "the same number of divines equally qualified by learning and piety" for such an undertaking.

preserve the spirit and force of the original – even, if need be, at the expense of modern colloquialisms – so long as the resultant translation is intelligible. ... there is a vast difference between translating a Sanscrit poem and the Bible into English. In the former case we are dealing primarily with ideas, cast in an alien mold, which may best be conveyed in English by a rather free translation. In the latter case we are dealing with a document whose language and vocabulary were specially chosen by the Holy Spirit for the communication of particular truths. No translator – least of all an evangelical Christian who holds to the inspiration of the Scriptures – dare ignore that fact. Not just ideas, but words are important; so also is the emphasis indicated by word order in the sentence.

"... when translating the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek text into English, we are *not* faced with serious problems of cultural extremes. The physical and social background of the ancient Near East is much closer to our general European society and economy than to either a tropical culture of Central Africa or the arctic culture of the Esquimaux (i.e., Eskimo, author). ... By and large, the pastoral of urban society of Bible times can be transferred directly and in its own terms into intelligible English. Moreover, the past four centuries of acquaintance with the Bible have introduced into our common speech many words and ideas originating in the society of Bible lands (such as 'crucifixion,' animal sacrifices, and so on) which though initially strange to the European scene, are now quite familiar. This makes the task of translating the Bible into English simpler than into the language of a people with an opposite or primitive culture. It is therefore easier to achieve a nearly word for word transfer which the nature of the inspired text deserves." (author's italics)

For many of us who have been contrarily "informed" over the years, Dr. Steele's words¹ take on a near "too good to be true" character. They capture our attention and fire the soul. He continues with the following

¹ Francis R. Steele, *Translation or Paraphrase*, (St. Louis, MO: Bible Memory Association International, 1960), pp. 2-4. Among the various positions in which Dr. Steele has functioned are those of Assistant Professor of Assyriology at the University of Pennsylvania from 1947-53 and Assistant Curator of the Babylonian Section of the University Museum. Twice he was annual professor of the Baghdad School of American Schools of Oriental Research and for many years since he has served as the Home Secretary of the North Africa Mission. This article was first carried in the September 26, 1960 issue of the magazine *Christianity Today*.

which depicts one of the outstanding features rendered by the King James translators but lacking in the modern versions:¹

"Anyone familiar with word studies in the original languages can testify to the amazing consistency of employment of particular terms throughout the Bible. ... men violate a basic principle of translation when they choose to substitute for individual words or short phrases long 'homiletic' passages of private interpretation. ... Frequently the full weight of meaning conveyed by repetition of the same Greek root word is lost in translation, since different English words are used where one word consistently used could have preserved the original force intact."

To illustrate this point, Professor Steele gives an example from II Corinthians 2:16 - 3:6 in which over this seven verse span four Greek words are encountered which are all similar forms and are derived from one root of the same word (hikanos, ikano"). The King James Bible rendered the English of these four as "sufficient", "sufficient", "sufficiency", and "sufficient" thereby allowing the reader to pick up on the similarity between their relationship as well as the continuity of thought in the original language. Other translations, however, do not exhibit this constancy. Instead, they choose several different words (usually adding others for which there is absolutely no textual evidence) and thus lose both the force and connection which the repetition would have preserved. The result is often misleading to one who "seeks the words of the Author." Dr. Steele continues:²

"... it is impossible to make a perfect transfer from one language to another ... the translator must make choice of those words in the second language which he thinks best convey the thought of the original. But frequently the translator appears to forget that the original words were chosen purposefully, and ... cast the sentences into new molds which convey the idea in a significantly different spirit or emphasis. He thus unnecessarily robs the text of at least some of its original import. This practice may be justified in some fields of literature, but it is inadmissible when one is dealing with the inspired Word of God.

¹ Steele, *Translation or Paraphrase, op. cit.*, p. 6.

² *Ibid*, p 7.

Dr. Steele adds:¹

"Certainly many words and even passages in ... the Bible will benefit from a more extended treatment. But such treatment belongs in a commentary, not in a translation."

To these last two observations by Dr. Steele, this author adds a resounding "amen". The final citation is given to provide – from one who is eminently qualified to so warn – a grave caution to us all.²

"Moreover, it is doubtful if all the new translations provide the correctives they profess. Not infrequently they simply substitute their own confusion for that which they claim to have dispelled. This is especially true in their claim to the title 'Translation'. **Few recent works have any right whatever to that title.**" (author's emphasis)

How often we hear from the pulpit or from the Sunday School teacher, "I like the way the xxxxxx translation says it". But who cares what man prefers. We do not gather together to hear the personal opinions and whims of men. The only question is – What saith the Lord? What saith the Holy Scriptures?

The new Bible translations appeal, not because they are faithful to the original text, but because they have placed the ability to *communicate* over and above fidelity to the actual Words of God. The obvious reason for this being foisted upon the public is ...

(5) GREED FOR MONEY

The majority of modern Bible publishers (not to be confused with Bible Societies) are neither religious organizations nor missionary societies deserving our unqualified trust.³ Operating in the cold hard world of business, they care not whether their product is a faithful rendering of the true text. Their interest lies along the lines of profit. They are not after the souls of men unto salvation or edification; rather it is their purchasing power which attracts these companies.

¹ Steele, *Translation or Paraphrase, op. cit.*, p. 7-8.

² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³ *Tindale's Triumph, John Rogers' Monument, The New Testament of the Matthew's Bible 1537 A.D.*, John Wesley Sawyer, ed., (Milford, OH: John the Baptist Printing Ministry, 1989), p. iv; from the forward written by Dr. Theodore P. Letis.

Tragically, the same is true concerning most owners of "Christian" book stores who sell not only any translation but paperbacks and commentaries espousing nearly every wind of doctrine. The reason this continues year after year at a more maddening pace takes us back to reason number four – itching ears for winds of doctrine (II Tim.4:3-4; Eph.4:14). The circle is ever widening and vicious.

**For ever, O LORD,
thy word is settled in heaven.**

Psalm 119:89

V. THE GREEK TEXT OF WESTCOTT AND HORT

THE MEN WHO CONTROLLED THE 1881 REVISION

Let us return to the 1881 Revision Committee and examine the lives (and the the text which they produced) of two of its leading members – Westcott and Hort. These two men had been working in secret prior to the revision for over twenty years putting together a theretofore unpublished Greek text of the New Testament which was based almost exclusively upon one manuscript, Vaticanus B. Their New Testament altered the 140,521 word text of the *Textus Receptus* at 5,604 places involving 9,970 Greek words.¹ Representing 7 percent of the total word count, these 9,970 included Greek words that were either added, subtracted, or changed.

When the Committee initiated its revision process in 1870, W-H succeeded in getting it to agree to a secrecy pledge concerning the actual product of the revision. On this committee was Vance Smith, a Unitarian scholar who did not believe in the deity of Jesus Christ and had so stated in writing. At the initial meeting, Westcott and Hort insisted that Smith be included in the inaugural communion service. This speaks loudly as to the true commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ that these two "professors" of the faith actually held forth.

In 1851, Mr. Hort wrote:²

"I had no idea until the last few weeks of the importance of texts having read so little Greek Testament and dragged on with the villainous *Textus Receptus*. Think of that vile *Textus Receptus* leaning entirely on late manuscripts."

Thus at only age twenty-three and having admitted he had almost no preparatory background, Hort concluded that the *Textus Receptus* was "vile" and "villainous". At that time he dedicated his life to its overthrow, intending to supplant it with another text. The text he eventually replaced the TR with was Codex Vaticanus B.

At the time of this decision, young Hort had been schooled in Classical Greek and was unaware that the New Testament had not been written in

¹ D.A. Waite, *Defending the King James Bible*, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-42. Missionary Dr. Jack Moorman personally counted every word in the TR, and Dr. Waite numerated the 5,604 changes made in it by W-H.

² A.F. Hort, *Life and Letters of Fenton John Anthony Hort*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 211.

that form of the Greek language. Since the Greek of the New Testament as recorded in the *Textus Receptus* did not rigidly follow the syntax of the Greek of the classics, Hort deemed it as an inferior quality of Greek.¹ This misconception was responsible for his having rashly termed the TR as "vile" and "villanious". Indeed, the Egyptian papyri which proved that the N.T. had been written in Koine (common) Greek rather than Classical Greek had not yet been discovered.

Vaticanus B had been "discovered" in 1481 on the library shelf of the Vatican. To understand Vaticanus B, we have to go back to approximately 200 A.D. to an early so-called "Father" of the church named Origen. If the student researches encyclopedias and other reference materials, he will find Origen, Westcott, and Hort spoken of as having been great men of God – men of faith. They will state how much the Church is indebted to them, that Origen was the first scientific textual exegete of the Scriptures, etc. However, such is not what one finds upon closer examination of the facts.

ORIGEN - THE FOUNTAINHEAD OF THE PROBLEM

Origen Adamantius compiled an Old Testament called the Hexapla (c.245 A.D.). It was, in effect, a parallel Bible which had six columns. The first column was the Hebrew Old Testament. Three other columns portrayed Greek translations by men who were Ebionites. They believed in the ethical teachings of Jesus but did not believe in Paul's doctrines of grace. Indeed, they called Paul an apostate and wholly rejected all his epistles.² They did not believe Jesus was Deity – that He was God with a capital "G", and taught that Joseph was the father of Jesus. Several of the Ebionites whose translations were included in these columns later apostatized, returning to Judaism.

One of them (Aquila of Sinope, 80-135 A.D.) was excommunicated from the Christian community for steadfastly refusing to give up astrology and for practicing necromancy.³ During the reign of Hadrian (A.D. 117-138),

¹ Jay P. Green, Sr. (ed.), *Unholy Hands on the Bible*, Vol. II, (Lafayette, IN: Sovereign Grace Trust Fund Pub., 1992), p. 454.

² Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2 Vols., Loeb Classical Library, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1980), Vol. 1, Bk III, ch. 27.

³ Foy E. Wallace, *A Review of the New Versions*, (Ft. Worth, TX: Noble Patterson Pub., 1973), Addenda, section 3, p. 21. Wallace reprints Professor R.C. Foster's "The Battle of the Versions" in his Addenda, 3rd & 4th sections, pp. 13-36.

he supervised the building of a pagan temple to Jupiter on the site of the Temple of Solomon and placed a statue of the Emperor where the Holy of Holies had been.¹ Aquila produced a new translation of the Old Testament into Greek wherein he deliberately translated many sections of Scripture concerning the Messiah in such a way as to make it impossible to apply these passages to the Lord Jesus Christ.² He conjectured that the Greek word "parthenos" of Matthew 1:23 was not the virgin Mary but represented a corruption in the original text. According to Aquila, the correct understanding was that Jesus was the bastard son of Mary and a blond Roman soldier of German extraction named "Pantheras" (Eng. = panther).³ Origen considered the works of these Ebionites to be "inspired" and thus included them in his "Bible".

The fifth column (written in classical Greek) supposedly is Origen's revision of an older pre A.D. Greek Old Testament translation. Today, this 5th column is referred to by text critics (though they are loathe to admit this) as the "LXX" or the "Septuagint".⁴

Origen also worked with the New Testament. Whereas he mainly translated the Old, he *edited* the New. Origen traveled extensively and everywhere he found a Greek New Testament, it was altered to fit his doctrine. He, of course, felt that he was merely "correcting" the manuscripts. However, men of God do not change original manuscript readings. If one does not agree with the text of a manuscript, the place for change is at translation; but to alter the original document – never! Origen had a wealthy patron who supplied seven stenographers and seven copyists to accompany and assist him as he systematically altered Scripture.⁵

Origen was the third head master of a school in Alexandria, Egypt, which had been founded in 180 A.D. by the Greek philosopher Pantaenus.

¹ Wallace, *A Review of the New Versions*, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 16 & 18. Irenaeus assailed Aquila as a wicked perverter of Scripture, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. I, Roberts and Donaldson, eds., (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1867; rpt 1978), "Against Heresies", Bk. III, ch. XXI, p. 451.

³ Wallace, *A Review of the New Versions op. cit.*, Addenda, section 3, p. 17.

⁴ Jones, *The Septuagint: A Critical Analysis*, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

⁵ Elgin S. Moyer, *Who Was Who in Church History*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1962), p. 315; also John H. P. Reumann, *The Romance of Bible Scripts and Scholars*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1965), pp. 98-103 for a more detailed account.

Pantaenus was succeeded in 202 A.D. by Clement of Alexandria (not to be confused with Clement of Rome) who taught that Plato's work was also inspired in the same sense as Scripture. Their writings indicate they were lost, albeit "religious", Greek philosophers. Neither professed a new birth apart from water baptism; indeed, it was on the basis of their having been so baptized that they declared themselves "Christian".

However, the New Testament repeatedly declares that this is not how one becomes a Christian as water neither saves nor redeems. Rather, the Bible teaches that in order to be a Savior you must live a sinless life, die on a cross and come back to life on the third day. As Mary, the Roman Catholic church, the Baptist church, Calvin, Wesley, or any present day churchmen etc. did not die on the cross and come back to life on the third day, they cannot be the savior of men's souls. Since water did not die on the cross and come back to life on the third day, it also cannot save the soul.

ORIGEN'S BELIEFS

The following is a composite gleaned from many sources¹ depicting the beliefs of Origen. Let us examine them to see if he was in fact a "great early Father of the Church" as we are often told.

This Greek philosopher had been taught by the founder of Neo-Platonism (Ammonius Saccas 170-243 A.D.). Neo-Platonism is a strange combination of Aristotelian logic and Oriental cult teachings. It conceives the world as being an emanation from "the one" – the impersonal one (not the personal "Abba" [Daddy or even the more intimate "Dada"] of the Bible) with whom the soul is capable of being reunited while in some sort of trance or ecstasy.

As a follower of that philosophy, Origen attempted to amalgamate its views to Christianity. The problem with Origen, as with many who profess Christianity today, was that he tried to take "the best" of the world system (that which he had learned in school - his old philosophic views etc.) and incorporate them into Christianity; but they do not mix. It will be noted that many of Origen's beliefs coincide with Roman

¹ Albert Henry Newman, *A Manual of Church History*, (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1902), Vol. I, pp. 284-287; Herbert Musurillo, *The Fathers of the Primitive Church* (New York: Mentor-Omega Pub., 1966), pp. 31, 38, 195, 198, 202-203; *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Vol. 16, (1936-esp. point 4, later editions omit this fact), pp. 900-902, to name but a few.

Catholic and Jehovah's Witness doctrine, both of which are "Christian" cults. Origen believed:

1. in soul sleep (that the soul "sleeps" in the grave until the resurrection). However, the Bible teaches that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord (II Cor.5:8);
2. in baptismal regeneration (belief that one is saved by water baptism). Although Satan was the originator, Origen is the first man we can find who was a strong proponent of this doctrine;
3. in universal salvation, i.e., the ultimate reconciliation of **all** things including Satan and the demons;
4. that the Father was God with a capital "G" and Jesus was God with a little "g" – that Jesus was only a created being. Thus, Origen was not Christian in the most basic of all doctrine, namely the person of the Lord Jesus the Christ;
5. to become sinless, one had to go to purgatory . This doctrine is nowhere to be found in Scripture;
6. in transubstantiation (that at communion the bread and wine actually turn to the body and blood of Christ); and
7. in transmigration and reincarnation¹ of the soul. (The resurrection of Jesus corrects that error as He came back to life as **the same Jesus**. Hebrews 9:27 says "And it is appointed unto men **once** to die, but after this the judgment." Thus the Bible teaches there is no reincarnation.);
8. or intimated that non baptized infants were hell bound;
9. and would not concede that any intelligent person could believe that the temptations of Jesus as recorded in the Scriptures actually happened;²
10. the Scriptures were not literal (Origen was the "father of allegories");

¹ Transmigration means that one comes back to life as something else, i.e., a frog, or some other animal or even a tree. Reincarnation means that you come back to life as someone else – another human. Someone may reply "Well, reincarnation should be the case so that we can have a second chance." Such is heresy. Never should God give a "second chance." How terrible and wicked it would be of God to give *only* two opportunities to be saved! God has given every man during his lifetime literally hundreds and thousands of opportune moments to have his soul saved from the terrible consequences of sin, by simply receiving Jesus as his substitute – as his Lord and Savior.

² Origen went on to even correct Jesus, for in Matthew 13:38 in the parable of the sower Jesus says that the field is the world (Mat.13:34). Origen said "the field was Jesus." Later, he changed his mind, deciding that the field was the Scriptures.

11. neither in an actual "Adam" nor the fall of man and that Genesis 1-3 was not literal or historical;
12. the correct interpretation of Matthew 19 was that a man of God should be castrated and thereby proceeded to emasculate himself;¹
13. and taught eternal life was not a gift, rather that one must seize hold on and retain it (but Eph.2:8 says "By faith are ye saved through grace; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.");
14. that "Christ enters no man until he grasps mentally the doctrine of the consummation of the ages" (that would eliminate about 99% at most typical Christian gatherings);
15. the redeemed would not experience a *physical* resurrection (however I Corinthians 15 teaches a physical resurrection, as do many other Scriptures). Moreover, around 200 A.D. Alexandrian "Christians" taught that Mary was the second person of the Trinity ("Quarterly Journal of Prophecy" [July, 1852], p. 329).

Origen is often depicted as a "man of God", especially because he "*died for his beliefs*". That is certainly a commendable character trait, but Mussolini, Karl Marx and Hitler also died for their beliefs. That does not mean they were Christians. Many people have believed in a cause enough to give their lives for it, but it does not follow that they were Christian. Origen's beliefs clearly show that he was a religious gnostic Greek philosopher and not truly a born again son of God.

¹ In so doing, Origen mutilated that which supposedly was the temple of the Holy Spirit. Jesus was not so teaching. When Jesus gave an example about plucking out an eye or cutting off a hand rather than to enter hell – He was teaching how dreadful sin was, how terrible hell was and with how radically sin had to be dealt. Jesus knew that no man in his right mind would really pluck out his eye or cut off his hand. Jesus was speaking to that person who would rationalize and say "Oh, I didn't want to do it. I did not want to gaze at her with an adulterous eye but my eye just did so. I didn't want to seize the money but my hand simply took it. I am basically a fine person. The problem is that my hand (or eye, he, she or even the devil) made me do it. Anybody, everybody but it is not my fault!" Jesus was saying in effect – Oh, if that is the case, simply cut off your hand or pluck out your eye.

Jesus desired to jar mankind out of its complacent self-satisfied lifestyle into an honest appraisal of the situation to the intent that they might repent. Again, He knew that they would not really pluck out their eyes nor did He mean for them to do so. He was teaching the horror and reality of hell. In Matthew 12 and 15 and in Jeremiah 17:9, Jesus taught that sin was a matter of the heart. One can pluck out an eye or cut off a hand but still think about and long to sin (compare the Baalite priest's cutting their flesh so as to gain their god's attention in I Ki. 18:28 - self-mutilation is purely pagan).

Before closing this section it must be noted that the frame of reference taken in selecting the correct text from among the variant readings during the 1870-1881 revision was said to be that of a "*neutral*" approach. This meant that the problem was to be approached with the mind set that said readings should not be chosen which "reflect a doctrinal bias" – that Scripture displaying a doctrinal bias should be viewed suspiciously.¹ Thus if the variant being examined read to the effect that Jesus Christ is God come in the flesh, that should be viewed as highly suspicious for it is very doctrinal. The problem with such a priori is that the Bible **is** a book of doctrine (II Tim.3:17).

Most modern scholars who work on Bible revision also like to think of themselves as being "neutral" maintaining that they translated or chose a reading having come to the problem with a "neutral" approach. But do we really believe that God would take a "neutral" point of view toward His Son and upon His finished work of redemption? When we read the letters of Paul and John, do we conclude that they were neutral? The standpoint that Jesus is Jehovah God – the Creator – come in the flesh is not a neutral position. Neither Peter nor Luke took a neutral position! Indeed, there is no such thing as a neutral position concerning the deity of Christ Jesus.

Westcott and Hort championed the so-called "neutral" method and it has been with us ever since. The question that must be faced is – would a man who fits the spiritual description of Origen as outlined on the two previous pages (whose work W&H used) ever produce a **neutral** text? Some of these textual critics are sincere but deceived. However, most are wolves in sheep's clothing. Origen was the first wolf in this cult and the fifth column of his Hexapla along with his edited N.T. are the fruits of that wolf cult. This concludes the first installment in our exposé of this great horror.

ENTER CONSTANTINE (288-337 A.D.)

The second important event in the history of the Text began when Constantine became Emperor. Although he professed to embrace Christianity, it is extremely doubtful that he ever converted. The facts concerning his "conversion" have been distorted in order to help perpetuate the adoration of the cross image in the church.

¹ From J.J. Griesbach: "When there are many variant readings in one place, that reading which more than the others manifestly favors the dogmas of the orthodox is deservedly regarded as suspicious." *Novum Testamentum Graece* (Halle: 1796), p. 62.

Constantine was going into a major battle amid division among his ranks. Many of his troops were Christians and many more were not. He knew he was out-numbered and stood to lose the battle. On the day before the Battle of Milvian Bridge (located under the walls of Rome), Constantine prayed to the sun-god and there appeared a cross – so we are told – over the setting sun with the inscription: "In hoc signo Vinctes" ("in this sign conquer"). Research into the matter indicates that the cross which Constantine is supposed to have seen resembled a capital "T" with a little loop at the top. In Egypt it was known as an ankh. Such was never a Christian symbol. It has always been a religious symbol of the Babylonian cult, a pagan sect which spread all over the world and is known in different cultures under many different names. Everywhere the cultic symbols were the same – the main object of worship was that of an image of a mother holding an infant.

THE "MYSTERIES" AND THEIR BEGINNING¹

The origin of this image may be traced back to Babylon at the time of the Tower of Babel. The Tower was built under the direction of the founder of the world's first kingdom, Nimrod-bar-Cush, the son of Cush ("the black one") and grandson of Ham ("the dark or the sunburned one"). Secular records state that Nimrod (Orion, or Kronos [a corona or crown] "the horned one") married the infamous Semiramis I. She is reputed to have been the foundress of the Babylonian "Mysteries" and the first high priestess of idolatry. Tradition also ascribes the invention of the use of the cross as an instrument of death to this same woman.

Apparently when Nimrod (a black) died, Semiramis became pregnant out of wedlock. The child, like its father, was white. Semiramis acting to save the moment declared that Nimrod's spirit had become one with the sun – incarnated with the sun – and that he had come to her in the night so that she had miraculously conceived a god-son. As the first mortal to be so deified, Nimrod thus became the actual "father of the gods". Semiramis presented the infant to the people and hailed him as the promised "seed of the woman" – the deliverer. Thus was introduced the "mystery" of the mother and the child, a form of idolatry that is older than any other known to man. The rites were secret. Only the initiated were permitted to know its mysteries, and it – along with all of its

¹ Alexander Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Bros. Inc., 1916). Hislop's is the classic text on this subject, and much of the material under this heading has been gleaned from him; especially pp. 91-103 and note p. 93.

"offspring" cults – became known as various "mystery" religions. The whole system of the secret Mysteries of Babylon was intended to glorify a dead man while Semiramis gained glory from her dead husband's "deification". The people did not want to retain God in their knowledge, but preferred some visible object of worship. Wherever the Negro aspect of Nimrod was found to be an obstacle to his worship, a simple solution was found. As the Chaldeans believed in reincarnation and the transmigration of souls, it was taught that Nimrod had reappeared in the person of his fair complected, supernaturally conceived son (Hislop, p. 69) – thus the father and son were one. It was Satan's attempt to delude mankind with a counterfeit imitation that was so much like the truth of God that man would not know the true Seed of the woman when He came in the fullness of time.

Eventually this mystery religion spread from Babylon to all the surrounding nations. Everywhere the symbols were the same. The image of "the queen of heaven" (Semiramis - Jer.44:19, 25; compare Isa.47:5 where she is referred to as "the" or "our lady" - *notre dame* in French) with the babe in her arms was seen everywhere. It became the mystery religion of the seafaring Phoenicians and they carried it to the ends of the earth. It was known as Baal (Nimrod - the sun-god) worship in Phoenicia where the mother was known as Astoreth and the child as Tammuz (Tammuz Adonis). In Egypt the cult was known as that of Osiris, Isis and Horus. The mother and child were worshipped as Aphrodite and Eros in Greece, Venus and Cupid in Italy (in Rome the child was formerly called Jupiter). The Chinese called the mother goddess Shingmoo or the "Holy Mother". She is pictured with child in arms and rays of glory around her head (Hislop, p. 21). Among the Druids, the "Virgo-Paritura" was worshipped as the "Mother of God". In India, she was known as Indrani. Elsewhere in and near India, the mother and child were known as Devaki and Krishna; in Asia they were Cybele and Deoius.

They were known by many other names in other parts of the world, but regardless of her name and place – she was the wife of Baal, the virgin mother (Hebrew = *alma mater*), the queen of heaven who bore a child although she supposedly never conceived. The mother and child were called by different names, due to the dividing of the languages at Babel. With the passing of time, some of the rites and parts of the doctrine and story varied from place to place and cult to cult, but the essential story always remained the same.

Allied with this central mystery were countless lesser mysteries. Among them were: the teachings of purgatorial purification after death, salvation by countless sacraments such as sprinkling with holy water, priestly absolution, the offering of *round* (sun disks) cakes to the queen of heaven (Jer.7:16-18; 44:15-30), the dedication of virgins to the gods, and weeping for Tammuz for a period of 40 days prior to the festival of Ishtar (Easter) to commemorate Ishtar's (another name for Semiramis, also known as Astarte) having received her son back from the dead. Tammuz was said to have been ripped to pieces and slain by a wild boar (the traditional Christmas pig) and afterward brought back to life (Hislop, p. 99). The egg became a sacred symbol depicting the mystery of his "resurrection". The evergreen tree became the symbol of his never ending life and birth at the winter solstice, when a boar's head was eaten (ham on New Year's day) in memory of his conflict. The burning of a yule log always accompanied this winter celebration. In the cult teaching, the ankh – a distinctive cross – was the sacred symbol of Tammuz. As it was the first letter of his name, it signified the life-giving principle (Ezekiel 8 - the women weeping for Tammuz). It is an ancient pagan symbol and did not originate with Christianity as most suppose.

The mystery religion of Babylon, which had begun under Nimrod's direction until its dispersal at the Tower of Babel (Gen. 10 & 11; Isa. 47), continued over the centuries to flourish in the "land of Shinar". When the city of Babylon was destroyed, the high-priest fled with a group of initiates and their sacred vessels and images to Pergamos (Rev.2:12-17). There, the symbol of the serpent was set up as the emblem of the hidden wisdom. From there, many of them crossed the sea and settled in the Poe Valley of northeast Italy where the Etruscans lived. When Rome conquered the Etruscans, the Etruscans brought their Babylonian cult religion to Rome where the child was known as Mithras (the mediator). Thus, when Christianity came to Rome, the whorish cult, the counterfeit, was waiting to join in an unholy union with it. These mystery cult teachings eventually invaded the Catholic church which is still full of its traditions, the roots of which lie deep in paganism. Every Roman emperor belonged to this cult. Everyone of means – the upper class – was an initiate. It was the "country club" to which to belong, much as is Freemasonry in many parts of the world today.¹

¹ The Lodge drew all of its basic teachings from various "denominations" within this mystery religion. The major writers within Freemasonry freely confess this, but almost no one reads these works to so learn.

BACK TO CONSTANTINE¹

So when Constantine told his troops that he had seen the sign of the cross, the Christians thought he was speaking of the "Christian" cross. The pagans perceived it to be the symbol of Tammuz or Nimrod. It united them together for the battle. Actually, there is little reason to consider this vision as authentic, especially since it has no real historical basis. The only authority from whom the story has been gathered by historians is Eusebius, who confessedly was prone to edification and was accused as a "falsifier of history." Another account, supposedly given by Lactantius – the tutor of Constantine's son Crispus – speaks only of a dream in which the emperor was directed to stamp on the shields of his soldiers "the heavenly sign of God" and thus go forth to battle.² That the Lord would command a pagan emperor to make a military banner with the cross emblazoned upon it and to go forth conquering and killing under that sign is altogether inconsistent with the general teaching of the Bible and with the spirit of true Christianity. It is more the spirit of the Crusades, which was not of the Spirit of God.

Further, the Roman Empire of which Constantine was the head had been described in the Scriptures by the prophet Daniel as a "Beast" that was so terrible in the eyes of God that it could not be compared to any earthly beast (Dan.7:1-8). Are we to believe that the Lord Jesus would become the leader of this beast system or that He would give a sun-worshipping emperor a vision, telling him to kill and enter into battle as His representative? We trow not!

Constantine never believed that Jesus was Deity – that He was God with a capital "G". The entire time he professed Christianity he was, as emperor, the high priest or Pontifex Maximus of the mystery cult in Rome.³ Moreover, after his supposed conversion, he committed several murders – including those of his wife and son!⁴ Constantine died the high

¹ Ralph Woodrow, *Babylon Mystery Religion: Ancient and Modern*, (Riverside, CA: Ralph Woodrow Evangelistic Asso., Inc., 1981), pp. 55-59; much of the data under this heading has been derived from Woodrow's excellent study.

² Interestingly, Constantine was not "baptized" until 337 A.D. after he fell sick unto death, some 25 years after his "vision". Some investigators have suspected that he had already expired prior to the baptism. Regardless, the officiating Bishop was Eusebius of Nicomedia, the champion of the Arian party (Moyer, *Who Was Who in Church History*, *op. cit.*, p. 137).

³ Woodrow, *Babylon Mystery Religion: Ancient and Modern*, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

⁴ *Ibid.*

priest of the worshipers of the sun and at the same time claimed to be the "pope" of the church of God on this earth! When Constantine dedicated Constantinople (Istanbul), he used both pagan and Christian rites in the ceremony. His determination to mix together both paganism and Christianity is also witnessed on the coins which he had made.¹ He had a cross placed on them (especially to please the professing Christians) along with representations of Mars or Apollo (Nimrod). At the same time he continued to believe in pagan magic formulas for the protection of crops and the healing of disease.

Why then, if he were not truly a Christian, did he show numerous favors toward the Christian faith? Constantine was a consummate politician. He had seen that years of severe and brutal persecutions had not destroyed the Christian faith. His position was being challenged by a rival Emperor (Maxentius) and as he was in dire need for support from every section of the populace, he thus turned to the Christians in order to unite his divided empire. This was fairly easy to do for by this time the majority of the church leaders were thinking in terms of numbers and popularity, rather than in terms of spirituality and truth. They were ready to compromise with the various "mysteries" in order to achieve those ends. This was especially true at Rome.

By adopting the cross as a symbol on the banners of his army, and having a transverse letter "X" (a Greek Chi) marked on the shields of his soldiers, Constantine hoped to establish unity among his troops. The apostate and/or worldly Christians would think they were fighting for the cross of Christ; the pagans had already been fighting for years under a standard bearing a mithraic cross of light.² The ploy worked and the battle at Milvian Bridge was won on 28 October, 312 A.D.

THE COUNCIL OF NICEA

In the year 325 A.D., the Nicean Council was called to put down and settle the Arian heresy. Arius believed that Jesus was not God come in the flesh – that He was only a created being – and not God with a capital "G". To him, Jesus was more than a man but not quite God.

¹ Woodrow, *Babylon Mystery Religion: Ancient and Modern*, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

² Will Durant, *The Story of Civilization. Caesar and Christ*, Vol. 3, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1944), p. 654. The X was also the symbol of the god Ham in Egypt: Alexander Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

Eusebius, a great historian who wrote a history of the early church, was also an Arian – a unregenerate religious man and a friend of Arius. Under great pressure from the orthodox Bishops at the Council, Constantine and Eusebius "took a more conciliatory view" concerning the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, they would no longer go all the way to Arianism, but they would not completely deny it either. But this simply cannot be done with Jesus. One cannot take a "conciliatory point of view" about the deity of Christ. The fundamental issue in whether one is actually a Christian or not is "Who is Jesus to you?" If a person does not believe unto the committing of his life that Jesus is God the creator (Jehovah) come in the flesh, that He died for the sins of the world and was raised from the dead on the third day to make the final blood atonement for mankind's sins, that person is not a Christian. That is the Biblical definition of a Christian. It is not someone who has been merely water baptized, confirmed, or has his name on the membership roll.

Arius did not relent and was banished. However, two years later Constantine allowed him to return. Constantine and Eusebius, like Arius, did not hold to the doctrine of "Consubstantiation" – that Jesus and God the Father were of one essence. Constantine had become not only the Emperor of the Roman Empire but, in effect, a Pope. As such, it was his duty and privilege to appoint all bishops, archbishops, etc., within the Church. From the human standpoint, the organized church had come completely under the authority of the Roman government. His son, Constantius II, inherited that power when he became Emperor. Like his father, Constantius was Arian (his brother Constans was orthodox) and all the bishops appointed by him were Arian in doctrine. As a consequence, for the next three hundred years every bishop in the Roman Catholic Church was Arian.¹

CONSTANTINE COMMISSIONS EUSEBIUS TO PREPARE 50 BIBLES

In 331, Constantine instructed Eusebius to prepare fifty copies of the Bible so that he could place them in the new churches which he planned to build in Constantinople.² This Eusebius did. The question is, what did Eusebius use for his guide in preparing these 50 Bibles for Constantine?

¹ E.H. Broadbent, *The Pilgrim Church*, (London: Pickering & Inglis, 1931), pp. 21-22.

² Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, iv, 36.

Eusebius considered Origen to have been the greatest of men; he claimed to have collected 800 of Origen's letters and to have used his Hexapla. Thus, Eusebius – assisted by Pamphilus – selected the fifth column of Origen's Hexapla, with alternate readings from the other columns, for the Old Testament,¹ adding the Apocrypha (books not included in the Hebrew canon such as 1st and 2nd Esdras, Tobit, Judith, The rest of the Book of Esther, the Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Bel and the Dragon, 1st and 2nd Maccabees, Baruch, etc.) and completed the work using Origen's edited New Testament. These were prepared for Constantine on fine vellum and backed by the stamp of the Roman government. The vellum (animal skin) was of such high quality that one antelope would be used just to make two sheets of finished product. Only the throne would have had sufficient funds to pay for such an undertaking.

THE INQUISITION

What does this have to do with Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus Aleph? The Roman Catholic Church has tried for years to destroy Protestantism and return all Christendom under Rome's Authority. Millions of people were put to death, not in war, but by various means of torture and murder during the Inquisition. The Roman church, using the Inquisition, made Adolph Hitler look like a mere choir boy. Hitler murdered six million Jews – a most heinous sin and crime – but during the Inquisition from just after 1200 to around 1750 A.D. as many as sixty eight million human beings were cruelly slain, all in the name of God! A sizable number of the slain were themselves Roman Catholics who had been falsely accused for political and selfish motives. It was a blood bath, a horror story!

Most of the major wars fought in Europe beginning in the middle 1500's and extending for several centuries were conducted for the purpose of bringing the Protestants back under the dominion of the Pope. Then, in 1870, when it was decided by a portion of the Church to "update" the Bible of the Reformation which had brought about the breaking away from Romanism (that wicked system that had strangled Tyndale and burned his body, that had murdered sixty-eight million people who would not bow to it, that had slaughtered 70,000 people at one time in the St. Bartholomew's day massacre) the Great Whore said in effect: "You Protestants are going to update your Bible? Here, look what we just

¹ Ira M. Price, *The Ancestry of our English Bible*, 2nd ed., rev., (New York: Harper and Bros., 1949), p. 79.

found on the Vatican shelf. Would you like to use Vaticanus B to assist you toward that end?" Yet the revisors were not even the least suspicious. Is not that amazing? When a similar ploy was tried on Erasmus in 1515, he saw through it. Why should the Vatican suddenly want to help the Reformers? We shall examine why presently.

What then are Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus Aleph? They are two extant (still existing) MSS of the original fifty whose production Eusebius personally oversaw and supervised for Constantine beginning in 331 A.D.¹ B was discovered in 1481 in the Vatican library. Tischendorf, a German text critic, discovered Sinaiticus Aleph in a waste basket at a monastery near the foot of Mount Sinai in 1844.² Aleph and B are derived from Origen's fifth column of the Hexapla and his New Testament. Again, Origen was the "Christian" infidel who deliberately altered Biblical text and, with the aid of fourteen stenographers, changed it to fit his own beliefs.

JEROME AND THE LATIN VULGATE

There is one more piece of the puzzle to be added. Jerome, the hermit of Bethlehem, was commissioned by Pope Damasus to revise the entire Latin Bible. Jerome completed the Gospels around A.D. 384. About 386, he came to Jerusalem under the auspices of the Church at Rome and began to update the Old Latin Bible. What did Jerome use as his standard for this task? Jerome based his Old Testament primarily on the Hebrew text in Origen's Hexapla and admits to using the other columns (his 5th and those of the Ebionites) to "correct" the text. He relied heavily upon Origen's edited New Testament to finish the revision. The entire work was completed c.405. Jerome's Latin Vulgate, although maligned by the Roman church for years, was accepted at the 1546 A.D. Council of Trent as that cult's official "Bible". It is still being used today.

¹ Fuller, *Which Bible?*, *op. cit.*, p. 163. Both Hort and Tischendorf believed that these were two extant copies which Eusebius had prepared. A.T. Robertson, among many others, concurs: *Introduction to Textual Criticism*, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

² Unfortunately, the discovery of Aleph impaired Tischendorf's judgement. Afterward, he altered the considered "mature conclusions" given in his 7th N.T. edition no less than 3,572 instances in his 8th, mainly due to the readings in Aleph – to the total scandal of the "science" of textual criticism. See, Burgon, *The Traditional Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

PUT IT ALL TOGETHER, PLEASE

Now let us review. What is Jerome's Latin Vulgate? It is a version derived from Origen's fifth column and his edited New Testament. What are Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus Aleph? They were taken from Origen's fifth column and his edited New Testament by Eusebius. What was the Greek text used by Westcott and Hort? It was taken directly from Origen as 90% is word for word from Vaticanus B and, of the remaining 10%, about 7% is Sinaiticus Aleph. In other words, Westcott and Hort came to the 1881 Revision Committee, having worked in secret for over twenty years on a Greek text which was derived from two (though mainly from one) of the copies which Eusebius had prepared for Constantine, these manuscripts having been produced from Origen's work! The translation was Origen's sole endeavor, his private interpretation – and we have already examined his beliefs! Westcott and Hort succeeded in getting the committee to accept almost word for word this Greek text, replacing Erasmus' Greek text of the Reformation.

Thus we see that the text of Westcott and Hort, from which Nestle's text is derived and all the modern translations have as their foundation, is *the same* as the Catholic Vulgate – for Jerome, like Eusebius, relied upon Origen's work! The point being made is that equals of equals are equal. Thus, the readings in the new Protestant Bibles are almost the same as the Roman Bible and most of the passages that militate against much of the Roman heresies and errors are either altered or omitted, greatly facilitating the ecumenical efforts to bring about the return to Rome.

The reader should discern therefore that the Latin Vulgate, Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, the Hexapla, Nestle's Greek text (or the Aland-Nestle²⁶ or UBS³), Jerome, Eusebius, Origen, and Westcott-Hort are terms for ideas that are inseparable.

VATICANUS B AND SINAITICUS ALEPH

What is Vaticanus B? It is a Greek manuscript written on vellum containing 759 pages, each being 10 1/2 x 10 1/2 inches. It **adds** to the Bible as it includes the Old Testament Apocrypha. Yet God said "don't add." It contains the Epistle of Barnabas (part of the Apocalyptic books of New Testament times) which teaches that water baptism saves the soul, again adding to the Word of God. However, the Word of God has also been **deleted** as Vaticanus B does not include Genesis 1:1-46:28; Psalms 106-138; Matthew 16:2,3; Romans 16:24 and it lacks Paul's pastoral

epistles (1st and 2nd Timothy, Titus and Philemon). Missing are Revelation as well as Hebrews 9:15 - 13:25 which teaches that the **once** for all sacrifice of Jesus ended the sacraments forever. There is also a blank space left at Mark 16:9-20 (see any standard reference such as *ISBE*).

Erasmus knew about Vaticanus B and its variant readings in 1515 A.D. while preparing the New Testament Greek text. Because they read so differently from the vast majority of mss which he had seen, Erasmus considered such readings spurious. For example, Vaticanus B leaves out "Mystery Babylon the Great", "the seven heads that are the seven mountains upon which the harlot (the apostate religious system that began at Babel of which the Roman church is a part) sits", and leaves out "the woman which is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth" which has seven mountains. All of this is found in Revelation 17.

Sinaiticus Aleph, discovered in 1844, has 147 1/2 pages, each page being 13 1/2 x 15 inches. It is always stated that Aleph is a "complete" Greek New Testament, but it is not. It **adds**, for example, the Shepherd of Hermas and Barnabas to the N.T. It **omits** John 5:4; 8:1-11; Mat. 16:2,3; Rom. 16:24; Mark 16:9-20; I John 5:7; Acts 8:37 and about a dozen other verses.

The most significant fact regarding these MSS is that in both Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus Aleph, John 1:18 reads that Jesus was the only begotten "God" instead of the only begotten "Son". Now, that is the original Arian heresy! The most widely used Greek text in Bible colleges and seminaries today is Eberhard Nestle's Greek text. Nestle likewise reads ... only begotten "God", which means that God had a little God named Jesus who is thus a lesser God than the Father. This means that at first there was big God and He **created** a little "god".

Thus, Jesus comes out to be a created being, a God with a little "g", but at the incarnation **a god was not begotten**. God begat **a son** who, insofar as His deity is concerned, is *eternal* (Micah 5:2). This reading renders these MSS as **untrustworthy** and **depraved!** The Arian heresy resulted from Origen's editing the Greek manuscripts encountered in his travels and appears in Vaticanus and Sinaiticus Aleph which were derived from copying his work.

Modern scholarship purports that these two codices were copied around 350-380 A.D. The reader can see how well that fits in with the fact that

Constantine told Eusebius to prepare the copies for him in 331. The material that Jerome used (Origen's Hexapla and, in places, his edited New Testament) was almost word for word like Sinaiticus Aleph and Vaticanus B, especially the former.

Helvidius,¹ a great orthodox scholar of the fourth century and a contemporary of Jerome's, accused Jerome of using *corrupted* Greek manuscripts. Remember, Jerome was using Origen's work and from that he produced the Latin Vulgate. Likewise, Aleph and "B" have their roots in Origen. Thus Helvidius condemns them all, for even in his day that "fountain" was known to be corrupt.

Moreover, whoever copied out Vaticanus obviously did not believe he had the Word of God in his hands for there are misspellings, faulty grammar, numerous omissions, whole lines recopied, and lines and clauses omitted. According to nearly all scholars, Sinaiticus and Vaticanus are "close brothers". They differ many times but they are of the same "textual type", using as they did Origen's fifth column and his New Testament.

ALEXANDRINUS "A"

A third manuscript often referred to in textual criticism literature is "Alexandrinus A". Dated as a 5th century witness, though it may be still earlier, "A" often follows the Traditional Text in the gospels. It reads like "B" and Aleph in Acts and the epistles.² This MSS also contains the two "Epistles of Clement" in which Clement of Alexandria teaches that:

1. Men are saved by works (II Clem.2:12, 15);
2. Christians are in danger of going to hell (II Clem.3:8);
3. Christians don't get new bodies at the resurrection (IV Clem.4:2);
4. He was a prophet who wrote Scripture (II Clem.4:11); and
5. The male and female in I Corinthians 11:9 (speaking of Christ's being the head, then the husband, followed by the wife in the order or chain of authority) were anger and concupiscence (II Clem.5:4). Not believing the Bible literally, Clement both fantasized and spiritualized the Scriptures.

¹ *Post-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. VI, Philip Schaff and Henry Wace eds., (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1892; rep. 1983), p. 338.

² Still, "A" is by far the purest text of the "5 Old Uncials"; Burgon, *The Traditional Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

THE SCHOLARS VERSUS JESUS - THE BATTLE CONTINUES

Mark 12:37 relates that the "common people" heard Jesus gladly. With the exception of a few like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, it was the scholars and religious leaders of His own day who rejected and resisted Him most vehemently. Nothing has changed for the great majority of modern scholarship rejects both God's promise that His Word would be preserved as well as the deity of Jesus Christ. It is still the common people who keep holding on to the true God-given, God-preserved Text upon which the King James was based.

The new translations profess to be **revisions** of the 1611 King James. They are not for *they are not even from the same Greek text*. A radically different Greek New Testament was produced and has been used as the foundation for the new translations. We have had a new "bible" foisted upon us which is not a Bible at all for God authored only **ONE** Bible.

Equally distressing is that the numerous modern translations are being sponsored and/or produced by publishing companies and by individuals who answer to no ecclesiastical arm of the Church. There is no one to whom they are accountable. Thus faithfulness to accurate translation is of little consequence to most of them. The criteria has become readability rather than correctness, and after a Madison Avenue sales promotion advertising the product as "easy to understand" or "reads just like today's newspaper", the final criteria and motive become that of profit.

The Westcott-Hort Greek text contains about 5,788 departures from the Greek text of the *Textus Receptus*.¹ There are about 40 major omissions. These omissions deal with the virgin birth, the bodily resurrection, the deity of Jesus, and Jesus' authority. The readings of the 1611 King James translation are supported by third and fourth century Western and Byzantine manuscripts which are of the **same age** as Vaticanus B and Aleph. The *Textus Receptus* exalts Jesus in about ten passages in which the others tend to disparage and detract from Him. Out of the nearly 8,000 verses in the New Testament, 152 contain doctrinal corruptions in the W-H text.

¹ Kenyon, *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, *op. cit.*, pp. 312-313.

THE NESTLE GREEK TEXT

Based upon the Westcott and Hort N.T., the text of Eberhard Nestle (or the Aland-Nestle²⁶ or the third edition of the United Bible Society [UBS³], both of which are founded on the Nestle text and are almost identical to it), is being used today as the Greek New Testament in most of the seminaries. It contains about four changes per verse when compared to the *Textus Receptus*. Incredibly, we are told this does not affect a single Christian doctrine. But it does – it creates doubt in the minds of even the most devout that they really have an infallible Bible in their hands. It devastates the Christian's faith that the Bible is really the Word of God.

Eberhard Nestle's Greek text has 36,191 changes in the New Testament from the *Textus Receptus*. The resulting text would hardly read as the same book! Yet, it has to do so up to a point. The new translations read differently in some places but not everywhere. What if someone found an ancient Greek text out in the woods or in a cave? Would it be accepted as a genuine New Testament manuscript? What would be the hallmark, the criterion, the standard against which it would be measured? Believe it or not, after all we have said concerning the textual critics' negative views of the TR – it is nevertheless the standard by which all other manuscripts are measured. The new-found ms would have to agree 90% with the *Textus Receptus* to be considered legitimate.

However, all Satan has ever needed is 10%. If we selectively alter God's Word 10%, we can remove a significant amount of the verses dealing with blood atonement and with Jesus' deity thus casting doubt in the minds of young men and women as to whether they have available to them the Word of God. Or, as the devil said, "Yea, did God really say that? Is that really God's Word? You can't believe that!" The Whore of Rome teaches those very words and now she is continuing to seduce the Protestant church to use the same Greek text upon which the Roman Catholic Latin Vulgate of Jerome is based (as well as the more modern Roman version, the Rheims-Douay).

The Catholic church has almost succeeded in doing away with the Word of God as translated by Tyndale, which God has providentially watched over all of these years. We are always seeing footnotes (such as the Great Commission as given in Mark 16 and many other passages) that inform us that "the oldest, best, most reliable, most trustworthy, manuscripts read differently." What this means in simple language is, according to the scholars, an "untrustworthy manuscript" is one written on poor

quality paper, and done in the handwriting of a non-professional scribe. A "trustworthy" one is written on high quality paper or vellum, and obviously prepared by highly educated professional scribes or scholars in neat capital letters – despite the fact that there may be many misspellings and omissions. However, they are referring to less than ten manuscripts and almost always only two – Vaticanus and Sinaiticus Aleph.

This is no more logical than if an alien came from another planet¹ in outer space and perhaps found a Bible with notes written on the edges and words highlighted or underlined. If he reasoned as our modern scholars, it would be judged as corrupt and untrustworthy. By the same logic, a Bible on a shelf which had never been used except for occasional reference would be declared good and trustworthy because it was clean and neat.

An example, as noted above, is Mark 16:9-20 where many Bibles contain a very dishonest footnote which states that the oldest and most reliable Greek MSS do not contain these verses. As noted on page 31, we have over 3,000 New Testament Greek manuscripts, none of which is complete – neither does any contain all four of the gospels in their entirety. Over 1,800 contain Mark 16:9-20 and *only three do not*.² So you see, the footnote is both very dishonest and misleading. As mentioned previously, Vaticanus even has a space left exactly the size of those verses. More than ninety-nine percent of the Greek manuscripts have those verses; they are THE WORD OF GOD.

¹ This of course is not a possibility for there is no one out there. We have not even found another planet in all the vast regions of space other than the 9 in our own solar system although scientists constantly allude to such entities to the end that the laymen are deceived about such matters. We already know that no higher forms of life (if indeed any forms at all) exist on these planets other than the earth itself. Further, Psalms 115:16 teaches us that the abode of mankind is the earth. Thus all men in existence will be found upon the earth. Lastly, there can be no superior alien life forms in space as man was created a "little lower than Angels" and in "the image of God". What could possibly be superior to that?

² Again, this was gleaned from Dr. Wilbur N. Pickering's taped interview before the Majority Text Society in Dallas, Texas (Summer 1995). In Burgon's day (1871 A.D.), 620 of the then extant mss contained Mark 16; **only** Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus Aleph did not have verses 9-20, Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel According to S. Mark*, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

THE CANON

The Old Testament was canonized prior to Jesus' incarnation; tradition says that Ezra probably was the leader of this compilation. Regardless, we know there was something that was recognized by the populace as "Scripture" to which Jesus referred, and He said that it could "not be broken". The people of Jesus' day knew what He meant when He referred to the "Scriptures".

Rabbinical writings tell us that the O.T. canon was confirmed by a council meeting of Rabbis and Pharisees in Jamnia c.100 A.D. However, that meeting did not determine the canon as some churches and seminaries teach for it was a synod of Christ rejecting Jews meeting after the Temple had been destroyed. No canon ever was established by unsaved men but by God through men who believed in Him! The Old Testament was canonized *before* Jesus came. Jesus said "**the**" Scriptures so the canon had been settled previously. When Jesus spoke the word "Scripture", no one in the audience raised his hand and asked Him to clarify – everyone knew of which He spoke.

The Old Testament was accurately recorded.¹ Every individual letter was numbered by the Jewish scribes who were of the Tribe of Levi and made overseers of the Scriptures by God. When it became necessary to recopy the parchments or scrolls, the scribes had to use a particular kind of ink on a special type parchment, write in so many columns of a specific size and so many lines. Within thirty days, it had to be examined and compared to the original. If four errors were found on one parchment, the examination went no further and the whole was rejected. Each time they wrote God's name (the tetragrammation "YHWH" from which we later coined the word "Jehovah") they cleaned their pens and washed their bodies if perspiring. When the scrolls were worn out, they were officially and solemnly buried or burned so they would not be profaned, torn into fragments, or altered.

The Old Testament precisely as we have it was **endorsed by Jesus** when He appeared in the flesh on the earth fifteen hundred years after Moses. Jesus accused the Jewish leaders of His day of many sins but, among all the evils He charged, not once did He intimate they had in any degree

¹ Josh McDowell, *Evidence That Demands A Verdict*, Vol. I, (San Bernadino, CA: Here's Life Publishers, Inc., 1990), pp. 53-55; also Pache, *Inspiration and Authority of Scripture*, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

corrupted the canon, either by addition, subtraction or alteration. If books had been omitted from the canon Jesus certainly would have said so and He would have added them to the Old Testament. Furthermore, had there been books in the canon which should not have been included, the Lord Jesus would have marked and/or deleted them. To the contrary, every statement He made with regard to Scripture confirmed the canon as it had come down to His day. The Lord did charge that they had developed a system of oral traditions which had come to take precedence over the Word of God, but He said the Scriptures themselves could not be broken (that is, they would come to pass - they would be preserved). It is an amazing phenomenon that our modern critics, in their arrogance, deny to Christ the very insight which they claim to possess.

THE APOCRYPHA

These books are mainly the product of the last three centuries B.C., a time during which written prophecy had ceased. They were accepted as part of the sacred literature by the Alexandrian Jews and, with the exception of the Second Book of Esdras, are found interspersed among the Hebrew Scriptures in the ancient copies of the Septuagint or LXX.¹ The godly Jews under Ezra rejected the Apocrypha as having been inspired by the LORD when they formed the Old Testament canon. Josephus (c.100 A.D.) confirms that these books were not considered as "divine" in his

¹ Jones, *The Septuagint: A Critical Analysis, op. cit.*, pp. 10-54. The reader should, in all fairness, be apprised of the fact that very nearly all references in the literature which allude to the Septuagint in fact pertain to Origen's 5th column. That is, the **real** LXX from all citation evidence as to N.T. references – indeed, for all practical purposes – the Septuagint that we actually "see" and "use" is found to actually be only two manuscripts, Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus a. This is especially true of Vaticanus. Although this fact is difficult to ferret out from among the vast amount of literature on the subject, it may be verified by numerous sources. Among them, the reader is directed to page 1259 in *The New Bible Dictionary op. cit.*, (Texts-Versions) where D.W. Gooding admits this when he relates that the LXX of Jer.38:40 (Jer.31:40 in the MT) as shown in figure 214 has been taken from the Codex Sinaiticus. Thomas Hartwell Horne is even more direct in *An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*, 9th ed., Vol. II, (London, Eng.: Spottiswoode and Shaw, 1846), fn. 1. p. 282 and fn. 3 p. 288. It has been established that both were produced from Origen's 5th column. Thus, the Septuagint which we actually utilize in practical outworking, the LXX which is cited almost ninety percent of the time, is actually the LXX that was *written* more than 250 years *after* the completion of the New Testament canon – and by a "Catholicized Jehovah's Witness" at that! Moreover, it must be seen that the testimony of these two corrupted manuscripts is almost solely responsible for the errors being foisted upon the Holy Scriptures in **both** Testaments by modern critics!

day. He informs us that the canon was closed c.425 B.C.¹ The Apocrypha gradually rose in esteem in the apostate Roman (Western) Church until the Council of Trent (1546 A.D.) affirmed the canonicity of the greater part. In making this decision the Catholic Church sided with the Jews of Alexandria Egypt in considering the Apocrypha sacred. Remember that it was in Alexandria that Mary was revered as the second person of the Trinity by the so called "Christians". Although Jerome rejected it, the Apocrypha has now been incorporated into his Vulgate by the Roman Catholic Church.

The New Testament contains 263 direct quotes from the Old Testament and 370 allusions to the Old Testament. Though some have claimed for the Apocrypha several vague "allusions" in the New Testament, these are nebulous mirages. Not one time did anyone in the New Testament refer to or quote the Old Testament Apocrypha. Jesus never referred to the Apocrypha. Had these books belonged in the Old Testament, why did the Lord not say so? The Old Testament had been canonized long before Jesus was born.

Yet Origen's fifth column includes the Old Testament Apocrypha. Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus include the Apocrypha as part of the text of the Old Testament.² We are being told that Vaticanus is the most accurate Greek text which we have but it includes the Apocrypha and Apocryphal books – none of which were canonized. Yet we are expected to accept Vaticanus B's testimony as authoritative over hundreds of other Greek manuscripts.

Remember, Vaticanus B leaves out of the Book of Revelation "Mystery Babylon the Great", "the seven heads are seven mountains upon which the woman (harlot) sits", and "the woman is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth". What organized religious group would like to have such telling passages left out? It is not surprising that the book which so definitively and powerfully speaks of Christ Jesus' Second Coming and Satan's defeat should itself be the chief object of Satan's attack.

¹ Josephus, *Against Apion* (*Contra Apionem*), I, 8).

² Along with spurious Apocryphal books such as "Epistle to Barnabas" and "Shepherd of Hermas" in the New Testament.

The "official" church was slow in accepting the Revelation as canonical, especially the Greek speaking eastern portion.¹ The rebukes to the seven churches in Asia Minor cut too close to the bone in the "organized" early church. The rebukes of Laodicea (Rev.3) may well have been the reason why the Council of Laodicea (4th century) chose to omit Revelation from its list of books to be read publicly. There was also a strong bias against the book's millennial doctrine, which is the case even today.² As a result, the Revelation is not found in nearly as many manuscripts as is the rest of the New Testament. Only about one in fifty contains it.³

Thus in Revelation, and to a lesser extent in the rest of the New Testament, we must occasionally turn to the Latin West for confirmation on a disputed reading.⁴ The Latin Christians who opposed Rome were more deeply committed in their faith than those who were in the Greek East. They were an important channel through which God preserved the text of His Word. Though the primary source was the Greek speaking East, the foregoing enables us to see why there would be a sprinkling of Latin readings in the Authorized Version. Many of the great doctrinal words in the English Bible are based on a Latin derivative, not upon the Greek. The result is that we encounter some occasional refinement and verification from the Latin and Syriac regions.⁵

Vaticanus B reveals itself as a corrupted manuscript for it **adds** the Apocrypha to the text of the Bible while **subtracting** from the Word of God at the previously mentioned omissions as well as many others.

As regarding the Apocrypha, how does one know that Tobit, for example, is not a God inspired book? In the story, "Tobit" was accidentally blinded by sparrow dung (2:10); he goes about with "Raphael", an angel traveling incognito, who lies about his name, lineage, and identity (3:16-17, 5:4-5,

¹ Moorman, *When The KJV Departs From The "Majority" Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, pp. 193-213. Dr. Hills argues with convincing force and plausibility that these readings, which include the last six verses of the 22nd chapter of Revelation, may well represent a slight smattering of original readings that fell out of the text of the Eastern Church over the years but had been retained in the Western version and were subsequently and providentially restored by Erasmus.

12, cp. 6:6). Azarias (Raphael's assumed name) teaches that: the smoke derived from burning the heart and liver of a fish will repulse and/or exorcise demonic spirits (6:6-7, 16-17); a fish's gall will heal blindness (6:8); and that alms (good works) "purge away all sins" (12:9).

The Word of God, however, teaches that Jesus accomplished that by His once for all finished work in His atoning death and resurrection for the sins and sin of all of Adam's offspring. It affirms that man is saved by God's grace (unmerited favor) through faith in Christ Jesus as a free gift (Eph.2:8), and not by works of righteousness which we have done (Titus 3:5)! Furthermore, in the Holy Scriptures exorcism is attained and secured simply by the power and authority found in the Name of Jesus. Yet according to Origen, Tobit is "inspired" in the same sense as were the four gospels.

The spurious nature of the Apocryphal book "The Shepherd of Hermas" is readily seen when compared to the Holy Scripture. For example in the third book of Hermas (Similitude IX, verse 121-124) we are told by an Angel (the Shepherd) that no man can enter the kingdom of God unless he is clothed by the garments of the four virgin women mentioned in this similitude. Furthermore, these four women are called "the holy spirits" and their garments are their names. We are informed that it will avail a man nothing to only take up the name of the Son of God unless he also receives the garment of the four virgins as even the Son of God bears their names. Thus the story adds to and contradicts the Gospel of Jesus. Now the most subtle form of heresy offered to man has always been that of "Jesus and ... ". When dealing with the subject of Salvation, anything that is added to Jesus and Him alone is not merely error – it is heresy. The power of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus is found in its simplicity. When man embellishes the Gospel by adding religious "strings" he always diminishes its force.

The only books of value among any of these books are those of First and Second Maccabees. Although they do not belong to the O.T. canon, unlike the mythological, spurious Bible contradicting material found in the other extra-biblical books, the data found in Maccabees does seem to be a fairly reliable historical account of the Selucid oppression of the Jews and the revolt lead by the Maccabean priesthood against that tyranny and persecution (171-37 B.C.).

Over the years much has been said concerning the fact that the first edition of the King James Bible contained the Apocrypha. It is true that

the publisher of the 1611 edition did insert the Apocrypha **between** the Testaments, but it was never included within the Old Testament text as was so done in the Hexapla, in Vaticanus and Sinaiticus. The Apocrypha section from the Cambridge Group of the 1611 translators rendered the entire work into English but for historical purposes only – not as inspired Scripture.¹ The Apocrypha was removed even from the space between the Testaments in the second edition; meanwhile, it in no way affected the accuracy of the texts of the Old or New Testaments.²

¹ D.A. Waite, *Defending the King James Bible*, *op. cit.*, p. 85. Dr. Waite "cut his teeth" on the Westcott-Hort Greek text at Dallas Theological Seminary (earning high A's) before the Nestle-Aland or United Bible Society Greek saw the light of day in its classrooms. He also sat at the feet of Bible Greek scholars while majoring in classical Greek and Latin at the University of Michigan. Twenty-one years later, he became persuaded through his own private study that the *Textus Receptus* was the true N.T. text. Dr. Waite has acquired 66 semester hours in combined Classical and Koine Greek from the University of Michigan & Dallas Theological Seminary as well as 25 semester hours in Hebrew (he garnered all A's in both languages while at Dallas). This does not include his 8 semester hours of Latin, 8 semester hours of French, or 11 semester hours of Spanish. Thus, Dr. Waite has amassed a total of 118 semester hours (1,888 regular class hours) in foreign languages! Whatever differences the modern critics of the King James Bible and its underlying Hebrew and Greek texts may have with Dr. Waite, they cannot justifiably criticize his preparation and training in these essential disciplines.

² Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

**The words of the LORD are pure words:
as silver tried in a furnace of earth,
purified seven times.
Thou shalt keep them, O LORD,
thou shalt preserve them
from this generation for ever.**

Psalms 12:6

VI. HOW HORT CONTROLLED AND SEDUCED THE 1881 COMMITTEE

HORT "INVENTS" A HISTORY OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT

Remember that Westcott and Hort joined this revision committee having worked secretly for over twenty years preparing their own private New Testament. Recall that they violated the charge which the church laid upon them regarding the kind of changes that were to be made in the revision. The church said to make only "minor" alterations, such as, capital letters, punctuation, and the removal of archaic words. But Westcott and Hort seduced the committee into a covenant of secrecy, meeting and working in this clandestine fashion for eleven years. Now contrast that with the openness of the King James Committee. The entire nation of England knew what was forthcoming having been kept informed by the translators as the work progressed. There were no surprises in 1611. But in 1881, suddenly there appeared a radically different Greek text.

Dr. F.H.A. Scrivener – a very learned man of God and the most capable, eminent textual critic of his day with regard to the N.T. manuscripts as well as the history of the Text – served on the committee and tried to stem the tide, but he was systematically out voted.¹ Hort was such a tremendous advocate that he convinced the majority of the members to accept his and Westcott's translation almost to the exclusion of any other opinion. Few of the other translators were familiar with the techniques and nuances of textual criticism. Point by point they fell under Hort's persuasive spell, a talent of near legendary proportion which Hort is reported by many to have possessed.² It was said that he would have made an unbeatable lawyer.

Time and again, Hort's side would out vote Scrivener. When Scrivener realized what was happening, he should have broken the foolish vow of secrecy and exposed the entire affair to the world. Thus he failed the Lord and the Church in this whole matter. Bishop Wilberforce, originally

¹ D.O. Fuller, *Which Bible?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 290-295. Also see p. 120 where Dr. Fuller quotes from Sir Robert Anderson's *The Bible and Modern Criticism*, 5th ed., (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1905), pp. 104-105.

² *Ibid.*, p. 291.

appointed to chair the committee, saw what was happening at the very onset. Unable to bear the situation, he systematically absented himself after the first meeting and refused to take part in the proceedings.¹ Yet, inconceivably, he also remained silent as to what he had seen and heard during the remaining three years of his life.

Nearly every Bible written in English since 1881 has used as its basic New Testament text the Westcott-Hort edition (Origen's privately "edited" N.T.). This text has passed down to us via Eusebius through the copies which he prepared for Constantine. The two remaining products of this "recension" are known today as codices Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus Aleph.

Hort's problem was how to overthrow the *Textus Receptus* and supplant it with Codex Vaticanus B, thereby elevating that manuscript above the sum total of all other extant manuscripts – even though 90-95% agreed in text with the *Textus Receptus* and yet were different from B. To achieve this goal he had to produce a convincing history of the text in order to explain why essentially only one type of text had survived and been preserved in all the later manuscripts from the fourth and fifth centuries on. Then he had to show and explain how this "historical account" justified the rejection of the dominant text, the *Textus Receptus*.

GENEALOGICAL METHOD

Hort's first step in solving the problem was to take the position that the New Testament could be treated as any other book. In other words, that it was not of a supernatural origin. This allowed the use of the genealogical (family tree) method, developed by the students of the classics, to be applied to the Greek manuscripts.² Such a technique is only applicable if there has been no deliberate altering of the text. However, as already cited, Second Corinthians 2:17 tells us that the text was being altered even as far back as the time of Paul. One of the great enemies of God, Marcion the gnostic (fl. c.140 A.D.) deliberately altered, shortened and removed from the mss to which he had access any Scripture which taught the deity of Christ.

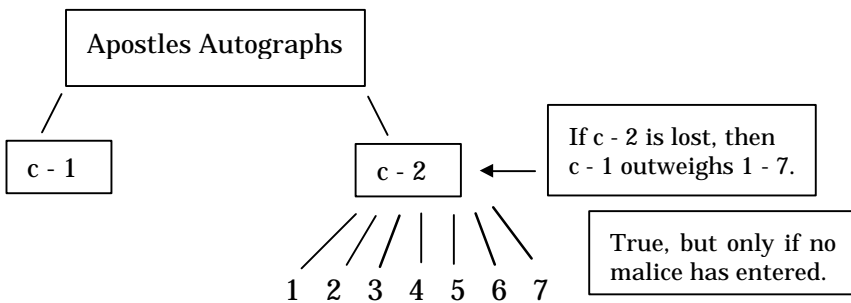
¹ Fuller, *Which Bible?*, *op. cit.*, p. 291.

² Wilbur N. Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1977), p. 32.

How did Hort deal with the problem of potential text tampering? He won the day by simply authoritatively proclaiming that the text showed "no signs of deliberate falsification ... for dogmatic (theological) purposes".¹ Amazingly, this brash misstatement of fact went almost unchallenged.

Let us examine how the genealogical method worked.² Westcott and Hort applied this technique in order to get to the place where the witness of one manuscript could outweigh that of many. Beginning with the apostles' autographs, i.e., the original copies of the New Testament written by the apostles, let us suppose that two copies were produced from these originals and identified as "Copy 1" and "Copy 2". If seven copies were made from Copy 2, they would represent the third generation (the apostles' autographs being the first generation, Copies 1 and 2, the second).

GENEALOGY:



Now if Copy 2 were lost, Copy 1 would "outweigh" the combined testimony of the seven copies which are of the third generation because copy 1 was of the second generation, hence nearer to the original reading. That would be true if malice had not entered into the history of MS transmission, but once malice has entered, we cannot know if someone has deliberately falsified Copy 1. Thus, one may no longer assert that Copy 1 outweighs the seven copies of the third generation. This method was used to justify the rejection of the majority text. **It was W-H's most invaluable tool.** Its application enabled them to overthrow the testimony of nearly 95% of the manuscripts.

¹ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction, op. cit.*, p. 282.

² E. C. Colwell, "Genealogical Method: Its Achievements and its Limitations", *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXVI, (1947): p. 111.

Hort used this tool to reduce the manuscripts into four families (voices or witnesses). These four families or voices Hort assigned the designations "Neutral" (consisting primarily of Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus a), "Alexandrian", "Western" (or Roman) and "Syrian".¹ He borrowed the idea from Griesbach (1745-1812) who had previously worked along similar lines. Johann Jakob Griesbach was a disciple of J.S. Semler (1725-1791).² Both Semler and Griesbach differed from Hort, concluding that there were only three families.

As W/H read through the manuscripts, they would determine (often quite subjectively) that a given ms read like the ones at Alexandria, Rome, or those at Antioch (which are referred to as Syrian or Byzantine) whereas others they deemed purely neutral (because they supposedly did not embellish or "detract" concerning Jesus, i.e., Vaticanus or Sinaiticus). Reducing the manuscripts into four families enabled them to lump large masses of the extant manuscripts into only one voice or one witness. Next, Hort set about to prove that the Syrian family was an inferior witness, even inconsequential. How did he accomplish that goal – how did he "prove" that all the Syrian manuscripts were unimportant?

CONFLATION³

Hort did so by his second contrivance – his conflation theory. Once a manuscript had been assigned to a family (or text type) on the basis of characteristic variants (readings) which were shared in common, any manuscript which exhibited readings of another family was declared to be "a mixture". "Conflation" was supposed to be a special mixture – not merely the result of simple substitutions of the reading of one document

¹ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 33. The "Syrian" is also referred to as "Byzantine" and is a identical "twin brother" to the *Textus Receptus*. It is also referred to as the "Traditional" or "majority" text.

² The liberal "Father of German rationalism" who originated the idea of "family classification". Johann Salomo Semler taught that the formation of the Biblical canon and text was entirely a human process, an accident of history totally apart from the guiding hand of God. He also was the author of the "accommodation theory" which set forth the principle that it is morally permissible to lie about one's beliefs when speaking publicly because the audience doesn't have the background to "understand" the full truth. Thus it was taught that the minister could assert from the pulpit that the Scriptures were verbally inspired, inerrant, etc., in order to "accommodate" his congregation who was unlearned in matters of text criticism so as not to upset or unsettle them thereby creating a "misunderstanding" and/or an imbroglio. Such is the meat upon which liberal text critics and liberal pastors chew.

³ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-35.

for another – but **combinations** of both readings in order to form a composite whole.¹ Thus the conflate readings would always be *longer*. Logic demanded that a text with a conflate reading had to be younger than the text which contained the various components of the conflate reading. In other words, you had to have had older pre-existing texts from which to make the combination reading – and if they were older, they were judged to be more faithful to the original writing.

Hort then offered eight examples of conflation where, by his interpretation, the Syrian text had combined the Neutral and Western readings. Modern textual critics reject Hort's "Neutral" family; hence they only recognize three voices, saying that the Neutral and Alexandrian are the same. Thus to the Modern, the Syrian text is not pure but a combination of the Alexandrian and Western readings. The entire conflate theory is substantiated by only eight readings taken from just two books of the twenty-seven in the New Testament! This conflate theory has been proven false about fifteen times in the past. The problem is that all the books proving it false are no longer in print, it having been believed that the fallacious theory had once and for all been laid to rest.

The eight passages offered as conflations are Mark 6:33, 8:26, 9:38, 9:49 and Luke 9:10, 11:54, 12:18 and 24:53. These pitiful few were all that they could offer to prove their theory, yet there are 7,957 verses in the New Testament! In other words, they could only detect eight verses out of almost 8,000 as proof to support their theory! Actually the entire concept of putting the manuscripts into different families is artificial and synthetic.

It was essential in demonstrating the Syrian text to be a younger conflation that *no inversions* be found – that is, where either the Neutral or Western text contained a conflation of the other plus a Syrian reading. If inversions existed, one would be unable to tell which reading was the original. How did they so demonstrate? It was done by merely stating dogmatically that no inversions existed.² These men had prepared for so long and delivered their conclusions and conjectures with such vigor and authority, that their views were accepted by most without reservation or challenge. Yet little actual documentation was presented to support the theory.

¹ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

² *Ibid.*, p. 106.

THE "FATHERS" LETTERS - EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL EVIDENCE¹

As further "proof" that the *Textus Receptus* was inferior, Hort contended that the readings characteristic of the Syrian text did not occur in the early church fathers' writings prior to A.D. 350. W-H claimed that Chrysostom (died c.407 A.D.) was the first "father" who habitually used the Syrian. This was **the keystone** in their theory – the crucial **external evidence**. It was decisive for it apparently confirmed and supported the "no inversion" pillar.

Next Westcott and Hort devised two criteria of **internal evidence** as additional supports for their theory. They called one such prop "intrinsic probability" and the other "transcriptual probability".²

Intrinsic probability was author oriented. In other words, which readings make the best sense, fit the context best? What reading was that which the New Testament writer most probably would have written? The extremely subjective nature of such a technique is obvious even to the non-textual critic for this attributes ability to the critic's intellect beyond that which is credible!

Transcriptual probability was scribe or copyist oriented. Which readings, out of two or more probabilities, would most probably account for the origin of the other readings in successive stages of copying? This, of course, was based on the genealogical presumption (the family tree of mss) and held that no malice had taken place – aside from inadvertent mistakes.

However, these two internal evidences, transcriptual and intrinsic probabilities, often cancel each other due to their highly subjective natures.³ The mind of the critic thus becomes the final judge.⁴

Having already declared that any deliberate changes were not done for doctrinal purposes, the question arises as to how Westcott and Hort knew this. Aside from inadvertent copying mistakes, the presumed *deliberate*

¹ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

² *Ibid.*

³ E.C. Colwell, "External Evidence and New Testament Criticism", *Studies in the History and Text of the New Testament*, eds. B.L. Daniels and M.J. Suggs, (Salt Lake City UT: Uni. of Utah Press, 1967), p. 4.

⁴ John Burgon, *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels Vindicated and Established*, ed. Edward Miller, (London: George Bell and Sons, 1896), p. 67.

changes gave rise to two textual canons.¹ The first canon was "the shorter reading is preferred". This was based on an *assumed* propensity of scribes to add to the text. However, A.C. Clarke, Professor of Latin at Oxford, showed in a study of classical text that scribes were most prone to accidentally omit rather than add (Pickering p. 80, also my p. 281). Once conflation had been accepted as factual, this canon became necessary and natural in order to disallow the longer, fuller Syrian (TR) readings.

The second canon was that "the harder reading is to be preferred." Thus, if there existed five or six variant readings of a text, the harder reading was presumed to be the correct one. This was based on the *assumed* propensity of the scribes to simplify a difficult text. But such is highly conjectural! Where is the proof? None was ever offered. Hort then **declared** the Syrian text to be *longer* and *more simple*, thus eliminating that text from consideration – thereby winning the day!

Albeit, Hort's problem was not yet totally solved. He had to explain how this Syrian (Byzantine - *Textus Receptus*) text came into being in the first place, and then explain how it came to dominate the field from the fifth century unto the present. Why did this so-called "inferior" text totally dominate in number such that nearly all of the extant Greek mss, about 95%, contain the same text?

THE "EARLY REVISION"²

Hort's solution was an *organized ecclesiastical revision* performed by editors and *not* merely by scribes.³ In other words, Hort proposed that in the early church of the third and fourth century, the Alexandrian, Neutral, and Western translations were competing with each other for acceptance. Hort promulgated the theory that an *official* text had been created by the church with ecclesiastical backing for the purpose of resolving the conflict, it having been completed by the middle of the fourth century (c.350 A.D.).

Westcott and Hort theorized that this text was a deliberate creation by scholarly Christians for the purpose of producing a text in which the readings reflected a compromise to end the turmoil over which of the

¹ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-85.

² Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, pp. 178-179. Dr. Hills' concise synopsis of the W-H "solution" is most incisive and instructive.

³ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

three competing texts should be accepted as authoritative. They proposed that the Traditional Text was the product of an "official revision" (or "recension") of the New Testament which supposedly took place at Antioch in two stages between 250 and 350 A.D.¹ Thus their theory was that the T.T. had ecclesiastical backing for the purpose of constructing a text on which all could agree, and that it was because of this official backing that it overcame all rival texts and ultimately became the standard New Testament of the Greek Church. Hort portrayed Lucian (Bishop of Antioch, died 311 A.D.) as its probable initiator and overseer.

Thus Westcott and Hort advanced that it was the Christians themselves who deliberately altered the Biblical text! This vacuous and specious proposal borders on the preposterous for a genuine Christian would never do such a wicked thing. Being believers in the infallibility of God's Word and in God's promises to preserve that same Word, they would fear altering the Holy Text believing literally that there is a curse from God on anyone who dares to so do.²

It is amazing that Westcott and Hort could seriously suggest that it was the Christians who had deliberately altered the Scriptures instead of men like Origen or Marcion who were gnostics or docetists and either did not believe in the deity of Jesus or believed Him to have been a phantom. These were the type of men who altered the Scriptures, not the Christians, for they believed them to be true and God breathed. W-H would have us believe that orthodox Christians corrupted the New Testament text; that the text type used by the Protestant reformers was the most unreliable of all and that the true text was not restored until the nineteenth century when it was brought out of the Pope's library and rescued out of a waste basket at Mt. Sinai.³ Modern textual critics would also have us believe, themselves being so deluded and deceived, that Westcott and Hort were providentially guided to construct a theory of the true text ignoring God's special providence and treating the text of the New Testament as that of any other book. These critics envision that the true text has been lost to the church for centuries and that they themselves, as prophets, are engaged in the monumental task of *restoring*

¹ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction, op. cit.*, pp. 137-138.

² Deuteronomy 4:2, 12:32; Proverbs 30:5-6; Psalms 12:6-7 and Revelation 22:18-19.

³ Hills, *The King James Version Defended, op. cit.*, p. 110.

the original readings – Westcott and Hort having begun this undertaking by laying the foundation.

ECLECTICISM AND ITS FRUIT

Indeed, as Dr. Edward F. Hills has stated, if the true New Testament text were lost for fifteen hundred years, – how could we ever be sure it was restored precisely?¹ At the time the Westcott-Hort theory was advanced, its proponents, including B.B. Warfield, felt that by utilizing the techniques contained within the theory the true "lost" text could eventually be fully restored.²

Today's scholars no longer hold to the Westcott-Hort theory in toto, yet their works always **begin** with Westcott and Hort's final conclusion – namely that the text represented by the majority (the TR) is of no consequence and that the true text lies mainly in the Vatican and Sinaitic MSS.

The modern critic uses what is known as the "eclectic" method of textual criticism. Eclecticism is an outgrowth of the Westcott-Hort theory of textual criticism. An eclectic editor "follows first one and then another set of witnesses in accord with what is deemed to be the author's style or the exigencies of transcriptional hazards."³ The technique involves subjective judgment, ignores the history of the text, emphasizing fewer and fewer canons of criticism. Most moderns emphasize only two.⁴ These are that a reading is to be preferred which best (1) suits the context, and (2) explains the origin of all others. Usually eclectics restrict the evidence to only the internal evidence of variant readings.

Today, most of Westcott and Hort's terminology has been replaced with new scholarly yet equally obscure sounding terms such as "Formal equivalence" and "Dynamic equivalence". The work of the modern textual critic/translator is largely composed of a balancing act. On one end is formal equivalence and on the other, dynamic equivalence.

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

² B.B. Warfield, *The Westminster Assembly And Its Work*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1931), p. 239. Dr. Hills well critiques Warfield's inconsistent thinking: *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

³ Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 3rd ed., enl., (NY: Oxford University Press, 1992; original prt. 1964), p. 175.

⁴ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 23. Dr. Pickering's presentation on eclecticism is excellent (see his ch. 2).

At the formal equivalence end, the word in question is translated exactly according to the Greek lexicon, paying little or no attention to the quality of the sentences that is being produced. The result is nearly a word for word or literal rendition of the Greek into the other language. The problem with this is that various languages contain different sentence structure such that the resultant rendering is often out of context, out of order within the sentence, may be either nonsensical or even misleading, and lacks emotion.

It is impossible to actually translate word for word from any language to another and produce an intelligible result. For example, consider a literal translation of the familiar John 3:16 passage – "For so loved the God the world that the his Son the only begotten he gave that every one the believes into him may not perish but may have life eternal". One would hardly call this result "English". Realizing this, a condition has been imposed by the proponents of formal equivalence to the effect that, though they deem a word for word translation of utmost importance, it must not be done so rigidly as to produce nonsense as in our example. This necessitates a counterbalance.

Today, dynamic equivalence is that counterbalance. At the other end of the see-saw, the translator attempts to verbalize the "message" that is being conveyed. From the Greek, he *extrapolates* or takes out what he *thinks* the author had in mind. Then, instead of translating or matching the words and wording as they are found in the grammar, words are injected that express *the thought* of the original author in the language the critic is using!? The NIV is notorious for doing this.¹ Thus dynamic

¹ Jay P. Green, Sr. (ed.), *Unholy Hands on the Bible*, Vol. II (Lafayette, IN: Sovereign Grace Trust Fund Pub., 1992), pp. 119-318. Dr. Green, a well known Greek and Hebrew scholar who has produced several Bible translations and a complete interlinear Bible in four volumes, has done the Church a great service in exposing the unfaithfulness of the New International Version (NIV). Not only has the NIV committee selected the corrupt critical Greek text as its New Testament base, Dr. Green reveals that the translators were not even faithful in their rendering of it as they have left around 5 percent of the Greek words altogether **un-translated!** "A slightly lesser percentage" of the original Hebrew O.T. has been left un-translated (p. 120). Thus tens of thousands of God breathed words are not in the NIV. Moreover, they have added over 100,000 words without so signifying to the reader by placing such words in italics as did the Authorized King James translators. All 100,000+ lack any Hebrew or Greek support whatever (pp. 120, 222-223). Both Waite and Green expose the NIV as being replete with free wheeling paraphrases rather than accurately rendering a translation. Nor are they alone in exposing this unfit translation; see also: *The NIV Reconsidered* by Radmacher & Hodges; (Dallas, TX: Redencion Viva Pub., 1990) and Norman Ward, *Perfected or Perverted*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Which Bible Society).

equivalence is, for all practical purposes, a paraphrase. A paraphrase means to use several words to communicate the meaning of a single word. For example, the Greek word *theopneustos* (qeopneusto") in II Timothy 3:16 is rendered "is given by inspiration of God."

The translator is constantly engaged in choosing between each extreme. Such is extremely subjective and invariably one side of the see-saw is strongly tipped – usually (though not always) toward the "formal" end for such is the natural inclination of the scholar. Instead, he should seek to render a *verbal* equivalence between the two languages before him as much as possible and still make sense, while at the same time attempting to inject the emotion and life of the original meaning.

Dr. D.A. Waite, a most qualified linguist (66 semester hours of combined Classical and Koine Greek from the University of Michigan and Dallas Theological Seminary, 25 hours in Hebrew, a total of 118 hours in foreign languages, two earned doctorates, and over 35 years teaching experience), maintains that it is at this very point the King James translators exhibited superior translation technique because they avoided the dynamic equivalence method, using instead "verbal" equivalence.¹ "That is, the words from the Greek or Hebrew were rendered as closely as possible into the English".² Dr. Waite further points out that the 1611 translators were most careful in their application of formal equivalence by carefully attending to the "forms" of the original wording. If the structure in the original language could be brought into the English, they so did. That is, if the word was a verb, they brought it over as a verb; they did not – as is common practice by most modern translators – change or transform it into a noun or some other part of speech.

Thus we see that the modern designations delineated in the preceding paragraphs can be and most often are just as subjective and non-scientific as the former terms and techniques. Actually, these textual scholars arrogate unto themselves (without any kind of ecclesiastical authorization) the authority to make free choice among the variant readings as Colwell attests: "in many cases solely on the basis of ***intrinsic probability***. The editor chooses that reading which commends itself *to him* as fitting the context ... The weight of the manuscript is

¹ D.A. Waite, *Defending the King James Bible*, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-132.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 90 and 98.

ignored. Its place in the manuscript tradition is not considered"¹ (author's emphasis). But apart from divine revelation, what living man really possesses such insight? As Pickering has observed – how can such rules be applied when neither the identity nor the circumstances of the originator of a given variant is known?²

Moreover, to base a final decision as to the true text solely upon internal considerations is unreasonable, unacceptable, and wrong.³ It ignores the massive external evidence of over 5,000 Greek MSS/mss now extant as well as the testimony of the letters of the early Church "Fathers" and the witness of the early versions. As there is no actual history of the transmission of the text, the choice between variants ultimately is reduced to conjecture and guesswork: "the editing of an eclectic text rests upon conjectures".⁴

Yet incredulously, most scholars do not practice pure eclecticism. Despite all their disclaimers, they still work essentially within the W-H framework.⁵ This may be seen in that the two most popular manual editions of the Greek N.T. in use today, Nestle-Aland²⁶ and UBS³, vary but little from the W-H text (the same is true of the recent versions, RSV etc.) – demonstrating that little "progress" has been made in textual theory since W-H.⁶

The result of these efforts to "restore" the readings to their pristine form has been mainly that of dismay. The project is now viewed as impossible by nearly all modern critics (though inexplicably the work continues). Typical acknowledgments to this effect by foremost textual scholars are:

¹ E.C. Colwell, "Hort Redivivus: A Plea and a Program", *Studies in Methodology in Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill Pub., 1969), p. 154.

² Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁴ E.C. Cowell, "Scribal Habits in Early Papyri: A Study in the Corruption of the Text", *The Bible in Modern Scholarship*, ed. J.P. Hyatt, (New York: Abingdon Press, 1965), p. 372.

⁵ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

⁶ Eldon J. Epp, "The Twentieth Century Interlude in New Testament Textual Criticism", *Journal of Biblical Literature*, XCIII (1974): pp. 390-391.

¹"In spite of the claims of Westcott and Hort and of von Soden, we do not know the original form of the Gospels, and it is quite likely that we never shall."

²"The primary goal of New Testament textual study remains the recovery of what the New Testament writers wrote. We have already suggested that to achieve this goal is well nigh impossible."

³"it is generally recognized that the original text of the Bible cannot be recovered."

⁴"Great progress has been achieved in recovering an early form of text, but it may be doubted that there is evidence of one original text to be recovered."

⁵"Each one of these critical texts differ quite markedly from all of the others. This fact certainly suggests that it is very difficult, if not impossible to recover the original text of the New Testament."

Thus all of these efforts over the past one hundred years have resulted in **maximum uncertainty**⁶ as to the original reading of the New Testament text. By stark contrast, that person who simply puts his/her faith in God's promise to **PRESERVE** His Word concludes that God has done so and that it is to be found in the vast majority of extant mss – and preserved in the English language in the 1611 King James translation. This person is left with **maximum certainty**, with peace of heart and peace of mind.

¹ Kirsopp Lake, *Family 13, (The Ferrar Group)*, (Philadelphia PA: Uni. of PA. Press, 1941), p. vii.

² Robert M. Grant, *A Historical Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 51.

³ Robert M. Grant, "The Bible of Theophilus of Antioch", *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXVI (1947), p. 173.

⁴ K. W. Clark, "The Theological Relevance of Textual Variation in Current Criticism of the Greek New Testament", *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 85:1, (March, 1966), p. 16.

⁵ M. M. Parvis, "The Goals of New Testament Textual Studies", *Studia Evangelica* 6 (1973): p. 397.

⁶ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, pp. 224-225. This designation and "maximum certainty" at the end of the paragraph are insights from Dr. Hills.

**Heaven and earth shall pass away:
but my words shall not pass away.**

Mark 13:31

VII. THE HORTIAN-ECLECTIC THEORY REFUTED

THE GENEALOGICAL METHOD FRAUD

Is it not incredulous that we are expected to believe God would allow the true text to sink into oblivion for fifteen hundred years only to have it brought to light again by two Cambridge professors who did not believe it to be verbally inspired?¹ As we read over the work of Westcott and Hort, one thing noticeable is the entire lack of their consideration of a supernatural element with regard to the Scriptures.² Thus having actually disavowed the doctrine of verbal inspiration and the overshadowing hand of God on His Word, their writings contain no sense of the divine preservation of the text, a doctrine which should be present in Christian deliberations.

Of course everyone would like to have the readings taken directly from the original manuscripts, but they are no longer in existence. So far, there have not been found any autographs of the New Testament surviving today. This we deem to be the wisdom of God for surely we would have made them idols as the children of Israel did with the serpent of brass which Moses had made nearly 800 years earlier (II Kings 18:4). Hezekiah had to destroy the brazen serpent because the people began to worship it instead of the God who had delivered them from the plague. People would do the same today – worship the paper instead of the God about whom it was written. We do not worship the Bible. We worship and serve the living God of whom it speaks.

With regard to the W-H theory, we reply that to treat the Scriptures as any other book is to:

- (1) ignore the reality of Satan who ever seeks to alter God's Word ("yea, has God said!" Genesis 3); and
- (2) ignore God's promise to preserve His Word.

But God promised to preserve His Word.

¹ Fuller, *Which Bible?*, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

² *Ibid.*, p. 165.

Hort said there were no signs of deliberate altering of the text for doctrinal purposes, but the Scriptures and the church "Fathers" disagree with him. Again, II Corinthians 2:17 says that "many" were corrupting the Scriptures during the time of Paul. From the letters and works of the Fathers, we know of Marcion the Gnostic who deliberately altered the text for doctrinal purposes as early as 140 A.D. Other corrupters of Scripture were named by the mid-second century by these church Fathers. For example, Dionysius (Bishop of Corinth from A.D. 168 to 176) said that the Scriptures had been deliberately altered in his day.¹ Many modern scholars recognize that **most variations were made deliberately**. Colwell, formerly agreeing with Hort's assertion, has reversed his position:²

"The majority of the variant readings in the New Testament were created for theological or dogmatic reasons. Most of the manuals and handbooks now in print (including mine!) will tell you that these variations were the fruit of careless treatment which was possible because the books of the New Testament had not yet attained a strong position as 'Bible.' The reverse is the case. It was because they were the religious treasure of the church that they were changed ... most variations, I believe, were made deliberately. ... scholars now believe that most variations were made deliberately"

The fact of deliberate numerous alterations in the early years of the New Testament's existence introduces **an unpredictable variable** which:³

- (1) the rules of internal evidence (transcriptional and intrinsic probabilities) simply cannot handle, and
- (2) nullifies the genealogical (family tree) method as a tool to recover the original (Hort knew that such would be the case; hence his dishonest statement that there was no deliberate altering).

¹ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, *op. cit.*, Book IV, ch. 23.

² E.C. Colwell, *What is the Best New Testament?* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1952), pp. 53, 58 & 49.

³ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 43. This seventh chapter leans most heavily upon insights gleaned from Dr. Pickering's fourth chapter as well as personal correspondence and telephone conversations. Born in Brazil of missionary parents, Dr. Pickering has well over twenty years of extensive work in linguistics. He is currently associated with Wycliffe Bible Translators in the country of his birth. He received his Th.M. in Greek Exegesis from Dallas Theological Seminary and M.A. and Ph.D. in Linguistics from the University of Toronto.

The genealogical method rests on being able to identify unintentional error as the clue to common ancestry. Agreement between manuscripts of this kind is rarely a coincidence. Furthermore, it is now known that W & H *never applied the genealogical method to the New Testament manuscripts*¹ The charts which they offered did not exhibit actual manuscripts. They were hypothetical and imaginary ones – as they thought things should have been.² Hort did not actually demonstrate the existence of his historical facts. The charts existed only in the minds of Hort and Westcott.

Other noted scholars have attested that the genealogical method not only has never been applied to the N.T., they have added that it *cannot* be applied. For example, Zuntz said it was "inapplicable",³ Aland that it "cannot be applied to the NT",⁴ and Colwell concurred emphatically in stating "that it *cannot* be so applied".⁵ Yet incredulously we read that with this method Westcott and Hort "slew the *Textus Receptus*"⁶ in the minds of the critics.

However, as Pickering summed the matter, since the method has not actually been used, the *Textus Receptus* must be alive and well!⁷ Hort claimed he used this weapon and spoke of the results of having applied this method with such confidence that he won the day.⁸ Amazingly, the

¹ M.M. Parvis, *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, 4 Vols., (NY: Abingdon Press, 1962), Vol. IV, p. 611 (N.T. Text).

² E.C. Colwell, "Genealogical Method", *op. cit.*, pp. 111-112. The late Ernest Cadman Colwell was widely acknowledged as the "dean" of N.T. textual criticism in North America during the 1950s and 1960s. For many years he was associated with the University of Chicago as Professor and President.

Like Parvis, Colwell concluded that W-H never applied the genealogical method to the N.T. mss & that Hort's intent was to "depose" the TR and not to establish a line of descent – that Hort's main points were subjective and deliberately contrived to achieve that end ("Hort Redivivus", *Studies, op. cit.*, pp. 158-159).

³ Gunther Zuntz, *The Text of the Epistles*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 155.

⁴ Kurt Aland, "The Significance of the Papyri for Progress in New Testament Research", *The Bible in Modern Scholarship*, ed. J.P. Hyatt, (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1965), p. 341.

⁵ Colwell, "External Evidence", *op. cit.*, p. 4.

⁶ Colwell, "Genealogical Method", *op. cit.*, p. 124.

⁷ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text, op. cit.*, p. 47.

⁸ *Ibid.*

fabrication was accepted as FACT, so much so that – despite all that has been written to expose Hort's dishonesty in this matter – since his day the genealogical method continues dominating the handbooks as being the canonical method of "restoring" the original text of the N.T. Present day scholars continue to go about their work and talk as though the genealogical method not only can be, but has actually been applied to the New Testaments manuscripts and base their efforts on the supposed results.¹

THE TEXT TYPE "FAMILIES" ARE ARTIFICIAL FABRICATIONS

Many modern scholars now admit that text type "families" are "artificial" inventions and do not actually represent "science". Merrill M. Parvis acknowledges:²

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

Colwell asserts:³

"The major mistake is made in thinking of the 'old text-types' as frozen blocks, even after admitting that no one manuscript is a perfect witness to any text-type. If no one MS is a perfect witness to any type, then all witnesses are mixed in ancestry (or individually corrupted, and thus parents of mixture)."

Doubting "whether any grouping of manuscripts gives satisfactory results",⁴ A.F.J. Klijn, continued:¹

¹ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

² M.M. Parvis, "The Nature and Task of New Testament Textual Criticism", *The Journal of Religion*, XXXII (1952): p. 173.

³ E.C. Colwell, "The Origin of Texttypes of New Testament Manuscripts", *Early Christian Origins*, ed. Allen Wikgren, (Chicago, IL: Quadrangle Books, 1961), p. 135.

⁴ A.F.J. Klijn, *A Survey of the Researches into the Western Text of the Gospels and Acts; part two 1949-1969*, (Leiden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill Pub., 1969), p. 36. This author has learned via personal correspondence (13 May, 1989) from Dr. Theodore P. Letis that Klijn, a well-known textual scholar, has been widely recognized as having attained to the first chair as the world's leading authority on the "Western" Text. With respect to a "pure" or "original" Western Text, Klijn himself acknowledged that "such a text did not exist" (*Ibid.*, p. 64).

"It is still customary to divide manuscripts into the four well known families: the Alexandrian, the Caesarean, the Western and the Byzantine. This classical division can no longer be maintained. ... If any progress is to be expected in textual criticism we have to get rid of the division into local texts."

Hence, neither "Syrian", "Alexandrian", "Neutral" nor the "Western" testimony as an entity actually exists. These so-called families are merely the synthetic, artificial products of Westcott's and Hort's imaginations which were fabricated in order to utilize the genealogical method – which allowed them to lump 80-95% of all individual witnesses as one voice. The reality is that there is only the testimony of individual manuscripts, "Fathers", and versions – not the voice of four families.

Thus the Byzantine or Syrian is not merely one witness. In any given verse it represents the voice of hundreds or even several thousand testimonies as to the true text. Furthermore, the evidence is that only few of the Byzantine mss have been copied from any of the remainder. They differ amongst themselves in many unimportant particulars.² In other words, all read so nearly alike that one can tell they are copies from the same text; yet the number of unimportant differences proves they were not copied from one another. Modern scholars acknowledge the truth of this.

In other words, the Byzantine mss are all **orphans**,³ and as such are independent witnesses. By "orphans" we mean that, as with the Old

¹ Klijn, *A Survey of the Researches into the Western Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

² Burgon, *The Traditional Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-47. John William Burgon was an Anglican Priest and Dean of Chichester at Oxford from 1876 until his death in 1888. His biographer called him "the leading religious teacher of his time" throughout England [E.M. Goulburn, *Life of Dean Burgon*, 2 Vols., (London: John Murray, 1892), Vol. I, p. vii]. Burgon's index of the Fathers is still the most extensive available, containing 86,489 quotations from 76 writers who died before 400 A.D. Although high Anglican in doctrine and theology – and somewhat chiding in his presentation – his work is the fountain. All other works published on this subject from the conservative view point continually quote and/or refer to John Burgon's books, especially to *The Revision Revised*. A contemporary of Westcott and Hort, he vigorously opposed both their text and theory and is generally acknowledged as having been the leading voice of the opposition. Dean Burgon has often been maligned and his contribution demeaned by liberal detractors "because of his learned defense of the Traditional New Testament text in most of the handbooks on New Testament textual criticism; but his arguments have never been refuted" since he published in 1883 (Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 139). This book remains the classic reference to this day; it is not light after dinner reading as it is replete with hard factual refutations to the W-H theory.

³ Kirsopp Lake, R. P. Blake and Silva New, "The Caesarean Text of the Gospel of Mark", *Harvard Theological Review*, XXI (1929): pp. 348-349.

Testament, the originals and old copies were burned or buried and thus committed to the earth for decay (as with a body) after they were copied.¹ That is why we do not have any originals today. As they have neither brothers, sisters nor surviving parents, the term "orphan" is therefore applicable to the extant mss. As orphans, they are **independent** witnesses to the true text of the New Testament.²

In addition, papyri with very distinctive readings existed side by side in the same "ecclesiastical" province.³ This further argues that no text types existed as proposed by the W-H Theory. So, as genealogy has not and cannot be applied to the problem, *it would seem the individual witnesses must be counted after all*. We agree with Westcott and Hort that they *should also* be **weighed** and this matter will be discussed presently.

Much is made over the fact that Erasmus used "late manuscripts", but this fails to recognize that all of our Old Testament manuscripts are "late". The oldest are dated around 900 A.D., and yet conservative Bible believers do not question their authenticity or that the text contained therein is not God breathed.⁴ Then why not trust the late mss of the New Testament which Erasmus used? It does not matter that they were late. The real issue is, were they actual copies of the original autographs or copies of copies of the originals (called "apographa").

Regarding **conflation** – as Dean Burgon adeptly pointed out – why, if the Traditional Text were created by 4th-century Antiochian editors whose regular practice had been to conflate (combine) Western and Alexandrian readings, could Westcott and Hort after nearly thirty years of searching throughout the Gospels find only eight supposed instances to offer as proof of their thesis?⁵ Why could they find only eight verses out of nearly eight thousand? Only a few more have been offered since by their followers.⁶

¹ Lake *et al.*, *Harvard Theological Review*, *op. cit.*, p. 349.

² Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

³ Aland, "The Significance of the Papyri", *op. cit.*, pp. 334-337.

⁴ As a matter of fact, the O.T. Masoretic Text has undergone much undue critical attack in the past and many evangelicals did begin to compromise and doubt its purity. The Dead Sea Scrolls discovery upheld the MT and ended the controversy.

⁵ Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, *op. cit.*, pp. 258-265, also see his footnotes.

⁶ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-176.

Wilhelm Bousset, a noted liberal German critic, agreed with Westcott and Hort on only one of the eight.¹ He totally disagreed with them on five and was not sure about the other two. This German critic's final conclusion was that W-H's principal proof, the eight examples, turned out to be the irrefutable proof that what they proposed was **not** correct. Like Burgon, Bousset astutely pointed out that if conflation had been the customary practice of the early church, W & H should have found hundreds of examples to bolster and confirm their conflate theory. Besides – as Pickering asked in 1977 – if the "Syrian" text is the result of conflating (combining) Western and Alexandrian readings, where did the material come from which is only found in the Syrian readings?²

Indeed, the fact is that *inversions do exist*.³ Furthermore, of the few passages which they offered, Mark 8:26, Luke 11:54 and Luke 12:18 are not conflate readings of a Neutral and Western tradition, and it is doubtful that Mark 6:33 and Luke 9:10 are. Moreover, it is just as reasonable that the truth is the reverse of their explanation – namely, that the longer Syrian is the original text and that the shorter readings resulted from omissions made in copying that original.

THE QUOTES FROM THE "FATHERS"

The crucial *external evidence* that Westcott and Hort offered in support of their theory was that there were no Syrian readings in the Fathers' quotes prior to A.D. 350.⁴ They maintained that Chrysostom, who died in 407, was the first father to habitually use the Syrian. However, these statements are simply not consistent with the facts. In the first place,

¹ Wilhelm Bousset, *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*, Vol. 11 (1894), pp. 97-101.

² Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

³ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 60. B conflates in Col.1:12; II Thes.3:4; Mar.1:28, 1:40 and Joh.7:39. The "Western" text conflates the "Syrian" and "Neutral" readings in Mat.4:13; Joh.5:37 and Acts 10:48. Codex Sinaiticus conflates Joh.13:24; Rev.6:1, 2, 5, 7, 8 and 17:4; etc.

⁴ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, *op. cit.*, p. 91; also see p. 124 in this (FNJ's) work. The reader will be interested to discover the prejudicial, subjective approach used by the modern critic in dismissing the vast damaging evidence that the Fathers writings place against their theories: "When the manuscripts of a Father differ in a given passage, it is usually safest to adopt the one which diverges from ... the *Textus Receptus* ..." Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

Chrysostom did not just give Syrian quotes.¹ Furthermore, according to Edward Miller's exhaustive compilation of the writings of the church "Fathers", *Origen* (185? - 254?) gave 460 quotes which agree with the readings of the Traditional Text and 491 quotes siding with the "Neologian" text.² In view of this, how then could Hort declare that Origen's quotations "exhibit no clear and tangible traces of the Syrian text"?³

Miller's study also revealed that Irenaeus, a second century church Father who according to Hort represented the "Western" text, gave 63 quotes from the Syrian (Traditional Text) text with only 41 from the so-called "Neologian" family.⁴ It should be noted that when referring to the "Fathers", this author is not endorsing their doctrines but merely recognizing and emphasizing what they accepted and believed to be Scripture at that early date. Miller further found that **prior** to Origen, the Traditional Text was quoted two to one over all others of the Fathers' quotes if we omit Justin Martyr, Heracleon, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian.⁵ Why should we omit them? They were carried away with Origen's confusion. Yet even if we include them, Miller's study showed that the ratio still favored the Traditional Text 1.33 to 1. Thus it is seen that Hort lied about the quotes from the Fathers and gave no actual statistics.

Miller, posthumous editor to Burgon, made full use of Burgon's patristic citations with regard to the testimony of the ante-Nicene Fathers. His work covered 86,489 extant citations from seventy-six of these Fathers. Of those who died before 400 A.D., the Traditional Text (identical "twin

¹ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63. Dr. Hills makes the same observation citing, as does Dr. Pickering, the study by Geerlings and New (Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 179).

² Burgon, *The Traditional Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 100, 121. This work of Burgon's was completed and edited by his friend and colleague, Edward Miller, who was – like the Dean – also an Anglican Priest. It was published in 1896, after the Dean's death in 1888. Miller's term "Neologian" included both "Neutral" and "Western" readings. It was, in fact, the Greek text pieced together by the revisers who produced the English Revised Version of 1881. Indeed, Miller stated that when the issue was at all doubtful, he decided against the *Textus Receptus* and that in the final tabulation he omitted many small instances favorable to the *Textus Receptus* (*Ibid.*, pp. 94-122).

³ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

⁴ Burgon, *The Traditional Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 99-101.

brother" and virtually identical to the text of the *Textus Receptus*)¹ wins out 3 to 2 over all the other variant readings.² Moreover, if we consider only the Greek and Latin Fathers (Syriac not included) who died prior to 400, their quotations support the T.T. in 2,630 instances whereas 1,753 support the "Neologian".³ Thus Miller found that in the Fathers' citations who died between 100 - 400 A.D., a span of 300 years, not only was the T.T. in existence from the first – it was predominant!⁴

Hort's statement that none of the church Fathers before 350 quoted the T.T. is simply not true. As mentioned, even Origen occasionally cited and adopted purely Syrian readings. For example, Dr. E.F. Hills states that in John 1-14 which is covered by Papyri 66 and 75, fifty-two times the Syrian reading stands alone as to the text and Origen agreed with twenty of them.⁵ This may be quickly verified by merely scanning Tischendorf's critical apparatus. Thus, the oft stated assertion of the critics that Origen knew nothing of the Byzantine text is simply untenable. On the contrary, these statistics demonstrate that Origen was not only familiar with the Byzantine text, he frequently adopted its readings in preference to those of the "Western" and "Alexandrian" texts. Hills goes on to report that seven of these same twenty occur in Papyri 66 and/or 75 (circa 200 A.D.).

Although Hort accused the Traditional Text as having late readings, hence it must be a "late text", his own research revealed otherwise. In his "Notes on Select Readings" which appears as an appendix in his *Introduction*, Hort discussed about 240 instances of variation among the manuscripts of the Gospels.⁶ In only about twenty of these was he willing to characterize the Byzantine reading as "late". Thus, by Hort's own admission, only around ten per cent of the Byzantine readings were supposedly late. Scholars today offer even less.

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

² Burgon, *The Traditional Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. ix-x, 101.

³ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 67, 74. Pickering is citing Edward Miller in: Burgon, *The Traditional Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-101.

⁴ Burgon, *The Traditional Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

⁵ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

⁶ Edward F. Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, 1st ed., 1956, *op. cit.*, p. 73. All other references to *The King James Version Defended* within this publication except this and fn. 1 on page 33 are to his 1984 4th edition.

PAPYRI (c.200 A.D.) SUPPORTS THE TEXTUS RECEPTUS

The papyri (around 200 A.D.), which dates 150 years before Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, support the *Textus Receptus* readings. This may come as somewhat of a shock to those familiar with the problem of textual criticism, as most have been informed that the early papyri are listed as Alexandrian or Western. True, nevertheless the Chester Beatty and Bodmer Papyri, even though placed in those families, have many renderings which are strictly Syrian – strictly *Textus Receptus*. After a thorough study of P⁴⁶, Gunther Zuntz concluded: "A number of Byzantine readings, most of them genuine, which previously were discarded as 'late', are anticipated by P⁴⁶".¹ Having several years earlier already acknowledged that with regard to the Byzantine New Testament "Most of its readings existed in the second century",² Colwell noted Zuntz's remark and concurred.³ Many of these readings had been considered to be "late readings", but the papyri testify that they date back at least to the second century!

In his recent book, the late (d.1989) Harry A. Sturz surveyed "all the available papyri" to determine how many papyrus-supported "Byzantine" readings were extant. In deciding which readings were "distinctively Byzantine", Dr. Sturz states that he made a conscious effort to "err on the conservative side" and thus his list is shorter than it could have been. Sturz lists 150 Byzantine readings which, though not supported by the early Alexandrian and Western uncials, are present in the bulk of later manuscripts and by the early papyri.⁴ Sturz lists a further 170 additional Byzantine readings which also read differently from the a-B text but are

¹ Zuntz, *The Text of the Epistles*, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

² Colwell, *What is the Best New Testament?*, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

³ Colwell, "The Origin of Texttypes of New Testament Manuscripts", *op. cit.*, p. 132.

⁴ Harry A. Sturz, *The Byzantine Text-Type And New Testament Textual Criticism* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1984), pp. 61-62, 145-159. For many years Chairman of the Greek Department (contra the dust cover of his book) at Biola University, Dr. Sturz studied New Testament textual criticism with E.C. Colwell. This work is a slightly revised version of his doctoral dissertation at Grace Theological Seminary. Dr. Sturz passed away 26 April, 1989. Dr. Theodore P. Letis, who was literally tutored privately at the feet of Hills, states in a 7-20-88 critique of Sturz's book that Hills was the first text critic to use the papyri to vindicate Burgon's argument that the Byzantine text reached back well before the 4th-century. Letis relates that while a doctoral student under E.C. Colwell at the University of Chicago in 1942, Hills proposed a dissertation topic which – had it been accepted – would have accomplished 25 years earlier that which Sturz set out to do. The proposal was refused, hence Hills wrote his dissertation on another topic.

supported by Western manuscripts. These are also supported in the ancient papyri. This support may seem minimal, but nothing can diminish the fact that the total number of papyri citations favor the so-called "late" Byzantine readings against their rivals in the two lists by **two to one**.¹ Sturz demonstrates papyri support for a total of 839 readings which in varying degrees would be classified as Byzantine. This forever dismantles Hort's theory that the Byzantine text was created as an official compromise text during the 4th-century by combining readings from earlier text-types.

Hills declared that the Chester Beatty readings vindicate "distinctive Syrian readings" twenty-six times in the Gospels, eight times in the Book of Acts, and thirty-one times in Paul's Epistles.² Hills goes on to state that Papyrus Bodmer II (Papyri 66) confirms 13% of the so-called "late" Syrian readings (18 out of 138).³ To properly appreciate this one must consider the fact that only about thirty percent of the New Testament has any papyri support, and much of that thirty percent has only one papyrus.⁴ Thus this is seen as a major confirmation to the antiquity of the text of the Traditional Text in direct contradiction to the theory previously outlined in which the Syrian readings were said by W-H to be 4th or 5th century. May we not reasonably project that subsequent discoveries of papyri will give similar support to readings now only extant in Byzantine text?

A most telling fact concerning the papyri is that several of them have texts of Revelation (P-47 for example). How does the destructive critic explain the fact that Vaticanus (written c.350) does not include the Book of Revelation whereas the 1611 Authorized Version (written nearly 1260 years later) contains this book? Can one reasonably explain how Erasmus' "late" manuscripts contained an entire book missing in the "pure, neutral Vatican" text? How did Erasmus know that the book of Revelation should be in the canon when the "oldest and best" manuscript did not contain it?

¹ Moorman, *When The KJV Departs From The "Majority" Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

² John W. Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel According to S. Mark*, (Ann Arbor, MI: The Sovereign Grace Book Club, 1959), p. 50. This is a reprint of Burgon's 1871 work containing an Introduction by Dr. Edward F. Hills, pp. 17-72.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

⁴ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

ECCLESIASTIC REVISION?

Remember Westcott and Hort proposed that Lucian had been the leader of an official ecclesiastical revision carried out by editors which had taken place in two stages between 250 and 350 A.D. This recension supposedly was for the purpose of producing an official compromise text "*to resolve the problems arising in the various provinces over the existence of competing textual families*" (Alexandrian, Western, and Neutral - see p. 125). The theory concluded that the Syrian (Byzantine) text was a composite of these pre-existing texts resulting in readings that "*elevated*" Jesus (which is what the Syrian/*Textus Receptus* readings do) as compared with the others. Thus, the theory accused the Christians of deliberately altering the true text of the New Testament for the purpose of making Jesus appear more God-like, more divine.

The hard fact is there is not one mention of such an ecclesiastical revision in all history.¹ Indeed, the emphasis on this cornerstone of the W-H theory has been abandoned by most present-day scholars. Colwell acknowledged this when he wrote:²

"The universal and ruthless dominance of the middle ages by one texttype is now recognized as a myth. ... [the] invaluable pioneer work of von Soden greatly weakened the dogma of the dominance of a homogeneous Syrian text. But the fallacy received its death blow at the hands of Professor [Kirsopp] Lake. ... he annihilated the theory that the middle ages were ruled by a single recension which attained a high degree of uniformity."

Over 20 years earlier Kenyon had noted that there was no historical evidence that the Traditional Text had been created by a conference of ancient scholars:³

¹ And it is this conjecture that has been the basis for dating the codices. Convinced that the codex was invented by those involved in this "revision" which supposedly took place during the persecution-free lull in the 2nd half of the 3rd century, for much of the 20th century scholars concluded no codex could represent an older date. Yet writing c.A.D. 85, the Roman poet Martial refers to the codex in Epigram I.2 - codices in N.T. times! [Thiede, *Eyewitness to Jesus*, (N. Y.: Doubleday, 1996), pp. 103-105.] Papyrologists have now pushed the origins of the codex back to the 1st century A.D., "not later than 70 A.D." [Italo Gallo, *Greek and Latin Papyrology*, (London: 1986), p. 14 & cited by Thiede, p. 118.]

² E.C. Colwell, "The Complex Character of the Late Byzantine Text of the Gospels", *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LIV (1935): pp. 212-213.

³ Sir Frederick G. Kenyon, *Handbook to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, 2nd ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1951; original prt. 1912), p. 302. Kenyon was Director of the British Museum & N.T. text critic.

"We know the names of several revisers of the Septuagint and the Vulgate, and it would be strange if historians and Church writers had all omitted to record or mention such an event as the deliberate revision of the New Testament in its original Greek."

With so much early Church history recorded both by Christian and by secular sources, it is difficult to believe that such an important event as a major revision of the Holy Writings could have taken place over such an extended span of time without any mention having been recorded. Furthermore, **Lucian was an Arian**¹ – an outspoken one – and NEVER would have favored readings exalting and deifying Jesus. The reality is that the so-called "Syrian" readings are the true readings and others have subtracted from them.

The ultimate triumph of the *Textus Receptus* began in the fourth century as the great conflict with the Arian heresy brought orthodox Christianity to a climax.² This is when and why the *Textus Receptus* began to completely reassert its dominance over the rival erroneous manuscripts. Finally, in the middle ages in every land there was a trend toward the orthodox "Syrian" text. However, ever since the days of Griesbach, naturalistic textual critics have tried to explain away this dominion of the *Textus Receptus* readings by attributing its ascendancy to some *monastic piety*³ whereby during the middle ages the monks in the Greek monasteries invented⁴ the orthodox readings of the text and then multiplied copies until it finally achieved supremacy. Yet, as Hills pointed out, if that were true the text would not have remained orthodox because that kind of piety would have included such errors as Mary worship and the worship of the saints, images and pictures.⁵ Dr. Hills continues:

¹ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 90. Yet despite this and the former cited statements by Colwell concerning von Soden's and Lake's findings as well as Kenyon's 1912 conclusion, as late as 1968 Bruce Metzger was still incredulously continuing to perpetuate the W-H party line in affirming that the "Byzantine" text is based on a recension most probably prepared by Lucian of Antioch (*The Text of the New Testament*, *op. cit.*, p. 212).

² Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

⁴ Or resurrected them from the Syrian readings which had resulted from the supposed "Lucian Recension".

⁵ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

"But as a matter of fact, no such heretical readings occur in the Traditional Text."¹

The "majority" manuscripts agree with one another closely enough to justify the contention that they all contain essentially the same text but not so closely as to give any grounds to the belief that this uniformity of text was produced: (1) by the labors of editors, (2) from some decree by an ecclesiastical leader, or (3) from mass production on the part of some scribes at any one place at any one time.² If the Traditional Text were a late development as proposed by the W-H Theory, how could it so completely displace an earlier and better text already in use by the church? All explanations offered to date, as we have noted, are totally lacking in substance and fact.

We have already seen that, contrary to the theory of Westcott and Hort, there was no ecclesiastical revision ordered by the church. The late conservative Christian text critic, Edward Freer Hills, attests that the scribes who produced the Western text regarded themselves more as *interpreters* rather than copyists hence they made bold alterations consisting principally of numerous *additions* to the Scriptures.³ The Alexandrian text makers (which in fact includes the so-called "Neutral" text family) conceived of themselves as being grammarians; thus their chief aim was to improve the style of the text.⁴ They made a few additions indeed, but **primarily removed** Scripture and also **shortened** the readings.

It has already been shown that the Westcott-Hort critical theory is fallacious in every proposition. Indeed, nearly all modern critics agree that the so-called "Lucianic Recension" (see p. 126) was Hort's invention. The significance of the failure of this canon of the W-H theory cannot be over-stressed as the following quotes illustrate. Regarding the W-H text, K.W. Clark writes: "The textual history postulated for the *textus receptus* which we now trust has been exploded."⁵ Eldon J. Epp correctly states:

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 182-183.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 183-184.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ K.W. Clark, "Today's Problems with the Critical Text of the New Testament", *Transitions in Biblical Scholarship*, ed. J.C.R. Rylaarsdam, (Chicago: Uni. of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 162. The credit for the devastating summarizing rebuttal in this paragraph rightly belongs to the peerless efforts of Dr. Wilbur N. Pickering (see "conclusion" to ch. four: *Identity*, *op. cit.*, pp. 91-92).

"the establishment of the NT text can be achieved only by a reconstruction of the history of that early text ..." ¹ Epp then confesses: "we simply do not have a theory of the text." ² Colwell adds his confirming voice: "Without a knowledge of the history of the text, the original reading cannot be established." ³ Aland acknowledges: "Now as in the past, textual criticism without a history of the text is not possible." ⁴ *Hort himself stated the very same:* ⁵

**"All trustworthy restoration of corrupted texts
is founded on the study of their history."**

Knowing this, Hort invented a history of the text which he and many others have since followed. And remember, it has already been noted (see page 127) that one of the fundamental deficiencies of the eclectic method of textual criticism is that it ignores the history of the text! Then where does all of this leave modern criticism? K.W. Clark correctly states the dismal situation:

⁶"The textual history that the Westcott-Hort text represents is no longer tenable in the light of newer discoveries and fuller textual analysis. In the effort to construct a congruent history, our failure suggests that *we have lost the way*, that *we have reached a dead end*, and that only a new and different insight will enable us to break through." (author's emphasis)

These candid admissions by such renown scholars from the opposing viewpoint who have been at the forefront of the controversy are remarkable, yet their disciples and other pundits continue on along much the same paths seemingly unaware of the significance of that which their colleagues have conceded. Of course as Hort's theory was never tenable in the first place, Clark's frank incredulous admission is what the present

¹ Epp, "The Twentieth Century Interlude in New Testament Textual Criticism", *op. cit.*, p. 401.

² *Ibid.*, p. 403.

³ E.C. Colwell, "The Greek New Testament with a Limited Critical Apparatus: its Nature and Uses", *Studies in New Testament and Early Christian Literature*, ed. D. E. Aune, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972), p. 37. This theme pervades Colwell's "Hort Redivivus".

⁴ Kurt Aland, "The Present Position of New Testament Textual Criticism", *Studia Evangelica*, ed. F. L. Cross et al., (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1959), p. 731.

⁵ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

⁶ Clark, "Today's Problems", *op. cit.*, p. 161.

author (along with Burgon, Miller, Scrivener, Nolan, Hills, Fuller, Pickering, Waite, Letis, etc.) has been maintaining all along. Clark's needed "new insight" is actually no more than a return in the "logic of faith"¹ to trusting in God's promise that He would forever preserve His Word and to see that throughout history He has so done through the Reformation text as Nolan's research concluded. This last point shall be enlarged upon presently.

GAIUS, THOUGH LONG DEAD, SPEAKS

Gaius was an orthodox "Father" writing near the end of the 2nd-century (c.175-200 A.D.). Gaius named four heretics who altered text and had disciples copying them.² He charged that they could not deny their guilt because the copies in question were their own handywork and that they were unable to produce the originals from which they had made their copies. As Pickering observed, this would have been a hollow accusation from Gaius if he could not have produced the Originals either!³ Hence, it follows that the Originals were still available at the end of the second century.

Polycarp (69 - 155 A.D.) was a pupil of John the Apostle. It is very likely that he had originals, at least the ones which John wrote. He also would have had some very near originals of the rest of the New Testament which he would have obtained from his teacher, John. Moreover, Polycarp would have had them at the time of his death in 155 A.D. Thus, around 175 to 200 Gaius must have had access to them also. Since the papyri prove the Syrian readings are at least second century, how could the original Syrian have gained dominance over the other text types (Neutral, Alexandrian, Western) if they had been corrupted when appeal to the autographs could have been made at that date? The whole W-H Theory as well as its modern counterpart is thereby clearly exposed and seen as vacuous and fallacious – "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing".

The only ancient, historical, authoritative revisions were those which occurred when Constantine commissioned Eusebius to produce fifty Bibles for him to place in the hands of the Bishops of the larger Churches

¹ Hills, *Believing Bible Study*, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37.

² Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, *op. cit.*, pp. 323-324.

³ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-110.

in his realm and that of Jerome for Pope Damasus. Thus the recension spoken of by the text critics was not in the days of Lucian but nearly 150 years earlier when Eusebius (and later, Jerome) chose Origen's work from the library at Caesarea as his text for both Testaments.

THE ARTIFICIAL NATURE OF TEXT FAMILIES DEMONSTRATED¹

We are constantly being assured by church leaders and scholars that all that is being done to restore the original readings is being done according to well established, and therefore trustworthy, scientific principles – the science of textual criticism. Having examined the methods and conclusions of those of the Westcott-Hort and the Eclectic schools of textual criticism, this author concludes that such is not science.²

For example, in Mark 5-16, Epp records that the Uncial Codex W shows a 34 percent agreement with B, 36 percent with D, 38 percent with the TR, and 40 percent with Aleph.³ As Pickering correctly asks: "To which 'textual stream' should W then be assigned?"⁴ Yet Codex W has been given a family assignment. Is not any such assignment clearly a matter of conjecture as well as a convenience in order to support a preconceived tenet?

¹ The material from this point through page 153 has been adapted and compiled by leaning most heavily on Dr. Wilbur N. Pickering, *The Identity Of The New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-57.

² Having had a 14 year professional vocation during which he held varying positions of responsibility as Paleontologist, Geophysicist, District Geophysicist, Geophysical Manager, and Regional Geophysicist with Texaco and Tenneco respectively, the author is qualified to make such a judgment. Shortly before resigning from his scientific career in 1974 to pursue Biblical studies, he was selected to attend Division Manager School.

Attaining the Ph.D as well as a Th.D., Dr. Jones has garnered majors in the disciplines of Geology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Theology, and Education from six different institutions of higher learning. A magna cum laude graduate and an ex-evolutionist, he also possesses a minor in Physics and is an ordained Minister (SBC).

Dr. Jones twice served as adjunct Professor at Continental Bible College in Brussels, Belgium. He is currently engaged in ongoing Biblical research and the teaching of God's infallible Word.

³ Epp, "The Twentieth Century Interlude in New Testament Textual Criticism", *op. cit.*, pp. 394-396.

⁴ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

Furthermore, both P-66 and P-75 have been generally endorsed as belonging to the "Alexandrian text-type."¹ A.F.J. Klijn catalogs the results of a comparison of a, B, P-45, P-66, and P-75 in the passages where they are all extant (i.e., John 10:7-25, 10:32-11:10, 11:19-33 and 11:43-56).²

He considered only those places where a and B disagree **and** where at least one of the papyri joins either a or B. Klijn stated the result for the 43 places as follows (to which we have added figures for the *Textus Receptus* as given on p. 55 in and by Pickering.):

Number of Agreements with:			
	Aleph	B	Textus Receptus
P-45	19	24	32
P-66	14	29	33
P-75	9	33	29
P-45,66,75	4	18	20
P-45,66	7	3	8
P-45,75	1	2	2
P-66,75	0	8	5

Is the summary assignment of P-66 and P-75 to the "Alexandrian text-type" entirely reasonable? Is this "science", factual, or truthful?

Moreover, Gordon D. Fee goes to considerable lengths in interpreting the evidence in such a way as to support his conclusion that "P-66 is basically a member of the Neutral tradition",³ but the evidence itself as he records it (for John chapters 1-14) is:⁴

¹ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

² Klijn, *A Survey of the Researches into the Western Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-48.

³ Gordon D. Fee, *Papyrus Bodmer II (P66): Its Textual Relationships and Scribal Characteristics*, (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1968), p. 56.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

P-66 Agrees with	Number of Agreements	Total Comparisons	Percent of Agreement
Textus Receptus	315	663	47.5%
P-75	280	547	51.2%
B	334	663	50.4%
Aleph	295	662	44.6%
A	245	537	45.6%
C	150	309	48.5%
D	235	604	38.9%
W	298	662	45.0%

Does a comparison of this data really suggest "two clear textual streams"? Many other examples could be cited, however the point has been plainly demonstrated. The whole purpose of applying the genealogical or family tree techniques to the Bible manuscripts was to reduce the vast majority of witnesses of the text of the New Testament to that of only one voice. Such in and of itself was wicked enough for us to endure, for in order to justify applying these techniques the position had to be taken that the New Testament could be treated like any other book, that it was not of a supernatural origin. But now we see wickedness added to wickedness, for under the guise of "scientific methods" a system has been imposed upon the material; which system is now exposed as artificial, totally subjective, contrived, and synthetic – SHAME!

Pickering has given the following estimates:

- 100% of the MSS/mss agree to 80% of the text
- 99% of the MSS/mss agree to 10% of the remaining 20%
- 95%+ of the MSS/mss agree to 4% of the remaining 10%
- 90%+ of the MSS/mss agree to 3% of the remaining 6%

A perusal of the foregoing reveals that one may reasonably say that around 90% of the extant MSS belong to the Traditional text-type. This strongly argues that such domination can best and most logically be explained by recognizing that this demonstrates the text goes back to the autographs.¹ Again, Hort correctly saw the magnitude this problem posed against his thesis so he invented the Lucianic revision.

¹ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

As Pickering observed, Sturz apparently did not perceive the significance of the argument presented by the vast statistical preponderance of evidence in favor of the "Byzantine text-type".¹ After demonstrating that the "Byzantine" is both early and independent of the "Western" and "Alexandrian text-types", Sturz – like von Soden – concluded that they should be treated as three equal witnesses.² This completely misses the point which is that if the three "text-types" were equal, how could the so-called "Byzantine" type obtain a near 90% preponderance since it has been shown (and Sturz agrees, his p. 62) that no 4th century official revision at Antioch ever took place?

Again, since academia now generally acknowledges that the "Byzantine text-type" must date back to at least into the 2nd-century, how could the original "Byzantine" document have been "created" by editors using other competing texts such that the resulting "conflated" (combined) text could gain ascendancy when appeal to the autographs was still possible at that time.

Thus only less than 3% of the text does not agree with 90% of the MSS.³ Furthermore, we are not judging between two text forms of, say 90% versus 10%. **As the minority disagree among themselves** (Only P-75 and B agree closely⁴), *the percentage is more like 90% versus 1%*. For example, in I Tim. 3:16 which the King James renders as:

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness:
God was manifest in the flesh, ...

Over 300 mss read "God was manifest", only 8 mss say something else; of those 8, five say "who" instead of "God" and three have private interpretations – which is 97% versus 2%. Yet, since Westcott and Hort, critics have adopted the Alexandrian reading "who was manifest in the flesh" as preserved in Aleph and have translated the word "who" as "He who", all the while insisting that Paul is quoting here from a fragment of

¹ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

² Sturz, *The Byzantine Text-Type*, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

³ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

⁴ But P-75 cannot be regarded as a guarantee that B's text is of the 2nd century. It is unjustified to conclude from the agreements between P-75 and B in portions of Luke and John that the whole N.T. text of B is reliable. There also exists a sufficiently large number of disagreements between the two which must be deemed as important as the agreements.

an early Christian Hymn.¹ Thus, according to the critics, Paul quoted an incomplete sentence, one having a subject without a predicate and even that has been left dangling.² I think not!

According to the 500 page study by Hoskier which detailed and discussed the errors in Codex B and another 400 on the idiosyncrasies of Codex Aleph, Sinaiticus Aleph and Vaticanus B *were found to differ from each other* in the Gospels alone about **3,036 times** – not including minor errors such as spelling or synonym departures.³ Their *agreements* are even **FEWER** – and these two manuscripts are "**the best and most reliable**"? Considering all the preceding data given in this section, one is left to wonder if rational, logical, intelligent life has yet arrived on planet earth.

The 1881 Revision Committee made between eight and nine changes every five verses. In about every ten verses, three of those changes were made for "critical purposes".⁴ In so doing, their justification was almost exclusively the authority of only two manuscripts, Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus a. The testimony of Vaticanus B alone is responsible for nine-tenths of the most striking innovations in the Revised Version.⁵

ERASMUS VINDICATED

We are constantly being told that Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus a are the oldest extant Greek manuscripts, hence the most reliable and best; that they are in fact the Bible. The New Greek text which has replaced the *Textus Receptus* in the minds of the vast majority of the scholars represents the private enterprise of two men, two very religious albeit unregenerate men, Westcott and Hort. These men based their work almost completely on Origen's fifth column for their Old Testament and his edited New Testament. Their New Testament readings are almost exclusively derived from only five manuscripts, principally from only one.

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

² *Ibid.*

³ Herman C. Hoskier, *Codex B and its Allies, A Study and an Indictment*, 2 Vols., (London: Bernard Quaritch, Ltd., 1914), Vol. II, p. 1.

⁴ Charles John Ellicott, *Submission of Revised Version to Convocation*, (1881), p. 27. Bishop Ellicott chaired the 1881 Committee.

⁵ Frederick Charles Cook, *The Revised Version of the First Three Gospels*, (London: Murray, 1882), pp. 227, 231.

"B" supplies almost ninety percent of the text for all the new Greek versions upon which the new translations are based. In other words, they use one manuscript to the exclusion of nearly all others! Seven percent is from Sinaiticus a, almost three percent from Alexandrinus A, a portion from Uncial D (which is extremely corrupt), and the small remainder from Codex L and a few other manuscripts.¹ For the most part, this is as close as the destructive critics have thus far come to "recovering" the original text. Hence, the Scriptures are seen as being in somewhat of a state of "evolution" by those who reject the fact of God's having preserved His Word for its constant availability and use by the body of believers as He indicated He would do.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (II Tim.3:16-17)

Thus the very same fault for which the critics have derided Erasmus so relentlessly over the years – namely, that he only used five manuscripts² – is far more true of their own modern rendition of the Greek New Testament. Remember, their charge is not completely justifiable concerning Erasmus for he studied several hundred Greek manuscripts and prepared notes on the variant readings found therein.³ And yet Westcott and Hort basically used only five, in fact, almost only one manuscript! Indeed, for the most part the same may be said for their modern eclectic counterparts. As Burgon rightly perceived:⁴

"... the whole of the controversy may be reduced to the ... narrow issue: Does the truth of the Text of Scripture dwell in the vast multitude of copies, uncials, and cursive ... or is it ... to be supposed that the truth abides exclusively with a very little handful of manuscripts which ... differ from the great bulk of the witnesses and, – strange to say – also amongst themselves?"

¹ Unfortunately, this reference has been misplaced, but the percentages given are accurate and well attested.

² Stephens and Elzevir used c. twenty to twenty-five manuscripts plus Erasmus' edition in bringing the TR into its final form.

³ Nolan, *An Inquiry*, *op. cit.*, p. 413; Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

⁴ Burgon, *The Traditional Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

ARE THE OLDEST MSS THE BEST?

But are not the oldest manuscripts the best – the most reliable? Of course, as Burgon attested, this would normally be true:

"The more ancient testimony is probably the better testimony. That it is not by any means always so is a familiar fact. ... But it remains true, notwithstanding, that until evidence has been produced to the contrary in any particular instance, the more ancient of two witnesses may reasonably be presumed to be the better informed witness."¹

However, we have earlier demonstrated from Scripture that this is not necessarily true with regard to the text of the N.T.² Furthermore, the actual *contrary evidence* says that most of the variant readings found in the Greek manuscripts were introduced by A.D. 200. Text critics themselves generally concede this, thus we find Scrivener writing: "It is no less true than paradoxical in sound that the worst corruptions to which the New Testament has ever been subjected originated within a hundred years after it was composed".³ Over half-a-century later Colwell agreed declaring: "The overwhelming majority of readings were created before the year 200"⁴ and Zuntz followed suit in stating: "Modern criticism stops before the barrier of the second century; the age, so it seems, of unbounded liberties with the text".⁵

Finally, G.D. Kilpatrick – an ardent eclecticist – contends that "as distinct from errors, most deliberate changes, if not all were made by A.D. 200".⁶ Kilpatrick then argues that the reason the creation of new variants ceased by around 200 was that by that time it became impossible to "sell" them. He next cites attempts by Origen to introduce

¹ Burgon, *The Traditional Text, op. cit.*, p. 40.

² II Corinthians 2:17; 4:2; II Peter 3:16, see p. 14.

³ F.H.A. Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, 4th ed., ed. Edward Miller, 2 Vols., (London: George Bell and Sons, 1894), Vol. II, p. 264; see Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text, op. cit.*, pp. 108-109.

⁴ Colwell, "The Origin of Texttypes of New Testament Manuscripts", *op. cit.*, p. 138.

⁵ Zuntz, *The Text of the Epistles, op. cit.*, p. 11.

⁶ G.D. Kilpatrick, "Atticism and the Text of the Greek New Testament", *Neutestamentliche Aufsätze* (Regensburg: Verlag Freiderich Pustet, 1963), pp. 128-131.

changes into the text and notes the dismal reception with which they were met:¹

"These two examples of alteration to the text of the New Testament after A.D. 200 show how uncommon such changes were in the later period. ... There can be no question that the earlier ones are far and away more in number. Origen's treatment of Mt. 19:19 is significant in two other ways. First he was probably the most influential commentator of the Ancient Church and yet his conjecture at this point seems to have influenced only one manuscript of a local version of the New Testament. The Greek tradition is apparently quite unaffected by it. From the third century onward even an Origen could not effectively alter the text. This brings us to the second significant point – his date. From the early third century onward the freedom to alter the text ... can no longer be practiced. Tatian is the last author to make deliberate changes in the text of whom we have explicit information. Between Tatian and Origen Christian opinion had so changed that it was no longer possible to make changes in the text whether they were harmless or not." (until our day - author)

Kilpatrick completes this aspect of his article saying:²

"... by the end of the second century A.D. Christian opinion had hardened against deliberate alteration of the text, however harmless the alteration might be. The change of opinion was ... with the reaction against the rehandling of the text by the second century heretics. This argument confirms the opinion of H. Vogels ... that the vast majority of deliberate changes in the New Testament text were older than A.D. 200. In other words they came into being in the period A.D. 50-200.

Thus most of the deliberate changes had been injected into the text and the creation of new variants had ceased by the year A.D. 200 with almost no further damage being incurred thereafter. From this and other data, Sturz rightly concluded that the readings of the Byzantine text were old as they, like those of the other so-called text-types, demonstrably go back deep into the 2nd-century.³

¹ Kilpatrick, "Atticism and the Text of the Greek New Testament", pp. 129-130.

² *Ibid.*, p. 131.

³ Sturz, *The Byzantine Text-Type*, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

Thus Burgon's "contrary evidence" has been produced such that the presupposition in favor of antiquity is nullified – both by the known existence of a variety of maliciously altered texts, especially during the 2nd-century, and the testimony of Scripture as noted.

It is common knowledge that the minority MSS,¹ those upon which the critical texts² are based, used papyri or parchment which came only from Alexandria Egypt.³ The question is – is it prudent to follow the witness of only one locale? Is it reasonable that an original reading should survive in only one region? In contrast, the majority TR text is composed of mss from Greece, Asia Minor, Constantinople, Syria, Africa, Gaul, Southern Italy, Sicily, England and Ireland. Alexandria had no original autographs of the New Testament. Hence areas such as Rome, Greece, Asia Minor and Palestine had a better start than did Egypt to have the true text of the Holy Scriptures.⁴

It is unwise for present day translators to base their modern versions on recent papyri discoveries, Vaticanus B, and Sinaiticus a because all of these documents came out of Egypt.⁵ During the early Christian centuries Egypt was a land in which heresies were rampant. Indeed, Hills reports that the texts of all the Bodmer Papyri are error-ridden and have been tampered with, in part by gnostic heretics.⁶ The same is true of the texts of Papyrus 75, B, and Aleph.⁷

Burgon and Miller pointed out this gnostic trait in B and a back in 1896,⁸ and their observations have yet to be refuted. Burgon named the infamous gnostic teacher, Valentinus (fl. A.D. 150) as the source of some of the corruptions.⁹ There was even a heretical character of the early

¹ Beatty, Bodmer and Uncials, such as B, Aleph, A, H and W.

² By "critical texts" is meant such entities as Nestle's text, UBS, the modern Eclectic text, the Westcott-Hort text, etc.

³ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-117.

⁴ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

⁵ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

⁶ Hills, *Believing Bible Study*, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

⁸ Burgon, *The Traditional Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 287-291.

⁹ John W. Burgon, *The Causes of the Corruption of the Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels*, ed. Edward Miller, (London: George Bell and Sons, 1896), pp. 215-218.

Egyptian church;¹ hence it is not surprising that the MSS from Egypt were sprinkled with heretical readings.

We shall now quote some *liberal* modern scholars with reference to some of the oldest witnesses so that we may ascertain the character of these witnesses. Remember the issue is – are not the oldest manuscripts the best? Again, Scripture indicates such is not necessarily true. We shall refer to these papyri as though they were men; in other words, the scribes who wrote them. Let us now consider some of the older material:

P⁶⁶ editorializes (meaning to change the material and substitute the editor's thoughts); it is very poor and sloppy according to E.C. Colwell.² He reports nearly 200 nonsensical readings and 400 mistaken spellings.

P⁷⁵ is not as bad as P-66 but Colwell affirms³ there are over 400 mistakes which include about 145 misspellings and 257 singular readings of which 25% are nonsensical.

P⁴⁵ has 90 misspellings and 245 singular readings⁴ of which 10% make no sense. As an editor, P-45 is concise but he omits adjectives, adverbs, nouns, participles, verbs, personal pronouns and frequently clauses and phrases. At least 50 times he shortens the text into *singular readings*.

Clearly, P-45 did not believe he had the Word of God in his hands or he would have been more circumspect. Colwell credits P-45 with having tried to produce a "good" copy. Perhaps, if "good" means "readable" but not "faithful" – for he made many deliberate alterations as Colwell himself acknowledged.

P⁴⁶ according to Gunter Zuntz,⁵ is neat and copied by a professional, but it abounds in scribal blunders, omissions and additions.

P⁴⁷ is not the best text the Book of Revelation states Kurt Aland:⁶ "... the oldest manuscript does not necessarily have the best text. P-47 is, for example by far the oldest of the manuscripts containing the full or almost full text of the Apocalypse, but it is certainly not the best."

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

² Colwell, "Scribal Habits in Early Papyri", pp. 387, 378-379; see Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-120 for an excellent more detailed summary.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 374-376.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Zuntz, *The Text of the Epistles*, *op. cit.*, pp. 18, 212.

⁶ Aland, "The Significance of the Papyri", *op. cit.*, p. 333.

The point being demonstrated here is that the **oldest is not necessarily the best**. These are all second and third century papyri, which are 100 to 200 years older than Vaticanus B or Sinaiticus a and much later than the material used by Erasmus. Age alone cannot insure accuracy as we would still not know how old the "parent" mss was when it "gave birth" to its offspring. For example, an eighth century document may have been copied from a sixth century parent mss, whereas a fourteenth century mss could have been the offspring of a second century manuscript.

The critics Kirsopp Lake, R.P. Blake, and Silva New found mostly **"orphans"** among the manuscripts which they collated.¹ That is, the scribes of the New Testament usually destroyed their old copies after recopying them resulting in almost no ancient "parents" surviving unto the present. Not only are nearly all of the extant manuscripts thus orphans, they found almost no siblings. Each manuscript was an only child without brothers or sisters.

The significance of this can hardly be overstated. This means that the authors were *independent* witnesses; that hardly any were copied from others – thus, no collusion or wholesale fraud exists!² There was no ecclesiastical committee forcing people to copy them; therefore they deserve to be counted as *independent witnesses*. Furthermore, as Pickering observed, the findings of these three critics attests to another consideration: "the age of a manuscript must not be confused with the age of the text it exhibits."³

TO WEIGH THE WITNESSES OR TO JUST COUNT THEM?

One may reply, "Should not witnesses be weighed rather than merely counted?" The problem with that statement is it infers that weighing and counting are mutually exclusive.⁴ We should do **both**. In a courtroom with ten witnesses testifying, if nine say they saw the event take place and the man is guilty whereas only one says he is not, what would be the result? The voice of the nine would carry the day. Nevertheless,

¹ Kirsopp Lake, R. P. Blake and Silva New, "The Caesarean Text of the Gospel of Mark", *op. cit.*, p. 349.

² Burgon, *The Traditional Text, op. cit.*, pp. 46-47.

³ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text, op. cit.*, p. 124.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 124-125.

witnesses should be weighed also, for it is possible that all nine could be persons of ill repute and the one of impeccable character.

Actually, all text critics "count" manuscripts. The great majority of the N.T. is absolutely completely established because *there are no variants*. That is, not only the majority but in **all** of the manuscripts nearly every word reads the same. Hence, even its detractors follow the "majority text" most of the time. Furthermore, modern editors such as von Soden, Harry Sturz and Weymouth say when two of the major families (or in Weymouth's case, two or more printed editions) agree against one of the other families (or editions) the majority (or two in agreement) should be followed.¹

As previously mentioned, Hort and others since him weighed the witnesses based on internal evidence, habitually utilizing "intrinsic" and "transcriptional" probability as their guides. That is, they chose the readings which they deemed best fit the **context** and best explained *the origin of the other reading* (of 2 or more possibilities) which had resulted from successive stages of copying. However, these two often **cancel** each other and, besides, they are *far too subjective* such that the word "weigh" becomes meaningless and the concept a mockery.

It has been documented on page 155 that "the worst corruptions to which the New Testament text has ever been subjected originated within a hundred years after it was composed."² Burgon adds:³

"Therefore antiquity alone affords no security that the manuscript in our hands is not infected with the corruption which sprang up largely in the first and second centuries. That witnesses are to be weighed – not counted – may be said to embody much fundamental fallacy. It assumes that the witnesses we possess are capable of being weighed and that every critic is competent to weigh them, neither of which proposition is true".

However, the **true text** of the New Testament can be found easily and with certainty – as we shall demonstrate.

¹ The material in this paragraph is taken from a 1988 correspondence to the author by Dr. Theodore P. Letis.

² Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction*, *op. cit.*, Vol II, p. 264.

³ Burgon, *The Traditional Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 40, 43.

HOW TO EVALUATE THE CREDIBILITY OF A WITNESS¹

How do we evaluate the credibility of a witness in every day life? By observing his actions, what he says and how he says it, listening to the opinions of his neighbors and associates and by observing the same things in his associates. Check out his associates. In other words, does he run with a bad crowd? If it can be demonstrated that he is a habitual liar, morally depraved or that his critical faculties are impaired, then his testimony should be received with skepticism.

Now let us weigh, for example, P-66 as a witness to the true text of the New Testament. He is *old*, but in John's Gospel he has over nine hundred clear errors concerning the text. He has lied to us over 900 times! Moreover, Pickering contends that neither P-66 nor P-75 knew Greek.² Is he thus a credible witness? No! Someone protests – but he is "old". True enough, but he is an old liar!

As we have seen P-45, according to Colwell, made numerous *deliberate* changes in the text. Is he not morally impaired? He has repeatedly lied to us. Can we still trust him?

Between them, Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus a have lied over 3,000 times in just the Gospels alone! According to Hoskier, when compared with the true reading of the *Textus Receptus*, between them there are 656 differences in Matthew, 567 in Mark, 791 in Luke and 1,022 in John – a total of 3,036.³ Now a is a bigger liar than B. Everyone agrees to that. If a is, let us say, a two to one bigger liar than B, then a thousand of those lies belong to Vaticanus B and 2,000 to Sinaiticus a. Are B and a *reliable* witnesses?

If we cannot determine objectively that a particular witness is lying, his credibility suffers if he keeps dubious company. Examples of "bad" company are the "five old Uncials" (a, A, B, C, D) which often read differently from the *Textus Receptus* but also disagree among themselves.⁴

¹ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-127. Freely "stolen" from Pickering as he is very incisive here.

² *Ibid.*, p. 126.

³ Hoskier, *Codex B and its Allies*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 1.

⁴ Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-18, 30-31; Burgon, *The Traditional Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

And what about character witnesses? Aleph and B were not copied, to speak of, by the church. That being true, it follows that *the early church* at large must have **rejected** their form of text.¹ Hence, in their day they simply were not respected by the true believers, and that speaks ill of them.

WEIGH, BUT THEN COUNT²

After weighing the witnesses, they must be counted. However, before doing so prudence would demand that we examine to determine possible collusion between the witnesses. Those mutually dependent must be lumped together as only one voice. Westcott and Hort were right in maintaining the correctness of that axiom. Only then should each witness appearing to be both *independent* and *trustworthy* have a vote. If several hundred such witnesses agree against three or four inveterate liars, can any doubt really exist as to the true reading? If a manuscript goes wrong continually, as a witness he is of low character. Again, the oldest extant uncial manuscripts, when viewed objectively, habitually are shown to be liars.³

For example, in the last three chapters of Luke (22-24) Codex D omits 329 words from what Westcott and Hort considered to be the true text. In addition, Codex D was judged to have added 173 words, substituted 146 words and made 243 transpositions to the Received Text by these same men. Yet in eight places they omitted material from the text of the *Textus Receptus* based solely on the witness of Codex D. As Pickering exclaimed, how can any value be given to the depraved testimony of Codex D in these chapters, much less prefer it above the united voice of all other witnesses?⁴

¹ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 127, 134-137. Again Pickering is heavily leaned upon. See Burgon's criteria or "Seven Notes of Truth" which he advocated in determining the identity of the N.T. text: *The Traditional Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

³ Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-18, 30-31; Burgon, *The Traditional Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 84. Also Hoskier, *Codex B And Its Allies*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 1, etc.

⁴ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 136. In the Gospels alone, Codex D omits no less than 3,704 words, adds to the genuine Text 2,213, substitutes 2,121, transposes 3,471, and modifies 1,772 for a total of 13,281 deflections from the Received Text: Burgon, *The Traditional Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

The focus here is not as much on Codex D as it is on the men, Westcott and Hort. They selected readings from an area in a MS which they acknowledged as having been heavily altered and yet chose them in eight places in those three chapters because they liked what D said. The point is made that textual criticism, by utilizing subjective methods, has been reduced to nothing more than the intellect of the scholar and his personal views.

Modern texts are based 90% on Vaticanus B, 7% on a, about 2.5% on Alexandrinus A and the remaining 1/2% on a few other early MSS. Convicted liars all! Textual critics have ignored the consideration of **respectability** as an objective and very necessary criterion in weighing.¹ However, if respectability is considered and implemented, the result will be the complete overthrow of the type text currently in vogue and return us to the *Textus Receptus*.

THE IMPORTANCE OF VARIETY IN SELECTING EVIDENCE²

The use of a variety of evidence will support the *Textus Receptus*, return the body of Christ to it as its final source of authority, and return to the Church absolute confidence that we still possess the God inspired, infallible Word – that He has preserved it for His followers as He promised. It must be seen that to believe in the **inspiration** of the Holy Writ without believing in its **preservation** within the believing remnant of the church is **meaningless**.

By "variety" is meant that evidence would come from:³

- (1) many theological and geographical areas rather than from Egypt alone.
- (2) materials that differ in age. In order for a reading to be a serious candidate for the original text, it would have to have attestation down through the ages of transmission. In other words, there should be consistent traces of its existence through the years.
- (3) different kinds of witnesses. Consideration should be given to all available evidence, i.e., not only Greek manuscripts but to data from the church "Fathers", lectionaries and different old versions.

¹ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 132-133. This is another of Burgon's "Seven Notes of Truth"; see: *The Traditional Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 29, 49-52.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 132, 134.

When these are objectively weighed and counted, the *Textus Receptus* will be vindicated – as will the King James Bible, which is the God guided faithful English rendering. Finally:

ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS SUPPORT THE RECEIVED TEXT

From the second and early third centuries, Latin (the original Latin "Vulgate") and Syriac New Testaments circulated all over Asia Minor, Africa, and Palestine. These Bibles were revised respectively by Jerome (382-405 A.D.) and presumably Bishop Rabbula (411-435). Where they followed the corrupt Alexandrian (Hesychian) scholarship of Origen (c.245) in editing they disfigured the New Testament text. Errors in the Peshitta and in the Vulgate can be traced to the Vatican (B) manuscript and its ancestors.

The Peshitta Syriac version is the historic Bible of the whole Syrian Church. It agrees closely with the Traditional Text. Until around one hundred years ago it was almost universally accepted as having originated in the 2nd-century, thus being one of the most ancient N.T. versions.¹ Because the Syriac Peshitta text is "Byzantine", Hort had to nullify its witness by denying its antiquity. This he did by placing its inception out of the second and third centuries. Accordingly, He proposed that its origin was connected to the so-called "Lucianic Recension" in the 4th-century.² Burgon pointed out that there was a total lack of evidence for Hort's assertion.³ Hills recounts that F.C. Burkitt (1904) pressed Hort's theory even further by naming Rabbula, Bishop of Edessa – the capital city of Syria, as the author of the revision.⁴

However, Arthur Voobus countered Hort, Burkitt, and other naturalistic critics by – like Burgon – first noting that their reconstruction of textual history was "pure fiction without a shred of evidence to support it."⁵ After

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, pp. 172-174. "Peshitta" means simple, easy to understand; referred to here in its original form before it was subsequently altered.

² Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, *op. cit.*, pp. 136-137.

³ Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, *op. cit.*, pp. 275-277.

⁴ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

⁵ Arthur Voobus, *Early Versions of the New Testament, Manuscript Studies*, (Stockholm: Estonian Theological Society in Exile, 1954), pp. 100-102.

concluding that Rabbula used the Old Syriac type of text, Voobus judged from his research that the Peshitta went back to at least the mid-fourth century and that it was not the result of an authoritative revision. Yet it is Burgon who long before noted a deciding historical difficulty for the "Hort-Burkitt" theory. He pointed out that the Peshitta had to have been in existence before Rabbula's episcopate because during his time a schism occurred in which the Syrian Church became divided into two sects, the Nestorians and the Monophysites. Since Rabbula was the leader of the Monophysites and a "determined opponent of the Nestorians" it becomes impossible to maintain that he produced the Peshitta. Had it been framed under his auspices his rivals would never have adopted "so quickly and so unanimously the handiwork of their greatest adversary" as their received New Testament text.¹ Hills sums the argument against Burkitt:²

"Why was it that the Peshitta was received by all the mutually opposing groups in the Syrian Church as their common, authoritative Bible? It must have been that the Peshitta was a very ancient version and that because it was so old the common people within the Syrian Church continued to be loyal to it regardless of the factions into which they came to be divided and the preferences of their leaders."

In light of all the preceding, this author – like Dr. Pickering – finds it difficult to understand how F.F. Bruce, Colwell, Kenyon, etc. could thus allow themselves to state dogmatically that Rabbula produced the Peshitta.³ The foregoing thoroughly rebuts the Hort-Burkitt theory concerning the Peshitta and conclusively shows that the Syrian text which bears witness to the KJB readings **is older** by 100 years than either Vaticanus or Sinaiticus.

"The Diatessaron", a Gospel Harmony in which Tatian of Assyria wove into one narrative the material contained in the 4 gospels (c.153-172), still survives in three works. Tatian was supposedly a converted pupil of Justin Martyr. Irenaeus charged that after the martyrdom of Justin, Tatian apostatized and wandered into heretical Gnosticism.⁴ Tatian was

¹ Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel According to S. Mark*, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

² Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

³ Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

⁴ Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. II, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1976; rpt. of 1910 orig.), pp. 493-495, 727-730.

further branded as: having wrongly interpreted I Corinthians 7:5 such that he condemned marriage as a corrupt licentiousness and a service of the devil, denying that Adam was saved due to Paul's saying "all die in Adam", and refusing to drink wine at Communion. After his death, his followers substituted water for wine in the Lord's Supper, abstaining permanently from meat, wine, and marriage due to the supposed intrinsic uncleanness in the three. However neither his extant apologetic treatise against the Gentiles (Greeks) nor his Gospel Harmony depicts any traces of Gnosticism or other heresy.¹ Tatian vindicates Christianity and exposes the contradictions, absurdities, and immoralities of Greek mythology with vehement contempt while also proving that Moses and the prophets were older and wiser than the Greek philosophers.

All this notwithstanding, the issue is not whether Tatian was an extreme ascetic or even whether he wandered to the borders of Gnosticism or the fact that he left out the genealogies of Jesus and made misjudgments producing inaccuracies in his connected account of the life of Christ Jesus from the 4 Gospels. These do not affect the points that are before us which center about the fact that Theodoret (390-458 A.D.) found more than 200 copies of the Diatessaron circulating in Asia Minor and Syria in his day which had been there from before 170 A.D.² Tatian reads with the KJB at Luke 2:33 and John 9:35 which uphold the Deity of Christ and the virgin birth. Thus the Diatessaron conclusively proves: (1) the existence and ecclesiastical use of the four Gospels, no more and no less, in the mid 2nd-century, and (2) an Old Syriac witness exists to the King James readings which is 200 years *older* than Vaticanus B or Sinaiticus.

As Latin was the "lingua franca" of the Roman Empire, many of the early translations in this language were in existence throughout the various countries within the Empire's border. Tertullian mentions a complete Latin Bible ("Itala", i.e.: the original "Old Latin" produced c.A.D. 157; unfortunately many critics also use the term for a revision of this work) as being in use all over North Africa as early as A.D. 190.

The Albigenses (branded heretics by the Roman Church) continued to use this "Old Latin" long after Jerome completed his version of the Vulgate. Today we have only about 50 MSS of these Old Latin Versions.³ These bear witness to the Syrian text type of the Receptus where the

¹ Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. II, *op. cit.*, pp. 727-728.

² Price, *The Ancestry of our English Bible*, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

³ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

Origenians have not tampered with them. In the places where they were edited, they bear witness to Origen's Hexapla.¹ Augustine of Hippo (354-430) and Tertullian (160-220) testify that the scribes in Africa were constantly editing and revising the manuscripts.²

About 383 A.D., Pope Damasus commissioned Jerome to produce an official revision of the entire "Old Latin" Bible. Hort concluded, and Hills concurred, that one of the MS Jerome consulted for the Gospels was closely related to Codex A resulting in 22 significant agreements between his Latin Vulgate and the Traditional Text.³ Jerome revised the "Old Latin" O.T. basing his translation on the text of Origen's Hexapla, making use of material from all the author's columns.⁴ He boasted about the "vellum scrolls" which the "scholars" had that were "far superior" to the Bibles used by the common people.⁵ In his letters, Jerome referred to using this Greek "original" (actually Origen's Hexapla) to correct and amend the unskillful scribes.⁶ Remember that Helvidius, a great scholar of northern Italy and contemporary of Jerome, accused Jerome of using corrupt Greek manuscripts in producing a new Latin Bible for the Pope.⁷ This would have been a meaningless accusation from Helvidius if he could not have produced the pure original readings either!

THE BIBLE OF THE VAUDOIS (WALDENSES)⁸

Another group of Christians branded as heretics by the Roman Church was the "Vaudois" who were so called from the alpine valleys in northern Italy where they lived. Much later they became known as the Waldenses

¹ Ruckman, *The Christian's Handbook of Manuscript Evidence*, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-79.

² *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), Vol. IV, p. 970 (hereafter *ISBE*); F.C. Burkitt, *The Old Latin and the Itala*, (Cambridge: n.p., 1896). The latter is considered the standard source.

³ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, *op. cit.*, p. 152; Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, pp. 187-188.

⁴ *ISBE*, *op. cit.*, (1979) Vol. IV, p. 972.

⁵ Ruckman, *The Christian's Handbook of Manuscript Evidence*, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

⁶ *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, James Orr, ed., (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Co., 1937), Vol. III, p. 1841.

⁷ *Post-Nicene Fathers*, *op. cit.*, Vol. VI, p. 338.

⁸ Wilkinson, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-44. The present author has drawn heavily on this fine work by Dr. Wilkerson (Seventh Day Adventist). Dr. David Otis Fuller cites Wilkinson verbatim from pages 176-318 in *Which Bible?*

after a leader, Peter Waldo, who arose among them about 1175 A.D. History does not afford a record of cruelty greater than that manifested by Rome toward the Waldenses. Every effort at total extermination, even to the very mention of their existence, was conducted against these believers for hundreds of years. The destruction of their records began around 600 under Pope Gregory I and persecution continued past the great massacre of 1655.¹

According to Beza, this Church was formed about 120 A.D.² Its Latin Bible (the "Italic" or "Itala") which represents the Received Text (Syrian) was translated from the Greek not later than 157 A.D.³ It is recognized that Jerome's Vulgate is the "Itala" (the "Old Latin") with the readings of the Received Text removed.⁴ The leadership of the Reformation – German, French and English – was convinced that the Received Text (TR) was the genuine New Testament, "not only because of its own irresistible history and internal evidence, but also because it matched with the Received Text which in Waldensian form had come down from the days of the apostles."⁵

In producing his translation Luther referred to the Tepl ms which agreed with the "Old Latin" version that was anterior to Jerome. This Tepl ms represented a translation of the Waldensian Bible into the German dialect which was spoken before the time of the Reformation. This undoubtedly was the reason the Roman Church reproved Luther for "following the Waldenses".⁶ Moreover, the translators of 1611 had before them four Bibles which had come under Waldensian influences: the Diodati in Italian, the Olivetan in French, the Lutheran in German, and the Genevan in English. Strong evidence exists that they also had access to at least six Waldensian Bibles written in the old Waldensian vernacular.⁷

¹ Wilkinson, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

² Peter Allix, *The Ecclesiastical History of the Churches of Piedmont*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1821; 1st pub. 1690), p. 177.

³ Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 43.

⁴ Kenyon, *Our Bible And The Ancient Manuscripts*, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-170; cp. pp. 139-144, 238-243.

⁵ Wilkinson, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.

⁶ Ernesto Comba, *History of The Waldenses of Italy*, (London: n.p., 1889), pp. 190-192.

⁷ Wilkinson, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

Dr. Frederick Nolan, who had already acquired eminence for his Greek and Latin scholarship and research into Egyptian chronology, spent twenty-eight years in tracing the Received Text back to its apostolic origin.¹ His investigations showed that the Italic New Testament of the primitive Christians of northern Italy, the lineal descendants of the Waldenses, was in fact the Received Text. He found remains of the primitive Italic version embedded in the early translations made by the Waldenses thereby carrying the Waldensian text back to the A.D. 157 "Old Latin" version – thus attesting to the antiquity of the *Textus Receptus*.²

Gilly's studies conducted in the mountains of the Piedmont among the Waldenses led him to pen:³

"The method which Allix has pursued, in his History of the Churches of Piedmont, is to show that in the ecclesiastical history of every century, from the fourth century, which he considers a period early enough for the enquirer after apostolical purity of doctrine, there are clear proofs that doctrines, unlike those which the Romish Church holds, and conformable to the belief of the Waldensian and Reformed Churches, were maintained by theologians of the north of Italy down to the period, when the Waldenses first came into notice. Consequently the opinions of the Waldenses were not new to Europe in the eleventh or twelfth centuries, and there is nothing improbable in the tradition, that the Subalpine Church persevered in its integrity in an uninterrupted course from the first preaching of the Gospel in the valleys."

Although Rome has obliterated the records and calumniated the character of these Christian folk (and many other genuine Christian sects as well) by lies, falsification and/or destruction of documents and

¹ Wilkinson, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

² Nolan, *An Inquiry*, *op. cit.*, pp. xvii-xviii. Although Dr. Nolan's study revealed that the old Waldensian Bible was Byzantine in nature and taken from the Old Latin, Dr. Letis informs us (1-21-1989 correspondence to Moorman) that no Byzantine Old Latin is known to be extant. The painstakingly detailed learned work by Nolan chiefly presents evidence to overthrow the critical system of Griesbach and to establish that the Byzantine, not the Alexandrian, codices are the most reliable. He stated that no reliance could be placed on the printed editions of Origen's works, on the accuracy of his quotations or on the MSS from which he quoted "Scripture" (pp. 320-321).

³ W.S. Gilly, *Waldensian Researches During a Second Visit to the Vaudois of Piedmont*, (London: n.p., 1831), pp. 118-119.

historical records, many earlier historians such as J. Leger, Comba, and Nolan have reached the same conclusions as Gilly and Allix. The immediate question before us is: how could the lineal predecessors of the Waldenses have had such a pure Biblical doctrine¹ so unlike the Romish church to pass down to the Vaudois as mentioned in the preceding quote from Gilly? Obviously the pre-Waldensian Christians of northern Italy could not have held doctrines purer than Rome unless the text of their Bible was purer than that of Rome; that is, theirs was not produced from Rome's corrupted manuscripts.²

THE ORIGINAL TEXT PRESERVED HISTORICALLY THROUGH THE TRUE CHURCH

Constantine's Hexapla based version was met by God through a powerful chain of churches, few in number compared with the manifold congregations of an apostate Christendom but, enriched by the presence of the Holy Scriptures and able scholars, it stretched from Palestine to Scotland.³ Rome was thus not only unable to obliterate in her own land the testimony of the Apostolic Scriptures but even far less so in the Greek speaking world of the hostile East.

The Greek version of the Bible adopted by Constantine (taken from Origen's Hexapla and his edited N.T. by Eusebius) was produced at a time when Bibles were scarce due to the fury against the Christians and their "book" by the Roman Emperor Diocletian (reigned 284-305 A.D.). Strangely, at a time when imperial favor meant so much, the version disappeared from popular use in only one generation as if it had been "struck by some invisible and withering blast."⁴ Why did this happen?

¹ McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopedia of Biblical Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1867), Vol. X, p. 855 ("Waldenses"). Among these doctrines are: that the Holy Scriptures are the only sources of faith and religion without regard to the authority of the fathers or tradition; rejection of all the external rites of the Roman church (i.e.: images, crosses, pilgrimages, worship of holy relics, etc.) except the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper; rejection of the papal doctrine of purgatory and masses or prayers for the dead; rejection of indulgences and confession of sin to a priest for forgiveness; denial of transubstantiation in the communion; rejection of the notion that the pope has any God-given authority over other churches; and that the marriage of the clergy is lawful and necessary, etc.

² Comba, *History of The Waldenses of Italy*, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

³ Wilkinson, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, *op. cit.*, p. 41. Wilkinson is once again the primary source under this heading.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

The *Textus Receptus* or Greek Vulgate (i.e., commonly used or current) had been the Bible of the Greek Empire, the countries of Syrian Christianity, northern Italy, Southern France and the British Isles **in the second century**. This was more than a full century before Vaticanus and Sinaiticus came to see the light of day under the direction of Eusebius and Pamphilus. When the Roman Church began to send out missionaries in later centuries, they found these people already using the *Textus Receptus*.¹

Moreover, the *Textus Receptus* was the Bible of early Eastern Christianity, subsequently being adopted as **the official text of the Greek Orthodox Church**. Hort himself conceded this.² We also have the witness of the great Syrian Church, the Waldensian Church of northern Italy, the Gallic Church in France, and the Celtic Church in Scotland and Ireland as to the authenticity and apostolicity of the Received Text.³ The ancient records of the first believers in Christ Jesus in these lands unmistakably reveal that they were first penetrated by missionaries from Palestine and Asia Minor, not Rome.⁴ Further, the Greek New Testament (or its translation) which they brought with them was of the text type from which the Protestant Bibles such as the King James and the Lutheran (in German) were translated.

The first converts in ancient Britain held their ground when the pagan Anglo-Saxons descended over the land like locusts. In A.D. 596, when the Pope sent Augustine (not the Bishop of Hippo, see page 167) to convert England, he treated these early Christian Britons with contempt and even connived with the Anglo-Saxons in their extermination of those devout folk.⁵ Indeed, British Christianity did not come from Rome.

At the forefront of early evangelism was the little island of Iona, located off the northwest coast of Scotland. Its most historic citizen was Columba, an Irish churchman of royal lineage. Columba (521-597) founded a theological school upon that island rock, utilizing manuscripts from Asia Minor. From Iona, the Gospel was carried to the Picts on the

¹ Wilkinson, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

² Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

³ Wilkinson, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

mainland, to the Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Germany, and even Italy. When Rome began to send out missionaries to extend her power, she found Great Britain and northern Europe already professing a Christianity which could trace its origin back through Iona to Asia Minor.¹ About 600 A.D., Rome sent missionaries to England and Germany to bring these simple Bible believing Christians under her dominion as much as to subdue the pagans.²

When the Gallic Christians of southern France were massacred by the heathen (177 A.D.) a record of their agony was prepared by the survivors and sent to their true brothers in Asia Minor – not to the Pope of Rome.³ Christianity came to France from Asia Minor, not Rome, and the same may be said for England, albeit possibly not directly but through France and then on to Briton.⁴ As Italy, France and Great Britain were provinces of the old Roman Empire, the first translations of the Bible in those areas were into Latin.⁵

Rome did not begin to send missionaries westward before 250 A.D. The old Latin versions, well established among these early disciples before they came into conflict with Rome, would later bring into sharp focus the depraved nature of the text of Jerome's Vulgate and the version of Constantine. Great bloody conflict eventually ensued as Rome moved to replace these ancient versions with her own Eusebio-Origen type of "bible". The struggle between these two text types continues unabated through their descendants today.

The old Italic version, written in the rude Low Latin (thus verifying its antiquity) of the second century, held its own as long as Latin continued

¹ Wilkinson, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

² Isabel Hill Elder, *Celt, Druid, and Culdee*, (London: Covenant Pub. House, 1947), pp. 90-96. Elder declares that England and Ireland resisted because they already had the pure Gospel. She cites: Gildas as speaking of England's having heard the Gospel by A.D. 37, even before the N.T. was written (p. 90); Origen as mentioning Christians being in Briton in A.D. 200 (p. 91); that the Druids were converted and that Christianity became the national religion of the British Isles in A.D. 156 (p. 93); and that St. Patrick (A.D. 389-461) completed his work resulting in 100,000+ Celtic converts over 100 years before Rome's interest in the Isles.

³ Wilkinson, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

⁴ Johann August Wilhelm Neander, *General History of the Christian Religion and Church*, Vol. I, trans. by J. Torrey, (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1848), pp. 85-86.

⁵ Wilkinson, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-27.

to be the language of the people. Jerome's version was only able to replace it when Latin ceased to be a living (changing) language and became the language of the learned. The first Latin translations maintained themselves against Jerome's Vulgate for nine hundred years.¹ The Gothic version N.T. was translated from the Traditional Text c.350 A.D. by Ulfilas, missionary bishop to the Goths; this proves that the T.T. existed prior to that date.² Like the Old Latin, this ancient version also held its own against the Latin Vulgate of Jerome until the tongue in which it was written ceased to exist.³

The apostle John's long life enabled him to bear apostolic witness to the true text of Scripture and canon until almost the year 100 at which time his hand-trained associates carried forward that same witness. Upon returning from his banishment to the isle of Patmos, John completed the sacred Canon by composing his Gospel, epistles and Apocalypse. Then combining these with the writings of the other Evangelists, he sanctioned them all with apostolic authority.⁴

This Traditional Text arose from the place of obscurity and humiliation forced on it by Origen's version in the hands of Eusebius and Constantine, to become the Received Text of Greek Christianity.⁵ With the Greek East completely shut off from the Latin West for 1,000 years, the noble Waldenses of northern Italy still possessed the Received Text in Latin form. They became one of the main instruments in the hands of the Holy Spirit through which He kept the many promises to preserve the Word of God.

In view of all the preceding, the Roman Church's claim that she gave the Bible to the world is seen as false. What she gave was an impure text, a text with thousands of alterations so as to make way for her unscriptural doctrines. At the same time, she heaped upon those who possessed the veritable Word of God long centuries of pitiless, relentless, merciless, bloodthirsty persecution.

¹ *ISBE*, *op. cit.*, (1979), Vol. IV, p. 973.

² Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

³ Wilkinson, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

⁴ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, *op. cit.*, Book III, ch. 24; also cited by: Nolan, *An Inquiry into the Integrity of the Greek Vulgate*, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-113.

⁵ Nolan, *An Inquiry into the Integrity of the Greek Vulgate*, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-42.

IS NATURALISTIC TEXT CRITICISM SCIENTIFIC?

We close this rebuttal with the question: in view of all the foregoing, is naturalistic textual criticism actually scientific? Having previously been employed as a paleontologist and geophysicist over a 14 year career, this author submits that his years of study and training in the scientific method as well as its accompanying discipline in logic and mathematics qualifies him to address this question somewhat more dispassionately than the textual critics themselves. Like Westcott and Hort, whose views on the matter have already been cited, naturalistic critics uniformly proclaim that their methods follow scientific standards. They believe that they have been scientific largely because they have taken a naturalistic view and approach to the New Testament Text, priding themselves on having treated it just as they would the text of any other ancient book. As Hort has put it:¹

"... we dare not introduce considerations which could not reasonably be applied to other ancient texts, supposing them to have documentary attestation of equal amount, variety, and antiquity."

Before (by Lachmann, Semler, Griesbach, etc.) and since the publication of these words, text critics have taken this position as representing a "neutral outlook" in approaching the problem – but they are tragically mistaken; such is not a "neutral" approach at all – it is pagan. Having studied many years over the writings of representatives of both sides of this issue, this author must agree with the summary statement by the conservative Christian text critic, the late Dr. Edward Freer Hills:²

"... if precision and dependability be the marks of an exact science, surely naturalistic New Testament textual criticism fails to meet the test. It leaves the major phenomena of the New Testament text unexplained, especially the Traditional text found in the vast majority of the Greek New Testament manuscripts. This deficiency readily becomes apparent when we consider the vain efforts of naturalistic textual critics to account for this Traditional text".

The reader should note that when this author mentions "scientific" methods, he is not referring to "science falsely so called"³ like the

¹ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction, op. cit.*, p. 277.

² Hills, *Believing Bible Study, op. cit.*, pp. 89-91.

³ *King James Bible*, I Timothy 6:20.

thoroughly pagan philosophical speculations such as the "Big Bang" or "Steady State" cosmogonies. Neither does he mean other nature myths that likewise deal with origins such as the hypothesis of evolution (any version – being incapable of falsification, organic evolution fails to meet the technical requirements to merit theory status) nor many of the pantheistic fancies of relativist, all of which have been erected based upon a few actual facts of science but whose support pillars are merely philosophy. All of these are no more than fairy stories for adults, full of metaphysical self-defeating contradictions into which unbelieving scientists have fallen because they have rejected and/or ignored God's revelation of Himself.¹

Real Science is based upon what you see. Indeed, the first premise in the scientific method states that we begin with an "**observed**" phenomenon. Thus, if that which is under investigation is not observable to the eye, it may or may not be true but, by definition, it is not science. It will be immediately noted that as no one alive today has actually physically seen God, the scientific method places God beyond and exterior to the realm of science. However it also places many supposed scientific hypotheses and theories outside the same realm for no mortal "observed" the origin of the universe or the solar system. Neither has anyone "seen" any organic evolution occur. Hence it must be recognized and acknowledged that the advocates of these views are not practicing real science; they, like the adherents of the opposing side, are engaged in a philosophic belief system. Such practices of faith have long been defined by a well known term – and that appellation is "religion". Thus both sides are going through life practicing their beliefs and in so doing are being "religious". One side honestly admits this; the other is self-deceived and does not so concede.

Regarding organic evolution, we are not referring to genetic variation within the dog kind (whereby c.120 different varieties ranging from dachshund to Great Dane may be produced by selective breeding), varieties of mosquitoes adapting to DDT, or population changes occurring between the dark and light varieties of peppered moths. Such are only "horizontal" changes (micro-evolution) revealing the inherent ability to

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, pp. 240-241. Here Dr. Hills exhibits excellent yet rare insight with regard to the problems inherent with modern godless science. Although this author does not necessarily agree with all of his conclusions, brother Hills grasped the situation and true scientific fundamentals better than nearly all of today's Christ-professing scientists.

adapt which is built into the DNA code of living creatures that allows them to survive limited changes in the environment so as not to readily become extinct. Such occurrences, though often cited as examples of evolution, have nothing whatsoever to do with macro-evolution (which is, after all, what evolution – neo-Darwinian or punctuated equilibrium – is really all about) whereby organisms progress upward over time toward more complexity and higher degrees of order – for in the cited examples neither of these prerequisites takes place.

That is, we are referring to the alleged type of change in which the dog kind and cat kind originated from a common ancestor. All the dog varieties produced by the aforementioned selective breeding are still "*Canis familiaris*" and, being the genus *Canis*, are interfertile (although size differences can produce physical difficulties) and can produce fertile offspring (the scientific prerequisites for determining Genera). Moreover, the mosquitoes remain the same variety and can still reproduce with others like it was before the adaptation took place and the dark and light forms of the moths are internally identical remaining the same genera and species, *Biston betularia*.¹ Absolutely no upward progress over time toward more complexity and higher degrees of order has taken place.

¹ Duane T. Gish, *Evolution, the Fossils Say No!*, (San Diego, CA: Master Books, 1972), pp. 38-39. Normally the peppered moth is white with black spots and stripes. Although once a rarity, the dark or carbonaria form has always been known. Around 1850 A.D., the tree trunks in England were mostly light colored. Moreover, the mottled gray lichen grew on these trees. Resting on the trunks with wings outspread, the light-colored variant blended and flourished being nearly non-detectable by the predatory birds whereas the darker population (also referred to in the literature as "melanic"), lacking protection from the environment, was depressed. However with the advent of the industrial revolution and its accompanying pollution, the tree lichen died and the trunks became progressively darker due to the resultant air contamination. Having lost their protective coloration advantage, by 1895 the light colored variety had been decimated by the birds to the extent that around 95% of these moths in the Manchester area were of the carbonaria variety. As of the 1950's, the population had become about 98% of the dark moths.

The population shift was, of course, due to the fact that the darker moths were now inconspicuous against the blackened tree trunks whereas the lighter forms had become more easily detected while resting against the darker background. But is this actually an example or proof of evolution? Indeed it is not. This process has nothing to do with increasing complexity or producing anything new, therefore this interesting occurrence has nothing whatever to do with proving that the lepidopterous insects arose by a naturalistic, mechanistic evolutionary process from non-lepidopterous insects or whether the insects arose from a non-insect life. Moreover, we started with a moth and 100 years later we still had a moth. Both remaining forms (light & dark) were internally identical and remained the same genera and species (*Biston betularia*). Again, positively no upward progress over time toward more complexity and higher degrees of order has taken place.

Finally, the fossil record which is offered by evolutionists as physical proof of their **belief** is totally against them. Time and space forbid a prolonged exposition along these lines as such would be beyond the purpose of this paper, but in passing it should be noted that not only are the transitional forms missing between all the major animal and plant groups, the presence of which would be necessary to maintain such an hypothesis, the gaps are of an unimaginable magnitude. The fossil record is one of mass destruction, death, and burial (almost exclusively by water and its suspended sediments), not that of transformation of one kind into another.

Contrary and hostile to the evolutionary scenario, the fossil record not only reveals a systematic absence of transitional forms, it reveals the sudden explosive appearance of highly diverse forms of life without any preceding intermediate types. Furthermore, since all of the major phyla are found in the Cambrian, the bulk of evolutionary diversity had to have taken place before that era, yet – even granting the legitimacy of the pitifully few Pre-Cambrian supposed "microfossils" (which this author does not) – the gap between these so-called microfossils and the highly organized, diversified life forms found in the Cambrian is immense. The ancestors of the Cambrian organisms simply are not to be found. In short, the laws of thermodynamics tell us that evolution could not happen and the fossil record tells us that evolution did not happen – and that is real science.

Furthermore, change resulting in variation within a "kind" is as much to be expected in the Creation Model as it is in the evolutionary scenario. Such variation in the created gene pool would enable the original kinds to have some leeway to adapt to environmental changes. Otherwise they would experience extinction at the slightest changes in temperature, altitude, water supply, food supply etc. This pre-designed built in safety measure was necessary due to the effect of the God imposed Curse which accompanied the Fall which had to be harmonized with the Creator's desire to also preserve (or conserve) the created life forms until they had served their God-intended purposes.

The evolutionist assumes the accumulation of many such minor advantages over time could eventually result in increased complexity and higher order generating a new species, but this is not science. It is merely a belief based solely upon assumption. To bring this to the level of science requires historical observation, experiential evidence, or a transitional series of forms in the fossil record that changes of this kind actually resulted in the production of forms of higher degrees of order and complexity. There does exist change within a kind, but the changes always remain within the kind. This is what man has **observed** (real science is based on that which is observable, everything else that is made out to be science actually falls into the categories of philosophy or religion) and that observation supports Creationism, for that model contains as part of its basic premise that all changes will stay within the God-established bounds of the original created kind.

Being un-observable, un-testable and thus un-provable, these nature myths (Big Bang etc. – there being several other plausible scientific explanations to account for the "red shift" besides that of an expanding universe) are outside the realm of science. Hence, their adherents must be seen as continuing on in **faith** with regard to these theories and hypotheses and moreover in so pursuing invariably violate many other well established laws and principles of real science – especially the first and second laws of thermodynamics. Therefore, the Christian should not be intellectually intimidated by them. Rather, we mean the logic and method of true empirical observable science.

Furthermore, textual criticism is not "scientific" because over the years nearly all of its leading proponents have systematically ignored the massive contrary evidence, refusing to give serious consideration to the objections, questions, and deliberations of the men who present such hostile testimony against their liberal views. It is not scientific because it continues to scorn and disregard the vast majority of manuscript data even though the supposed justification for so doing, the late text hypothesis and that of the Antiochian recension, has been completely exposed as untrue and baseless. Indeed, the notable works of Burgon, Miller, Hoskier, Scrivener, Hills, Pickering, and others who have championed the antithetical position have yet to obtain the hearing they deserve; yet such should be found in a truly open "scientific" forum where the supposed objective is to examine **all** the data and arrive at the truth.

Today, extremely few Greek New Testament students have ever heard of these men, other than perhaps a few aside derogatory remarks such as "Burgon was the champion of lost causes", much less seen a copy of their works or actually read them. Yet Burgon, despite his witticisms and taunts, presented innumerable documented hard facts and in so doing followed along a true scientific approach much more so than did Westcott and Hort who, lacking hard proof, often resorted to fanciful imagination. Nevertheless W&H have been allowed a full hearing and attracted a large following. And why is this so? Part of the answer may be seen in Hoskier's remark: "The reason is sadly obvious, the latter method is taken easy, and at first sight plausible to the beginner. The former is horribly laborious, although precious in results."¹

¹ Herman C. Hoskier, *Concerning the Text of the Apocalypse* (2 Vols., London: Bernard Quaritch, Ltd., 1929), Vol. I, p. xlvii.

Moreover, the undeniable truth, as Letis has been documenting for the past several years, is that textual criticism leads to higher criticism which inevitably leads to the rejection of the historical and miraculous in the Word of God. Further, the 18th-century myth that "text criticism does not affect doctrine or the fundamental truths of Christianity" seizes, mesmerizes, and seduces all who have been formally instructed at educational institutions of higher learning, especially those who have attained advanced theological training.¹ Indeed, it is precisely the denial of *these* points that has led to the destruction of the faith of many of today's pastors and priest with regard to the written Word of the Living God and has, since about the turn of the century, allowed for the free promotion of the modern translations which are all founded on the critical (eclectic) text.

Kenyon's words: "It is true (and cannot be too emphatically stated) that none of the fundamental truths of Christianity rests on passages of which the genuineness is doubtful"² are simply naive in the extreme as well as untrue. Regardless of the eminence of whosoever utters Kenyon's sentiment – it is a deception devoid of truth. Again, the plain errors of fact and contradictions incorporated in the eclectic text of the New Testament invalidates the doctrine of Divine Inspiration as it thereby becomes relative as well as rendering untenable the doctrine of the Scriptures as being the infallible deposit of God's Word to man.

Finally, this author concludes with Hoskier that without a *demonstrable* history of the transmission of the text (sans flights of the imagination) as well as an understanding of the interaction of the versions upon each other and upon the Greek texts, text criticism can never be said to rest on a "scientific" foundation.³ Indeed, Hoskier stated that it was this lack of scientific basis in the field of textual criticism that most concerned Dean Burgon.⁴

¹ Letis, in 1-12-1992, 4-6-1992 and 3-17-1993 correspondence from Edinburgh, Scotland.

² Kenyon, *Our Bible And The Ancient Manuscripts*, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-4; also see p. 55 in the 1958 edition for a similiar remark.

³ Hoskier, *Codex B and its Allies*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 415.

⁴ *Ibid.*

O how I love thy law!
it is my meditation all the day.
Thou through thy commandments
hast made me wiser than mine enemies:
for they are ever with me.
I have more understanding than all my teachers:
for thy testimonies are my meditation.
I understand more than the ancients,
because I keep thy precepts.
Psalms 119:97-100

VIII. THE BELIEVING FRAME OF REFERENCE

THE CHURCH'S HISTORICAL TEXT

Of course, by faith we know that we do not have to wait for such a meticulous lengthy undertaking as described in the previous chapter (see pp. 161 ff.) to be completed in order for us to finally possess the original text. By faith, the child of God knows that he **already** has the Word of God at his disposal. A study of the history of the transmission of the Scriptures from their having been deposited by the Lord into the hands of man will further serve to strengthen that faith; yet such a study will not completely prove beyond all doubt that this is so.

This cannot be over emphasized, for unless we come by faith to a commitment that God has kept His promises and providentially preserved His Word in the *Textus Receptus* itself and not merely in the Greek majority readings, the final form of the text will forever be unsettled in our hearts.¹ The natural, rational mind resents this method. However the pitfalls apart from such a theological approach are many and dangerous. The late Dr. Edward F. Hills is consistently Christian and perceptive in his logic when he addressed this matter regarding its relation to higher education.²

"We must make God and Jesus Christ His Son the starting point of all our thinking. But how can we do this on the graduate level at a theological seminary or a university? How can we know for example, whether the King James Version is a correct translation or not? Don't we have to rely on dictionaries, such as Brown-Driver-Briggs, Thayer, Kittel, and Liddel-Scott? And for grammar don't we have to go to the great authorities in this field, such as Gesenius, Bauer, and Blass-Debrunner? ... For our knowledge of the New Testament manuscripts are we not obliged to depend almost entirely on the writings of experts, such as Gregory, Kenyon, Colwell, Metzger, and Aland? **When we study the Bible on the graduate level, therefore, how**

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-112, 224-225, etc. This is Dr. Hills continuing theme throughout his works.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 113-114. The reader is enjoined to read the non-cited portions of this quote which have not been given for the sake of brevity; here Hills explains "the logic of faith" with regard to the TR & KJB.

can we begin with God? Must we not rather begin with men? With the information provided by scholars, *most of whom are unbelievers?* (emphasis added)

"Questions like these cause many conservative seminary students to panic and become virtual unbelievers in their biblical studies. In order, therefore, to prevent such catastrophes, we must always emphasize the Christian starting point that all our thinking ought to have. If we are Christians, then we must begin our thinking not with the assertions of unbelieving scholars and their naturalistic human logic, but with Christ and the logic of faith.

"... In biblical studies, in philosophy, in science, and in every other learned field we must begin with Christ and then work out our basic principles according to the logic of faith. This procedure will show us how to utilize the learning of non-Christian scholars in such a way as to profit by their instruction. Undeniably these unbelievers know a great many facts by virtue of God's common grace. They misinterpret these facts, however, because they ignore and deny God's revelation of Himself in and through the facts. Hence our task is to point out the inconsistencies and absurdities of unbelieving thought and then to take the facts which learned unbelievers have assembled and place them in their proper framework of biblical truth.

Dr. Hills concludes:¹

"... Begin with Christ and the Gospel and follow the logic of faith. This is the principle that must guide us in our graduate studies, especially in the biblical field. If we adhere to it, then everything we learn will fit beautifully into its place in the Christian thought-system. But if we ignore Christ and adopt a neutral approach to knowledge, we will soon lose ourselves in a wilderness of details and grow more and more chaotic in our thinking."

Indeed, if we *only* used the majority concept as our standard, we would remain in constant uncertainty – in a state of flux. Who knows but on the morrow the archaeologist's spade may uncover an ancient library containing hundreds or even several thousands of Greek manuscripts embodying the "Alexandrian" text? Thus, the true reading would always hang in doubt for still later another library may be discovered with

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

"Western" readings or even "Syrian". But we need not be concerned, for God has not left us depending upon the spade of the archaeologist to determine the true text. Neither are we awaiting his discovering a new papyri hiding in a jar somewhere. If we did so, our faith would always be wavering and we could never be confident that a dealer would not soon appear with something new from somewhere else. We would be wondering if the damming of the Nile River had destroyed some Greek text which would show us a new wonderful truth.

We already possess and have had all along the actual TRUTH of Scripture! We have, by faith in God's promises to preserve His Word, an assumed premise, a priori, of God's providential preservation of the text. Someone may say "prove it", but this fails to comprehend the nature of a priori premise. As Letis has reminded us: "One does not prove a first premise. A premise by definition is something one assumes, not something he proves."¹ And even more to the point – the context of these promises having been for the use of His people throughout time – we rest with maximum certainty that we already have those precious Words at our disposal as preserved in the Bible of the Reformation.² We are not lingering in expectation for the modern text critics to "restore" them to us.

It is not our position that the text found in the majority is the true text merely because it is found in the majority of mss (although some do so argue). It is the **reason** that this text is found present in the majority that is decisive. "The reason", says Letis, "that all defenders of the TR since the Reformation follow the majority text is because it reflects the actual text **HISTORICALLY USED BY THE CHURCH** – the believers in all ages to whom Jesus promised to lead into all truth – as sacred text."³ True, the supporting evidence such as that of Sturz' mentioned in chapter seven which revealed that the papyri sustained many of the Byzantine readings as being second century was encouraging, but our confidence is

¹ Theodore P. Letis, "A Reply to the Remarks of Mark A. McNeil" (Edinburgh: 9-3-1990), p. 2. This is a 5 page response by Dr. Letis to a 8-14-1990 appeal for documentation from Mr. Eldred Thomas (Vid. supra, fn. 3, p. 67), whose program on the subject of Biblical texts had aired resulting in Mr. Mark McNeil's having taken issue with him on several particulars.

² Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, op. cit., pp. 224-225.

³ Telephone conversation with the author, October, 1989. Dr. Letis has contended the same many times in various articles and correspondence (also Hills, *King James Version Defended*, op. cit., p. 113). He so does in fn 1 above (Reply to ... McNeil).

not in isolated scrapes of old papyri or vellum. It is founded on a much surer foundation. Our confidence is in God's never failing promises and in the text which has been continuously in public usage by the Church. This is why the TR is the true text, not merely because of its great statistical "superiority" or "probability".

Furthermore, when we use such phrases as "the Word of God says ...", "the Scriptures say ..." or "the Holy Bible says ..." etc., we do *not* merely mean the Hebrew Masoretic text and the Greek Textus Receptus (Syrian, Byzantine, Traditional Text, or majority text). We are referring to something contained between the covers of one Book, something that we can hold in our hands as English speaking laymen or elders. We are speaking of an entity which we can read daily for our own edification and read aloud to our families, friends, and Church. That "something" is known as the Authorized or King James Bible. We proclaim without reservation that it is the Holy Spirit guided, absolutely faithful English translation and rendering of God's original wording. As such, it speaks to us as final authority (in context) against which all matters must be measured and tested. It is "THE" Bible, the living Words of the Living God – it is the Word of God.

THE MODERN VIEW OF INERRANCY AMONG MOST CLERGY

The current vogue in conservative, fundamentalist scholarship will come as a great surprise to the layman. Today, most conservative Protestant clergymen have been brainwashed as mere youths in their late teens or early twenties at the various denominational Bible colleges and seminaries concerning the doctrine of inerrancy of Scripture. As a result, when most of these pastors etc., declare that they believe in the verbal, plenary inspiration and/or inerrancy (or some other similar declaration of faith in the Scriptures) what they really mean is that only the original autographa were inerrant.

Now this is devastating, as we have no originals preserved for our use. But the situation is even worse than that, for neither do the vast majority of these men believe that the text contained in the original autographs has been preserved intact. That is, they have been taught as very young men that for hundreds of years many original readings have been lost to the Church.

They have also been taught, hence most subscribe to the teaching, that these lost readings are in the process (and have been so for the past one hundred years) of being *restored* back to their pristine original forms by the use of modern textual criticism techniques and methods. Thus, if we were to ask one of the scholars representing this school of thought whether he could show us the "infallible Word of the Living God", he would take us to his private study – wave his hand toward between 800-1200 books on his library shelves and reply that somewhere contained within all those volumes exists the Word of God. He would inform us that the problem was very complex, but all was well as he and other brilliant scholars were working on putting the puzzle back together. Besides, he would assure us, no major doctrinal issues are in doubt in the meantime.

If we pressed these men further to better define their position, we would discover that very few believe that there exists on the earth today between two covers such that it could be held in the hand – the Bible. That is – in their view, is that which they hold in their hand having the words "Holy Bible" inscribed thereon and read from the pulpit to their flocks, the inerrant Word of God? If they were honest, regardless of the version to which they personally subscribe, the answer would be "NO"!

When these men are interviewed by pulpit committees, deacons etc. and are asked whether they believe in the inerrancy of the Scriptures, they will invariably reply in the affirmative.¹ However, this is a deception. The committee means something that they can hold in their hands, study, meditate over, and read to their children. As outlined previously, the potential local pastor being interviewed means something quite different. Thus a deliberate wicked misrepresentation of beliefs is being foisted upon the laity. The reason for the dishonesty is that most conservative congregations would not knowingly select men of so little faith in God's promises to preserve His Word to serve as their pastors. Truly of those the Scripture has spoken and is verified in them:

For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows (I Tim.6:10).

¹ The candidate having been so instructed by his seminary professors – remember Semler's "accommodation" policy? (see Ch. VI., page 122)

HOW PRINCETON WAS CORRUPTED¹

How did such a dreadful situation arise in the first place? Sad to say, the man responsible was a man of God, a Christian brother. That brother's name is B.B. Warfield, and the following is a brief description portraying the truth of how "a little leaven leavens the whole lump." The time is in the late 1800's and early 1900's.

J.S. Buckminster had persuaded the officials of Harvard College to publish an American edition of Griesbach's² 1809 Greek New Testament, as he viewed text criticism "a most powerful weapon to be used against the supporters of verbal inspiration." Warfield, the eventual champion of the Princeton school, was well aware of this "weapon" and determined to neutralize it. However, in attempting to accomplish this goal he compromised his previous commitment and views on inerrancy, altering them into a new doctrine. The result on American conservatism was that lower (textual) criticism came to be viewed as "safe".

Princeton had for many years been a conservative Presbyterian bastion of faith, fully dedicated to verbal inspiration and inerrancy. True, some accommodations crept in after 1834, yet Princeton remained reasonably true to the Word. Prior to Warfield's arrival in 1887, no Princetonian had attained expert status in the young discipline of New Testament text criticism (though his mentor Charles Hodge had studied two years in Germany). Like Hodge, Warfield felt that one had to study in Germany to be abreast of critical issues. He also was aware that in New England text criticism (the so-called "lower criticism") was undermining the orthodox view of verbal inspiration.

With a letter of introduction from Philip Schaff, Warfield entered the University of Leipzig in 1876 for a year's study. Previously, as a firm believer in inerrancy, he had fully subscribed to the Westminster Confession which upheld the doctrine of preservation with regard to the Bible of the Reformation. After 1876, Warfield – guided by his Common

¹ Theodore P. Letis, *Edward Freer Hills' Contribution to the Revival of the Ecclesiastical Text*, (Unpublished M.T.S. thesis, Emory University: 1987), pp. 71-106 . The information under this heading has been adapted from Letis' second chapter.

² To recall Griesbach's canon regarding variant readings being "suspicious" if they favored orthodox teachings of the Church, see page 97. Then consider that Westcott and Hort venerated Griesbach's name "above that of every other textual critic of the New Testament." Westcott and Hort, *Introduction, op. cit.*, p. 185.

Sense philosophy – consciously rejected the "Scholastic"¹ approach and became the first American to become an authority in the theory and praxis of "Enlightenment"² New Testament text criticism at Princeton.

During his year at Leipzig, Warfield's resolve weakened under the constant barrage of "variant readings" and Hortism. He had come to believe the true text had in some places been lost though he still felt, for the most part, it had remained untouched through time. Warfield and Hodge had come to embrace the Westcott-Hort theory believing that these men were exemplary models of evangelical scholarship while at the same time attuned to German methods. Warfield now saw as his calling the integration of Biblical criticism with the historic view of verbal inspiration.

In short, neither Warfield, Hodge nor most evangelicals since have realized that what they correctly recognize as "that dangerous higher criticism" is inexorably interwoven with and subtly tied to the "safe" discipline of lower criticism. Warfield had intended to defend "verbal inspiration" from German attacks naively thinking that lower criticism, dealing as it does with the "concrete facts", remained immune to the "speculations" of the higher critics.

B.B. Warfield's Common-Sense philosophy allowed him to adopt the "scientific" text criticism method of Westcott and Hort. He accepted their claim that they had constructed a "neutral" text. The fact that W-H had arrived at such a determination *without* any reference to *theology* made their arguments all the more compelling for Warfield. He **reasoned** that this method must be God's means of **restoring the true text** (humanistic). Thus he had shifted from his former view of "providential **preservation**" to one of "providential **restoration**" in the new text of

¹ Scholasticism: the philosophical and theological method taught in Medieval schools which revived in the 16th through the 20th centuries. It embodied the use of Aristotelian logic as an aid to better understand the Christian revelation. It was an attempt by intellectual process to attain a deeper penetration into the inner meaning of Christian doctrine, thus philosophy had a great role in scholastic thought. Utilizing thesis method, it represented an attempt to reconcile reason and faith, philosophy and revelation.

² The Enlightenment: a "freedom of the intellect" movement in 18th century Germany which spread into much of Europe. It was founded upon the presupposition of faith in the omnipotence of human ability. The Enlightenment sought the path to absolute truth through "pure reason", observation and experimentation without guidance from anyone else. Its adherents distrusted all authority and tradition in matters of intellectual inquiry.

Westcott and Hort. This was a radical change of interpretation of the Westminster Confession.

Eventually Warfield and his colleague in textual studies, Philip Schaff, feeling that "enlargement is not alteration, development is not revolution, elaboration is not correction" (does not this sound akin to theistic evolution?) came to delight in the notion of updating the old creedal standards. They came to desire a revision of the Westminster creed that would be in accordance with "the advanced stage of theology".

Shortly after his return from Leipzig, the Westcott-Hort text was published (1882). Benjamin B. Warfield gave it a review that would forever endear it to conservatives in the United States. Philip Schaff, himself an accomplished textual scholar, was so impressed with Warfield's elucidation of the Westcott-Hort method of "genealogy" that he invited Warfield to explain it in his *Companion To The Greek Testament And English Version*. This was tantamount to elevating Warfield to the first rank in this discipline in America.

John Burgon, a high Anglican priest but opposed to ritualism, spent most of his adult life at Oxford. Burgon, who eventually became the Dean of Chichester, viewed Westcott and Hort in a much different light. He saw them as guilty of importing the apostate German method into the British Isles. Warfield despised Burgon, an irony as they were fellow inerrantist, because he relied on theology to interpret textual data. Indeed, this is the correct world view, frame of reference and approach that the Christian should bring to every issue of life. To the contrary however, Warfield felt that the faithful should follow the same method as did the "Enlightenment" scholars, treating Scripture as any other piece of literature, without reference to either its inspiration or uniqueness. Thus Warfield took every opportunity to discredit Burgon's theological arguments in order to distance modern Presbyterians from the suspicion of resisting "scientific" scholarship by an appeal to theology.

Having been encouraged by A.A. Hodge to defend the Princeton view of verbal inspiration against an attack by the critical theories of Charles S. Briggs, Warfield found himself on the horns of a dilemma. His challenge was to act as champion and come to the rescue of Princeton in response to Briggs and other critics and still protect his own reputation as an emerging future authority in text criticism. Yet text criticism was the one discipline which seemed to undermine the Princeton view of verbal inspiration more than any other! Warfield had become a contradiction.

While admitting on the one hand that in text critical matters the Bible was as any other literature, Warfield had to contend that it was still the verbally inspired Word of God.

For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God
(John 12:43).

This was a demanding task indeed, but not intellectually beyond Warfield's abilities. Warfield's solution was to shift his doctrine of inerrancy to include **only** the original autographa; no longer holding to the belief in the inerrancy of the Bible of the Reformers, the Traditional Text. Thus he moved that if the locus of providence were now centered in *restoration* via "Enlightenment" textual criticism, rather than *preservation* of the traditional texts, then we need not concern ourselves with the criticisms lodged at the text of Scripture presently (and historically!) used in the Church. This posture allowed Warfield to actually join with the critics of the Princeton position as God's agents (or as some view it, as prophets) in the task of restoring the inerrant original.

HOW THE CONSERVATIVE SEMINARIES WERE CORRUPTED¹

Year after year, Enlightenment critics wore down the orthodox Calvinist and other conservatives by pointing out the many discrepancies (variant readings) within the textual data. Warfield proved untrue to his original goal and finally abandoned the scholastic, creedal approach. He determined that if text criticism – German Enlightenment text criticism – could be separated from the higher criticism that fathered it, with common sense at the helm, it could lead the Church safely to the goal. Moreover, if errors and "corruptions" within our present copies could be acknowledged, then perhaps just around the corner lay the pristine autographa waiting to be restored by God's good Providence. Yet textual criticism invariably leads to higher criticism in rejecting eventually the historical and miraculous in God's Word. The denial of *this* point has allowed the promotion of the many modern translations over the past century. It is a myth that text criticism is harmless to faith.

¹ Letis, *Edward Freer Hills' Contribution to the Revival of the Ecclesiastical Text*, *op. cit.*, the material written under this heading has been adapted from pp. 86, 87, 103-105.

For the early Princetonians, authority had rested in the providentially preserved text which had been employed by the Church throughout its history, that same text having been used by the Spirit of God to bring about the Reformation. It was B.B. Warfield who brought the Enlightenment to Princeton. The following quote¹ depicts the depths of the deception into which he plunged after his return from Leipzig, a deception which has greatly aided in the satanically guided move to bring us back to the Roman Catholic "Bible" and – eventually – to the Pope.

"I have been surprised, in comparing the Revised Testament with other versions, to find how many of the changes, which are important and valuable, have been anticipated by the Rhemish (Roman Catholic) translation, which now forms a part of what is known as the Douay Bible. ... And yet a careful comparison of these new translations with the Rhemish Testament, shows them, in many instances to be simply **a return to this old version**, and leads us to think that possibly there were as finished scholars three hundred years ago as now, and nearly as good apparatus for the proper rendering of the original text." (author's emphasis and parenthesis)

Soon after Warfield's death in 1921, higher criticism entered Princeton and the Seminary was reorganized in 1929 to more fully accommodate critical thought. The facile certainty that Westcott and Hort's system seemed to offer Warfield vanished as later text critics abandoned the notion of being able to reconstruct a "neutral" text based on Codices B and a. "Eclecticism" (which has long despaired of discovering an archetypal, autographic text – apparently because in their judgment, no such entity ever existed!) became the standard approach in text criticism, and it dominates to this hour.

The adoption of the German methods and the reorganization of Princeton are part of Warfield's legacy. Another part of his legacy is that his position on inerrancy was continued through the godly professors whose lives he had influenced such as Robert Dick Wilson, J. Gresham Machen, Oswald Allis, and Cornelius Van Til. These all left Princeton at the 1929 reorganization and went on to establish Westminster Theological Seminary. Tragically, they carried with them Warfield's warped reinterpretation of the Westminster Confession which professes the "scientific" text criticism of Westcott and Hort as God's means of

¹ Benjamin B. Warfield, *Collection of Opinions*, Vol. II, pp. 52-53.

eventually "restoring" the autographic text. As a result, Westminster Seminary soon became "frozen in time".

The cancer of Warfieldian inerrancy spread rapidly from Princeton throughout the ranks of the Presbyterians. From there it continued to infect other conservative groups. During the early part of the 20th-century the Southern Baptists adopted Westcott and Hort through the person of their greatest Greek scholar, A.T. Robertson. Robertson greatly admired Warfield and succumbed to his beliefs on text criticism. In 1925, Robertson dedicated his handbook "to the memory of B.B. Warfield".¹ To this very day, the poison continues to infiltrate and dominate all conservative circles. Truly, "a little leaven leavens the whole lump."

The reason that this wicked compromise began and goes on unabated, is that brilliant Christian scholars have refused to humble their intellects – placing their own education and intellect above the promises of God and historic Church creeds on inerrancy. All too many find themselves unwilling to stand in simple faith alongside the dauntless Reformers, Burgon, Miller, Hoskier, Nolan, Hills, Van Bruggen, Fuller, Pickering, D.A. Waite, Green, Letis, Moorman, etc., as well as many other men of God over the past centuries – wishing instead to be admired by their peers as "progressive", "informed", and "abreast of the latest scientific approaches". The vast majority thereby blindly supports the "restoration" position.

¹ A.T. Robertson, *An Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1925), and pp. vii-ix. Warfield's compromises included that of Scripture and evolution. Accepting the supposed great age of the earth as required by evolutionary hypothesis (as had Princetonians Charles Hodge and his son Alexander), Warfield continued bringing down Princeton Theological Seminary by assuring his readers that evolution could "...supply a theory of the method of divine providence." Arthur Custance, *Two Men Called Adam*, (Brockville, Ontario: Doorway Publications, 1983), pp. 3-7. Robertson further compromised himself by accepting the Synoptic problem. This hypothesis teaches that the similarities and differences between the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke may only be resolved by assuming a literary relationship among them. Thus the evangelists must have copied from each other and/or consulted the same written source(s) – that the Gospels are the result of interdependence among the three "Synoptic" writers. It purports that Luke and Matthew used Mark in preparing their Gospel accounts and that since Matthew and Luke recorded nearly identical matter for much not found in Mark they both used a second source in common (i.e., "Q" for the German *quelle* or "source"). Further, that Mark wrote his gospel under the direct influence of Simon Peter (not the Holy Spirit?): Robertson, *A Harmony of the Gospels*, (NY: Harper & Row, 1922), pp. vii, 255-256. Yet the Synoptic Problem cannot be proven neither indeed does it exist! Eta Linnemann, *Is There A Synoptic Problem?*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992), pp. 9-15, 24-27.

Though at first the reader may be taken aback by the following, let him read it over several times until it be comprehended. We are not interested in anything concerning the "originals" or "autographs". God saw fit to destroy the original autograph of the tables of stone upon which the Ten Commandments were inscribed, as well as the second tables. Moreover, He allowed wicked King Jehoiakim to cut up and burn the "original autograph" given to Jeremiah and written by Baruch while at the same time the Lord preserved the **original text** without error (Jer.36, esp. vv. 22-23, 28 and 32).

Nor are we waiting in anticipation for some archaeologist or textual critic to "find and restore" to the Church the "original" text. In certain faith in God's many promises to preserve His Holy Word, we know that we already have these ten "Living Words" exactly as the Lord gave them to Moses, as well as those of Jeremiah etc. Were we to discover the "original", by faith we know that it would read exactly as we have had preserved for us in the TR/KJB.

Likewise, it is God Himself as Sovereign Lord and King who was pleased in His wisdom to destroy the autographs of the N.T. Thus, it is tempting God and sinful for us to say that there were (and can still be obtained via text critical techniques) autographs better and more reliable than the Providentially Preserved Bible that we have today. We are not, therefore, interested in any discussion or so-called scholarship which seeks to "uncover" what the originals were like. It is His preserved Bible that is the Word of God, not the autographs. The autographs **were** the infallible Word of God. As they no longer exist, they cannot **be** the Word of God – for God has promised that He would preserve His Word forever.

Nearly everyone who invokes the autographs does so to alter (and thus pervert) the Providentially preserved Scriptures. Most men and/or institutions that claim to embrace the "Doctrine of Inerrancy," do so intending it to apply only to the "originals". In so doing, they have embraced Warfield's perverted version and definition of "inerrancy". Such men and/or institutions lay claim to faith in "inerrancy," but have no doctrine of Providential Preservation and thus they are still – sad to say – looking for (or attempting to restore) the inerrant autographs. It is deceitful for pastors to hold high the Bible and proclaim "I believe God's Word is inspired from cover to cover" while saying under one's breath, "in the autographs". To maintain that we must have the autographs today in order to be certain of the text is as imprudent and needless as to insist

that we require the cup from which Christ drank before communion can be rightly celebrated.¹

Thus, whereas we aver and asseverate that the "originals" were "inspired" (Greek = *qeopneusto* = *theopneustos* = inspired by God or God breathed) and inerrant, we cannot subscribe to the modern version of the "Doctrine of Inerrancy" as it embodies only the "originals" whereas it excludes Providential preservation of the original text. This "Doctrine of Inerrancy" must be recognized by the Church as un-scriptural, untrue, tainted, prostitute, and depraved – a Canaanite idol – as it, in its current Warfieldian form, holds only to a non-existent entity.

Moreover, it is MADNESS to attempt to attain something that one already has as his possession. Hours upon wasted hours of study and research have methodically been carried out, not only by lost apostates and liberals, but – sadly – by brilliant conservative fundamentalists attempting to produce that which we have had as our deposit all along – the infallible, inerrant Word of the Living God, as He Himself promised. Oh Christian, gird up the loins of your mind – make bare the arm!

¹ Robert D. Preus. *The Inspiration of Scripture, A Study of the Theology of the Seventeenth Century Lutheran Dogmaticians*, 2nd ed., (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd Ltd., 1957), p. 49. Preus is citing Dannhauer.

**And it is easier for heaven and earth to
pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.**

Luke 16:17

IX. THE CONCLUSION OF THE MATTER

TECHNICAL OVERVIEW

For nearly two hundred years, the history of textual criticism in the modern period has been the account of the breaking away from what the liberals and apostates have called the "bondage" or "tyranny"¹ of the *Textus Receptus*. These men have asserted that it is as foolish to reject Westcott and Hort's theories (and retain the *Textus Receptus*) as it is to reject the law of gravity.² Conversely, conservative fundamentalists³ have been accused of worshipping the King James Bible. Such an act would, of course, be a sin were anyone actually to do so, but is it not a far greater sin to worship Westcott and Hort? In reality, the liberals and apostates have brought us from the "bondage of the *Textus Receptus* and King James translation" to the bondage of Vaticanus B. All they have done is exchange one for the other, the latter being an untrue, unfaithful witness.

The problem with Hort's work is that the student is never taken with him along the path which he followed but has to start with the acceptance of Hort's final result.⁴ The hostile critics have to explain how Vaticanus B comes to oppose the sub-apostolic Fathers deliberately in many places if we are going to accept anyone's assurance, especially Hort's, about B's being "neutral".⁵ The truth is that the maligned *Textus Receptus* has been the base with which B tampered and changed; the church at large recognized this until the year 1881 when Hortism was allowed free play.⁶

¹ Zuntz, *The Text of the Epistles*, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

² Hills, *Believing Bible Study*, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-91.

³ About 1910, in opposition to liberal attempts to reconcile the teachings of Christianity with the theories of "science falsely so-called" (especially evolution), conservative Protestants met and drew up five "*fundamentals*" of the faith which were insisted upon as necessary for acceptance as being Christian. They are: (1) the infallibility and literal truth of the Bible in every detail; (2) the virgin birth and complete deity of Christ Jesus; (3) the physical resurrection of Christ Jesus and all the dead; (4) the atoning sacrifice of Christ Jesus for the sins of the world; and (5) the second coming of Christ Jesus in bodily form (*New Standard Encyclopedia*, Vol. 5, p. 375).

⁴ Salmon, *Some Thoughts on the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

⁵ Hoskier, *Codex B and its Allies*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 422.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 465.

Those who accept the W-Hort text, or its modern counterpart, are placing their faith upon an Egyptian revision which occurred somewhere from 200 to 450 A.D. and was abandoned by Bible believers all over the civilized world between 500 to 1881 A.D.¹ After the true Church buried B and its allies through disuse, these Egyptian "mummies" were "resurrected" in recent times and restamped as "genuine". Thus, the modern Church has accepted as authentic that which the early Church rejected. Such are the ways of present day Laodicea (Rev.3:14-22).

It must be kept in mind that when God promised to preserve the text against permanent destruction, He did not guarantee within that promise the accuracy of each and every manuscript. Although this certainly could have been done, it would have necessitated a continuing miracle. Moreover, God's promise did not include the threat of His immediate execution of the person causing an error or corruption in the copying or production of a manuscript, whether deliberate or accidental. His promise merely guarantees the preservation of the text.

The excuse that we needed a revision because we found older manuscripts has been exposed as unfounded and untrue. Beyond all question the fact is that the *Textus Receptus* is the dominant Greco-Syrian text from 350 to 450 A.D.² Since these dates go back to the time of the production of Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus a, why is the authority of these two spurious MSS always being flaunted by reason of their supposed superior age?

Again, Hort's problem was that he had to account not only for the agreement of the majority but also for the deviations in the other manuscripts, as well as their departures from the old versions and the voice of the Fathers.³ We have already disclosed that there is no historical proof of the revisions which Westcott and Hort allege. Thus, if Westcott and Hort were wrong in their basic premise, it is necessary that we go back prior to W-H to take up the study afresh for if the direction were wrong then, further supposed progress would only lead us farther from the truth.⁴

¹ Hoskier, *Codex B and its Allies*, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 468.

² Burgon, *The Traditional Text*, op. cit., pp. 116, 121.

³ Fuller, *Which Bible?*, op. cit., p. 147.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

If there were no *official* Syrian text (and there could not be one without a revision as Hort imagines) then there is no Westcott-Hort theory.¹ There is a traditional text, but it is not the result of an official ecclesiastical Syrian revision. Indeed, if the theory of Syrian recensions of official text were true, there would not be so much variety in the cursive manuscripts. Their differences indicate that they have been copied from different ancestors, as pointed out, and therefore they are all orphans.

Therefore, the Traditional Text and Vaticanus B cannot BOTH be the Word of God! If the Traditional Text is as ancient as Vaticanus B, and Hort admitted that it was when he and Westcott wrote:²

"The fundamental text of late extant Greek MSS generally is beyond all question identical with the dominant Antiochian or Graeco-Syrian text of the **second half of the fourth century.**" (author's emphasis)

why should the authority of one manuscript be acknowledged against a host of manuscripts, versions, and "Fathers" which support the *Textus Receptus*?³ Bishop C. J. Ellicott, chairman of the 1881 Revision Committee, issued a pamphlet that same year in which he likewise admitted that the Traditional or Received Text was as ancient as Vaticanus B:⁴

"The manuscripts which Erasmus used differ, for the most part, only in small and insignificant details from the bulk of the cursive (Byzantine) manuscripts. The general character of their text is the same. By this observation the pedigree of the Received Text is carried up beyond the individual manuscripts used by Erasmus ... That pedigree stretches back to a remote antiquity. The first ancestor of the Received Text was at least contemporary with the oldest of our extant manuscripts (i.e., Codices B, Aleph, A, C, and D), if not older than any one of them." (author's parenthesis)

As we have learned, age alone cannot prove that a manuscript is correct! In fact, the main reason Vaticanus B is still preserved is that it was

¹ Fuller, *Which Bible?*, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

² Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

³ Fuller, *Which Bible?*, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

⁴ Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, *op. cit.*, p. 390.

written on very expensive vellum (animal skins) whereas most other documents of the period were written on papyrus and, having been rejected by the Church as spurious, it was not read or copied but lay relatively undisturbed on the library shelves of ancient monasteries.¹ Sinaiticus a even shows clearly the marks of ten different correctors who wrote upon it down through the centuries.²

As Burgon observed,³ it seems too improbable to believe that in the last nineteen hundred years out of every thousand copies of the Greek New Testament, we are to suppose that nine hundred and ninety-five have proven to be untrustworthy. Moreover, that the four or five which have remained, whose contents were unknown until as good as yesterday, are supposed to have retained the secret which the Holy Spirit originally inspired. Furthermore, is it not incredulous that we are expected to accept that much of the gospel, lost to the world for nineteen centuries, had to be "rescued" from a wastebasket to be "saved" from the consuming fire – by a German text critic? How fortuitous.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW⁴

We have shown a brief history portraying the struggle between the Church and the Biblical critics as to what constitutes a final form of the New Testament text. An irreconcilable difference exists between the Church and the text-critics/University with respect to the frame of reference that each takes with regard to the "Written Word".

The Church (in its broadest sense which includes the O.T. faithful) has historically viewed the Written Word as a "sacred" book. By sacred we mean that the text of the Book is viewed by its followers as being that of final authority. The status of the sacred text is fixed and absolute – one does not add to or subtract from it. It is seen as sacred because the entire content is accepted as having been given to the people as a *deposit* by *the*

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-186.

² Fuller, *Which Bible?*, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

³ Burgon, *The Traditional Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

⁴ Theodore P. Letis, "Brevard Childs and the Protestant Dogmaticians: A Window to a New Paradigm", *Bulletin of the Institute for Reformation Biblical Studies*, 2:1, (Fort Wayne, IN: 1991), pp. 4-8. Much of the material under this subtitle has been adapted by permission from Letis' article. Dr. Letis completed his doctorate at the University of Edinburgh (Scotland) in June of 1995.

Deity. Until the time of the Reformation, the Bible was safely lodged within the confines of church use and thus retained its status as "sacred".

When the Church divided into the Eastern (Greek) and Western (Latin-Rome) provinces, the time honored "specialness" that the Bible had held as "sacred" text began to change. The Christian community had divided into two very distinct entities. A Greek Vulgate (the TR) became the standard in the Eastern Church whereas the Western branch held to the Latin Vulgate of Jerome.

Eventually the animosity which developed between the Eastern and Western Church grew beyond mere doctrinal disputes. Each became convinced that the manuscripts used by the other had become corrupted. That is, as they did not always read the same, the Greeks came to distrust the Latin Bible and the Latins were equally certain that the Greeks had altered their texts. Each "Bible" continued to be authoritative for each given community, both affirming that theirs was the true original sacred text. Thus two distinct "sacred books" emerged – yet God had given only **one** text.

This enmity continued and heightened until the 5th century A.D. when the papacy restricted the flow of Greek language and literature into Western Europe as part of its method in keeping its dominion and distinctiveness.¹ For nearly one thousand years (c.476-1453) all the treasures of the East's classical past – its records, history, archaeology, literature, and its science – remained untranslated and unavailable to the West. The Greek language became a stranger to the western part of Europe as the priests declared the study of Greek to be that of the devil, persecuting all who promoted it.² For the most part, the West became exclusively Latin,³ estranged from the East. It was this persistent opposition to the achievements of the past that contributed immensely in causing a veil to fall over the West, plunging it into the Dark Ages (A.D. 476-1453). The spurious books of the Latin Vulgate opened the door for the mysterious and for the dark doctrines which had confused the

¹ Wilkinson, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45.

² Froude, *Life and Letters of Erasmus*, *op. cit.*, pp. 74, 187, 294, & 256.

³ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, *op. cit.*, p. 142. Albeit as the Empire broke up into modern kingdoms, the pure Latin broke up into the Spanish Latin, French Latin, African Latin and other dialects.

thinking of the ancients.¹ The corrupt readings of the authentic text decreased the confidence of the people in inspiration and increased the power of the priests. This darkness prevailed until the half century preceding 1453 A.D. when refugees fleeing the Greek world from the flood of the Turkish invaders came west bringing with them their language, literature, and culture.²

During this period of separation, division and isolation, the "Bible" was interpreted, copied and distributed as the unique possession of the Church by churchmen (monks, priests, bishops) within each of the two communities – with the firm resolve that each was working with sacred text. Although this continued into the 18th century until the time when the Enlightenment ripped ("liberated" from their perspective) the Biblical texts from the domain of the Church, it was in the 16th century that the Christian humanist, Desiderius Erasmus – himself a disaffected priest, decisively disrupted the canon and text of the Western Church.³ Erasmus replaced it with the Greek N.T. canon and text of the Eastern Church, thus setting in motion a process that by the nineteenth century **culminated in the loss of the Bible as a sacred text in the Roman-Latin West**. The end result was that the Bible came to be viewed merely as a "religious" book.

By "religious book" we mean a book which still retains a "traditional specialness", but it has lost its status as sacred. The reason this has happened is that the text has been removed from the ecclesiastical matrix. Its interpretations and dimensions (the canon) are no longer determined exclusively by churchmen and theologians. Having been removed from its natural home and haven within the confines of the Church, its interpretation now becomes subject to the critics/University rather than the Church. In this new matrix, the Bible text is seen as merely that of a piece of world literature – nothing more. Here, it is no longer viewed by its reader as decisively authoritative and sacred text. In capsule, this is the entire problem before the Church.

This tension, between the Bible as ecclesiastical text and as the text of the University, cries out back to the words of Tertullian (160-230 A.D.), "What indeed hath Athens to do with Jerusalem? What concord is there

¹ Wilkinson, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

² *Ibid.*, p. 44.

³ Letis, "Brevard Childs and the Protestant Dogmatists", *op. cit.*, p. 4.

between the Academy and the Church?" Tertullian would surely dismay to learn that since the nineteenth century the Academy has completely prevailed over the Church with regard to the Biblical text. The result has been an eclipse of Biblical narrative and the arrival of a strange bizarre silence of the Bible in the Church.¹

Biblical scholars working in concert with publishing companies, neither of which answer to any ecclesiastical authority within the Church, have taken the Bible away from the people. Through their endless writings and promotions, they have convinced many in the community of believers, pastors included, that only they can truly appreciate and understand the Bible. They infer that they are the only ones who can determine what it means. Does not this arrogance resemble a giant leap back to the Catholic position from whence the Reformation sprang? Did the dauntless Reformers work, endure persecution and die in vain?

Of course, unlike the great whore of Rome with its Pope for final decision making, no consensus has emerged from the critics/University explaining what the Bible means as only a "religious" book. To the contrary, the text is in a state of continuous flux, vacillating between the opinions of enormous egos. In this rarefied atmosphere on the edge of Olympus, every man does "that which" is "right in his own eyes" (Jud.21:25).

It is no longer a matter of the different *methods* used by Church and Academy in studying the Bible; it is a matter of totally different *views* and *goals*. This has resulted in a revolt (within the Academy as well!) over the loss of sacred text and a call to recognize the Bible as a book *sui generis* (unique, in a class all its own).² It is time for the Church to reclaim its God-given deposit. The Bible is the Church's book! This must begin at the grass roots – laymen to the fore if our shepherds continue to sleep, intimidated by so-called science (I Tim.6:20), respecting men's person – unwilling to humble their intellects before God and stand in faith.

Such will not be an easy matter apart from intervention from the Lord. The Academy is awake and determined to keep the theologians from quietly "stealing" **their** Bible back fearing that the Church will again

¹ Letis, "Brevard Childs and the Protestant Dogmaticians", *op. cit.*, p. 5. The reader is reminded that Dr. Letis is the source for the material under this current heading.

² *Ibid*, p. 6.

shroud it in medieval-like canonical authority, in the name of "Biblical theology".

Thus there has been a transition from the Bible as sacred text deposited and lodged in the bosom of the Church, to the Bible as viewed as only religious text – and just as firmly centered in the University. The rejection of the Latin Vulgate, the sacred text of the medieval Roman Catholic Church, by Erasmus and Valla¹ as being corrupt, gutted the Vulgate of sacred status.² Rome countered with decrees at Trent (1546) relevant to Jerome's Vulgate in an effort to recapture its standing as sacred text. When by the nineteenth century this failed, the Trent undertaking was, in effect, replaced by the 1870 Vatican I decree which conferred infallibility to the Pope.³

As a result of this ongoing struggle which had its inception at the division of the "Christian" community into the Eastern and Western entities and the ensuing developments to which we have alluded, the war continues. It has merely shifted alignments. Rather than East versus West, it has evolved into battles between the Church and the Academy in determining what constitutes the correct New Testament text.

TEXT CRITICISM TODAY - THE AGE OF MINISCULES⁴

It may come as a surprise, but only a relative few of the 3,000 plus manuscripts now cataloged have been collated (to collect, compare carefully in order to verify and often to integrate).⁵ The same is true

¹ Lorenzo Valla (c.1406-1457) was an ordained Italian priest, perhaps the most brilliant mind of the Renaissance. He was one of the first exponents of modern historical criticism. Utilizing those skills, he exposed the spurious character of the "Donation of Constantine" – a document that allegedly proved that Constantine had given central Italy over to papal control when he moved the Roman capital to the East. Valla demonstrated the Donation was an 8th century forgery and thus could not be used to support papal claims to temporal power. This exposé also contained a bitter attack on the temporal power of the Papacy. He undertook a critical comparison between the Latin Vulgate and the Greek N.T. Valla had a deep influence on Renaissance scholars and also on the Reformers, especially on Erasmus and Martin Luther.

² Letis, p. 7 in a December 1988 formal correspondence to this author in which he outlined his doctoral dissertation approach.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Moorman, *When The KJV Departs From The "Majority" Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-27. Much of the data included under this subtitle has been taken from Moorman's excellent publication.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

concerning the 2,143 extant lectionaries. Such collation has been limited to the papyri fragments, older uncials, and those cursives which give some support for the Alexandrian (a-B) text. Except for a few cursory checks, the vast majority has been ignored. The reason is that the overwhelming majority of manuscripts supports the TR/KJB; and seeking out any further support is the last thing in which textual criticism is interested. Westcott and Hort certainly were not interested in giving the majority the opportunity to speak. They wove their theory around only a few MSS, and of these they had but second hand knowledge. They collated no manuscripts themselves, but rather applied themselves to the study of collations and apparatuses made by others.¹ As a result, their knowledge of the documents was second-hand and partial. Hort knew of the existence of fewer than 1,000 cursives, and only c.150 of these were available to him in complete collation.²

Since Hort, around 1,800 cursives have been found. Again, apart from a cursory glance to see if there might be some readings supportive of the a-B category of text, they have been merely cataloged and ignored. Attention instead has centered on the comparatively few papyri fragments and what to do when they disagree with a and B. Indeed, Kurt Aland has admitted "... the main problem in N.T. textual criticism lies in the fact that little more than their actual existence is known of most of the manuscripts ..."³ However, minuscules must pass a "test" before Aland and other textual critics consider them worthy of inclusion in a textual apparatus. All MSS/mss which are generally Byzantine will fail.⁴

The issue of the presence of grammatical smoothness has even been used as an argument against the TR and Byzantine mss in general. The critics maintain that the TR and its supporting mss, reading in as flowing a style as they do, "reflect editorial revision designed to improve the flow and syntax." Textual criticism has long implied that the rougher the grammar, the more likely a variant reading is to be the original.⁵ But

¹ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction, op. cit.*, pp. 77-78, 144.

² Frederik Wisse, *The Profile Method for Classifying and Evaluating Manuscript Evidence*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), p. 2.

³ Kurt Aland, "The Significance of the Papyri", *op. cit.*, p. 330.

⁴ Wisse, *The Profile Method for Classifying and Evaluating Manuscript Evidence, op. cit.*, p. 4.

⁵ Moorman, *When The KJV Departs From The "Majority" Text, op. cit.*, p. 20.

why must the Holy Spirit be accused of using rough grammar? Did not the Divine Author in inspiring the words and sentences of Scripture know how to use proper Greek? Are we to understand that His knowledge has since "evolved?"

For the critic, the nineteenth century was the age of the uncials; the mid-twentieth century was the age of the papyri, but now he is entering the age of the minuscules.¹ However, when one reads that many more cursives are being cited in the latest Nestle-Aland Greek N.T., he should not be deceived into believing that a significant shift away from the Alexandrian text has taken place. What the present "age of the minuscules" really means to the editors of the critical text is that they hope to find a little more support for the a/B/Alexandrian family of text.

As a matter of fact, they did not find much support during their "age of the uncials." Further, despite initial promise, the "age of the papyri" has become something of an embarrassment for their cause. Thus insofar as finding anything that would even remotely strengthen their case for the a-B text from the manuscripts, this "age of the minuscules" is their last hope. So despite any appearance to the contrary or talk of being eclectic – Aleph, B, and their few allies still dictate the modern critical text. The feeling still prevails that no purpose would be served in giving the majority a greater voice.

For the text critics, these old uncials are more than adequate representatives of the MS tradition to the extent that the rest can be ignored. After all, they challenge us, "why start more than thirteen centuries after the autographs were written, and wade back through literally thousands of MSS in an immensely complicated and expensive process, if at best one can only arrive at a fifth-century text which is already well represented by copies of that time."² This argument forms the background for all those who consider it justifiable to ignore all, or at least nearly all, of the minuscules (cursives).

The only argument which would justifiably allow the critics to circumvent the task of studying all the late mss would be that there exists among the early uncials a relatively uncorrupted tradition which shows all other

¹ Moorman, *When The KJV Departs From The "Majority" Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 5; here Moorman cites from the Nestle-Aland 26th edition, pp. 47-48.

² Wisse, *The Profile Method for Classifying and Evaluating Manuscript Evidence*, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2.

text-types of the period to be secondary and corrupted.¹ Only if this position can be proved, and if it is clear from some sampling that late mss fall predominantly in the tradition of one of the corrupted texts, could they justify the omission of a full study of these late minuscules. Yet A and B, the two main pillars of the critical text, exhibit 3,036 clear differences in the Gospels; what candidate can they propose as a "relatively uncorrupted tradition"? They have none! Yet they continue to keep the TR/KJB dishonestly shrouded – out of public sight, without giving all of the witnesses an opportunity to speak.²

The point that we wish to make clear at this occasion is that anyone who seeks to gather Byzantine manuscript evidence from the standard sources (Alford, Tischendorf, Souter, Merk, Vogels, Nestle, Aland, or von Soden) is really getting only a few scraps from the table.³ The interests and energies of these men have been expended elsewhere. Their labors with regard to the great mass of Byzantine mss have been limited to those places where there has been departure from the TR.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Recently, some well meaning brothers have attempted to allow the mss a voice by utilizing the massive 1913 work of Hermann von Soden to assist them in producing a "Majority Text". However, von Soden's enterprise represents only a very small portion of the total. He merely made a cursory sampling of the vast numbers of mss. Moreover Herman C. Hoskier thoroughly documented that while hoping to find "great things" from von Soden's final volume he was forced, albeit regrettably, to have to strongly condemn it. Hoskier stated that the work was not only "honeycombed" with errors, many documents which should have been recollated had not been touched whereas others were only partially so done with many others having been incorrectly handled.⁴

Wisse informs us that von Soden collated a significant number of MSS only partially. After his test check on a weighty portion of von Soden's

¹ Wisse, *The Profile Method for Classifying and Evaluating Manuscript Evidence*, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

² Moorman, *When The KJV Departs From The "Majority" Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁴ Herman C. Hoskier, *The Journal of Theological Studies*, 15, (London: Oxford University Press, 1914), p. 307. Hoskier continues over the next 20 pages documenting a most withering indictment.

data, Frederik Wisse adds "Once the extent of error is seen, the word 'inaccuracy' becomes a euphemism. ... von Soden's inaccuracies cannot be tolerated for any purpose. His apparatus is useless for a reconstruction of the text of the mss he used."¹ It is worthy of mention that, although von Soden viewed the Byzantine text as being un-derived from and possibly as old as Aleph-B (a departure from standard W-H dogma), in all other matters he was so strongly Alexandrian that Hoskier reported: "von Soden's text is so thoroughly Alexandrian that it falls into line with Hort, irrespective of MS evidence."²

By now we trust that our reader can discern that our extant manuscripts reflect but do not determine the text of Scripture.³ The text was determined by God from the beginning (Psa.119:89 etc.). After the advent of printing (A.D. 1450), the necessity of God's preserving the manuscript witness to the text was diminished. Thus, in some few instances, the majority of MSS/mss extant today may not reflect at every point what the true, commonly accepted, and majority reading was 500 years ago. The Greek manuscripts do not constitute the sole viable witness to the true text of the New Testament.

The ancient versions, lectionaries, and quotes from the Fathers must also be taken into account. Hence, we should not be surprised to find that the Spirit of God has occasionally used the Latin West for corroboration on a disputed reading.⁴ After all, if we went strictly by the majority of the extant Greek manuscripts we wouldn't be able to include the Book of Revelation in the canon, for only one in fifty MSS/mss contains it. There was a bias against the book in the Greek speaking East, thus it was not used in the lectionary services.

Again, the reason that all defenders of the TR since the Reformation follow the majority text is because ***it reflects the actual usage by the Church*** (the body of believers in all ages) which Jesus promised to lead into all truth, not merely because of statistical "superiority" or "probability". To not grasp or comprehend this leaves the reader with a

¹ Wisse, *The Profile Method for Classifying and Evaluating Manuscript Evidence*, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

² Hoskier, *Codex B and its Allies*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 461.

³ Moorman, *When The KJV Departs From The "Majority" Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

⁴ Moorman, *When The KJV Departs From The "Majority" Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 27. Also see: Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, pp. 200-203.

"tentative" Bible. Even opponents freely admit this conclusively decisive point. For example, Professor Kurt Aland forthrightly grants:¹

"It is undisputed that from the 16th to the 18th century orthodoxy's doctrine of verbal inspiration assumed ... [the] *Textus Receptus*. It was the only Greek text they knew, and they regarded it as the 'original text'".

Merrill M. Parvis penned:

"The *Textus Receptus* is not the 'true' text of the New Testament ..."

but then incredulously went on to concede:²

"It [the TR] was the Scripture of many centuries of the Church's life. ... **The *Textus Receptus* is the text of the Church.** It is that form of text which represents the sum total and the end product of all the textual decisions which were made by the Church and her Fathers over a period of more than a thousand years." (author's emphasis)

These candid admissions by such leading scholars of the opposing view underscore and prove our entire thesis – that the *Textus Receptus* always has been the N.T. used by the true Church! Indeed, this has recently been conclusively proven by a remarkable piece of new manuscript evidence.

Three tiny fragments of uncial codex which were acquired in Luxor, Egypt in 1901 and donated to Magdalen College in Oxford, England had been preserved in its library in a butterfly display case. Dated c.A.D. 180-200 in 1953, both sides of the Magdalen Papyrus (the largest piece is 1⁵/₈" by 1/2") exhibit Greek script from the 26th chapter of Matthew.

In 1994, these fragments came to the attention of the German biblical scholar and papyrologist Dr. Carsten Peter Thiede (Director of the Institute for Basic Epistemological Research in Paderborn, Germany). Painstakingly redating the scraps, Dr. Thiede placed them at A.D. 66 – the only known first century N.T. text extant.³

¹ Kurt Aland, "The Text Of The Church?", *Trinity Journal* 8 (Fall 1987): p. 131.

² Merrill M. Parvis, "The Goals Of New Testament Textual Studies", *Studia Evangelica* 6 (1973): p. 406.

³ Carsten P. Thiede & Matthew D'Ancona, *Eyewitness to Jesus*, (New York: Doubleday, 1996), pp. 124-125. Dr. Thiede's findings appeared in a sensational front-page story of the December 24, 1994 (Christmas Eve) edition of the London *Times*.

But this was only the beginning. Using an eipflourescent confocal laser scanning microscope, Dr. Thiede found that fragment 3 (recto) revealed the TR/KJB reading from Matthew 26:22, "*hekastos auton*" – every one of them – rather than "*heis hekastos*" – each one [in turn one after the other] – as all the various critical texts read!¹ Thus this fragment now documents the antiquity of the TR/KJB text to the time of Peter, Paul, John the Apostle, as well as some of the 500 witnesses of our Lord's resurrection (I Cor.15:4-8) – and extends Nolan's finds beyond A.D. 157 (see page 169) back to A.D. 66.

Neither should it be imagined that Dr. Thiede was motivated to arrive at these conclusions because he is a TR supporter; he is not. As a papyrologist and having hard physical data in hand, he was not intimidated to abandon his new textual discoveries because they conflicted with the presuppositions and conjectural theories of New Testament textual scholars. Facts, you see, are stubborn things.

However this brings us to ask: Since the texts of the TR and T.T. are identical twin brothers,² why did Burgon only defend the T.T.; why did not Burgon "contend for the acceptance of the *Textus Receptus*"³ whereas Hills (Waite, Letis, this author etc.) did? (Both men did advocate "retaining" the TR but for different reasons and purposes.)

Hills best explains the reason for the disparity between himself and Burgon's views by calling attention that Burgon (as well as Prebendarys Scrivener and Edward Miller) was not a Protestant but a High-Church Anglican.⁴ As such, Burgon believed in infant baptism and apostolic succession. The latter meaning that only bishops who had been

¹ Thiede, *Eyewitness to Jesus*, pp. 59-60. These results were presented at the 21st Congress of the International Papyrologists' Association in Berlin August, 15, 1995, and met with "unanimous approval" (p. 61). Dr. Thiede adds that the precise nuance cannot be rendered in English: the Magadalen text emphasizes they were all speaking at once - a realistic portrayal of a dramatic moment with its accompanying excitement. But the standard critical text reads such that they spoke one after the other, waiting their turn in an orderly fashion (p. 60). Thus this original reading which was always preferable based on internal criteria is now corroborated by the oldest papyrus of Matthew's Gospel (p. 60).

² Except for the infrequent instances where the T.T has missing text (i.e., I Joh.5:7-8; Acts 7:37, 8:37, 9:5-6; Luk.17:36; Mat.5:27, 27:35; Heb.2:7, 11:13 etc.), the TR and T.T. exhibit only minor insignificant differences.

³ Hoskier, *Codex B and its Allies*, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 415; also see: Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, op. cit., pp. 107, 372, 373, 392.

⁴ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, op. cit., p. 192.

consecrated by earlier bishops and so on back in an unbroken chain to the first bishops who had been set aside as such by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles were the true and only instruments that God would use in Church matters. This world view caused him great annoyance over the fact that, although about two thirds of the New Testament Revision Committee were also Anglican¹ (Church of England; most of whom were liberal), the southern convocation had allowed a few Baptist, Methodist, and other "separatists" (not to mention Vance Smith, a Unitarian who had in writing denied the deity of Jesus²) to participate.³ It was, in fact,

¹ *The New Westminster Dictionary of the Bible*, Henry Snyder Gehman, ed., (Phil., PA: The Westminster Press, 1970), p. 981. Indeed, the Church of England and its Universities at Oxford and Cambridge were rife with men who had long denied the infallibility of Scripture. These were eager to acclaim a textual theory in harmony with their views. The liberalness of the Revision Committee can hardly be appreciated today. For example, the chairman, Bishop Ellicott, believed there were clear tokens of corruptions in the Authorized Version (Charles John Ellicott, *Addresses on the Revised Version of Holy Scripture*, (New York: E.S. Gorham, 1901), p. 70), and Dean Stanley openly confessed that the Pentateuch was not the work of Moses and that the Biblical narratives contained therein were not infrequently "colored" due to the imperfections of the men who wrote them (Arthur P. Stanley, *Essays Chiefly on Questions of Church and State from 1850 to 1870*, (London: John Murray, 1884), pp. 329-330). He further believed that the Word of God resided in the sacred books of other religions, as well in the Bible (*Essays*, p. 24). Bishop Thirlwall retired from the committee and refused to return until the Unitarian, Dr. Vance Smith, was allowed a seat at communion (see following fn. "Samuel Hemphill, *A History*).

² Samuel Hemphill, *A History of the Revised Version of the N.T.*, (London: E. Stock, 1906), pp. 36-37. When on 22 June of 1870 the "1881" revisers came together to initiate their work, a communion service (suggested by Westcott) was held in Westminster Abbey. Arthur Westcott, son of B.F. Westcott, recorded that his father and Hort insisted upon the inclusion of the Unitarian scholar, Dr. Vance Smith. The upper house of the Convocation of Canterbury had passed a resolution that no person denying the deity of Christ should take part in the work, yet Smith had so done in his book *Bible and Theology*. Westcott's son states: "The Revision was almost wrecked at the very outset", and quotes his father in a note to Hort as threatening to sever his connection with the project (as did others!) if Smith were not allowed to participate: "If the Company accept the dictation of Convocation, my work must end." (A. Westcott, *Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 394). Arthur mentions more than once that his father was often considered "unorthodox", "unsound", or "unsafe" (i.e., A. Westcott, *Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 218). After receiving Holy Communion with his fellow-revisors, Smith later commented that he did not join in reciting the Nicene Creed or in any way compromise his principles as a Unitarian (Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, *op. cit.*, p. 507). The English people were infuriated by Smith's inclusion (*Ibid.*). It may be argued that it is unfair, irrelevant or even an ad hominem to address the liberal theological views of W&H with regard to their textual theory, but a man's world view and the frames of reference that view engenders inevitably bear upon his attitude toward the Sacred Writ.

³ Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, *op. cit.*, pp. 504-505.

this High-Church Anglicanism which led Burgon to place so much emphasis on the N.T. quotations of the Church Fathers, most of whom had been bishops.¹ For him, these quotations were vital because they proved that the Traditional Text found in the vast majority of the Greek manuscripts had been authorized from the very beginning by bishops of the early Church.

However, this high Anglican position betrayed Burgon when he came to deal with the printed Greek N.T. text for from the Reformation times down to his own day the Greek text favored by the bishops of the Church of England had been the *Textus Receptus* – and the TR had not been prepared by bishops but by Erasmus who had not been a bishop but was an independent scholar. Thus Erasmus, and his Greek edition, did not align with Burgon's High-Church stance on apostolic succession and authority.² Still worse for Burgon was the fact that the particular form of the *Textus Receptus* used in the Church of England was the third edition of Stephanus – and Stephanus was a Calvinist.³

Hills came to many of the same conclusions that Burgon had reached, but being a conservative Presbyterian and trained in the classics at Yale with a doctorate in N.T. textual criticism from Harvard, his frame of reference was that of a true heir of the Reformation.⁴ Thus, rather than to the High-Church argument of apostolic succession as a guarantee of the text's fidelity, Hills appealed to the affirmation of the Presbyterian Westminster Confession of Faith. This Confession sanctioned the *Textus Receptus* as being the Greek text which bore the mark of historic continuity and as having been preserved in its integrity within the Christian Church itself – hence it must be the providentially preserved true text (WC 1:8). Moreover, this was the very position of the Protestant dogmaticians, both Lutheran and Reformed, ever since the seventeenth century.⁵

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

² Letis, *The Majority Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

³ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

⁴ Theodore P. Letis, "The Revival of the Ecclesiastical Text and the Claims of the Anabaptist", *Calvinism Today*, Vol. II, no. 3, (North Yorkshire, England: July 1992), p. 11.

⁵ Letis, "The Protestant Dogmaticians" *op. cit.*, pp. 1-19. By "Protestant dogmatician" Dr. Letis means the "much maligned heirs of Luther and Calvin from the post-Reformation era of the 17th-century" (see his p. 1).

Hills convincingly argued that, from a believing consistently Christian standpoint, Burgon's (and all other) position was illogical as anyone believing in providential preservation of the N.T. text must accept and defend the *Textus Receptus* since it is the only form in which the Traditional Text has actually circulated in print. Moreover, that to decline to defend the TR implies that God preserved a pure text all during the manuscript period but for some unexplained reason left this pure text "hiding in the manuscripts and allowed an inferior text to issue from the printing press and circulate among His people for more than 450 years."¹

Realizing that the only bridge that would take us back beyond the extant MSS/mss of the majority text – the fourth century – to the lost autographa was *Providential Preservation*, Hills correctly saw the absolute necessity for a theological element in determining the Text.²

Hills thereby concludes (as does this author) that when we believe in and receive Christ Jesus, the logic of faith first leads us to a belief in the infallible inspiration of the original Scriptures.³ This is followed by a belief in the providential preservation of this original text down through the ages and thence to a belief in the Bible text current among believers as the providentially preserved original text. This is the "common faith" which has always been present among the Church of the Living God. Indeed, Hills summarizes it best:⁴

"But if the providential preservation of the Scriptures is not important, why is the doctrine of the infallible inspiration of the original Scriptures important? If God has not preserved the Scriptures by His special providence, why would He have infallibly inspired them in the first place? And if it is not important that the Scriptures be regarded as infallibly inspired, why is it important to insist that Gospel is completely true? And if this is not important, why is it important to believe that Jesus is the divine Son of God? In short, unless we follow the logic of faith, we can be certain of nothing concerning the Bible and its text".

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

² Letis, *The Majority Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

³ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

Dr. Hills further illustrated what he meant by his term "the logic of faith":¹

"For example, how do we know that the Textus Receptus is the true New Testament text? We know this through the logic of faith. Because the Gospel is true, the Bible which contains this Gospel was infallibly inspired by the Holy Spirit. And because the Bible was infallibly inspired, it has been preserved by God's special providence. Moreover, this providential preservation was not done privately in secret holes and caves but publicly in the usage of God's Church. Hence the true New Testament text is found in the majority of the New Testament manuscripts. And this providential preservation did not cease with the invention of printing. Hence the formation of the Textus Receptus was God-guided.

"And how do we know that the King James Version is a faithful translation of the true New Testament text? We know this also through the logic of faith. Since the formation of the Textus Receptus was God-guided, the translation of it was God-guided also. For as the Textus Receptus was being formed, it was also being translated. The two processes were simultaneous. Hence the early Protestant versions, such as Luther's, Tyndale's, the Geneva, and the King James, were actually **varieties** of the Textus Receptus. And this was necessarily so according to the principles of God's preserving providence. For the Textus Receptus had to be translated in order that the universal priesthood of believers, the rank and file, might give it their God-guided approval." (author's emphasis)

Farther along, Dr. Hills continued:²

"This faith, however, has from time to time been distorted by the intrusion of unbiblical ideas. For example, many Jews and early Christians believed that the inspiration of the Old Testament had been repeated three times. According to them, not only had the original Old Testament writers been inspired but also Ezra, who (*supposedly*) rewrote the whole Old testament after it had been lost. And the Septuagint likewise, they maintained, had been infallibly inspired. Also the Roman Catholics have

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-114.

² *Ibid.*, p. 194.

distorted the common faith by their false doctrine that the authority of the Scriptures rests on the authority of the Church. It was this erroneous view that led the Roman Church to adopt the Latin Vulgate rather than the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures as its authoritative Bible. And finally, many conservative Christians today distort the common faith by their adherence to the theories of naturalistic New Testament textual criticism. They smile at the legends concerning Ezra and the Septuagint, but they themselves have concocted a myth even more absurd, namely, that the true New Testament text was lost for more 1,500 years and then restored by Westcott and Hort." (author's parenthesis)

Yet despite the efforts on behalf of the Church by Burgon, Scrivener, Hoskier, and – in the twentieth century – Hills, recently we have been placed in the bizarre situation of noting that whereas our opponents blasphemously assert that the TR/KJB New Testament is wrong in at least 5,300 instances – many of our Christian friends now say, "No, it errs only about 1,500 times." Thus many good brothers in Christ Jesus have been seduced into siding with the liberals and/or apostates as both positions embrace "restoration" rather than "preservation". Truly, such is a deplorable state! Worthy of the most deliberate consideration is the proposition that anytime the entire world system agrees with the Christian about any matter which is spiritual or has spiritual overtones – not only are we wrong – the error is nearly always 180 degrees out of phase with God's truth.

Moreover, the single greatest move of the hand of God since the time of the Lord Jesus and the Apostles as recorded in the Book of Acts was that of the Reformation. This great move must be recognized as the direct result of the historical restoration by Erasmus of the true text that the Apostles lived and wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The reader must then confront himself with the question: "If the Reformation were the fruit of restoring to the people the text known today as the *Textus Receptus*, where is the great revival that should have accompanied the labor of the past 100 years of text-critically editing and correcting that document?" The "Great Awakening" of the 1700's as well as the revivals of the late 1800's and early part of the 1900's under men such as Wesley, Whitefield, Finney, Spurgeon, Moody, R.A. Torrey, and Billy Sunday were all preached from the King James text.

To the contrary, we know of no revival that resulted from using the critical text. Thus we see that the **fruit** of the TR/KJB has been the

harvest of millions of souls. In stark contrast, the fruit of the critical text and its offspring has been doubt, division, endless debate, wasted time and energy that could have been spent in worship or evangelical effort, and the destruction of the faith at most seminaries and many pastors along with the sheep who feed at their feet. If the critical text is the better text, where are the great revivals that should have followed this enterprise? Does not this hard historical truth bear irrefutable testimony as to which text the Spirit of God has endorsed and stamped genuine – to that which He breathed man-ward?

Patient reader, in the previous pages we have declared and proclaimed that the defense of the King James Bible and its Greek foundation, the *Textus Receptus*, has been the very least of concern within the realm and scope of Textual Criticism. Almost all its energy has been directed toward "reconstructing" the text on the basis of a few old uncials, and ferreting out what little support can be gleaned for these MSS. It is not intended by the author to imply that the theological views of Burgon or Hills automatically make their text critical views correct or that those of Origen, Westcott, Hort, etc. necessarily make them wrong. Nevertheless up to the time of Westcott and Hort, the unyielding uniform Protestant consensus (of course, among so many there were some dissenters) can be summed by Quenstedt who, in the 1600's stated:¹

"We believe, as is our duty, that the providential care of God has always watched over the original and primitive texts of the canonical Scriptures in such a way that we can be certain that the sacred codices *which we now have in our hands* are those which existed at the time of Jerome and Augustine, nay at the time of Christ Himself and His apostles." (author's italics)

Moreover, before the time of W-H: "the 'lower criticism' had kept itself quite apart from the so-called dangerous 'higher criticism'. Since the publication of Hort's text, however, and that of the Revisers, much of the heresy of our time has fallen back upon the supposed results acquired by the 'lower criticism' to bolster up their views."²

It cannot be over stressed that just as the LORD used the Hebrew community to preserve the Old Testament Scriptures as He had originally given to them in that selfsame language (i.e., the Hebrew

¹ Preus, *The Inspiration of Scripture*, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

² Hoskier, *Codex B and its Allies*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 421-422.

Masoretic text), even so the instrument by which GOD has preserved the New Testament text has been that community through which the Greek tongue has been continued. The *Textus Receptus* is the official text of the Greek Orthodox Church to this very day.

We purport that the various editions of the *Textus Receptus* are the overall framework within which providential preservation has operated. We affirm that all the words of the inspired New Testament Scriptures are to be found within this framework. We proclaim that the work of the various editors – Erasmus, Stephens, Beza and the Elizevirs – was the result of God's providence in stabilizing the TR as a settled entity. Hence, no further revision of the Greek wording is needed as God, through His providence, has settled the text. Further, we have seen that the dark ages truly began with the Greek text of Westcott and Hort (Origen-Eusebius) which was published by Jerome in 405 A.D., and ended with the 1516 publication of the Greek text of Erasmus.

The single most enduring and reasonable charge that has been leveled against the TR which persists to this day is that Erasmus had to use the Latin Vulgate for the last six verses in the final chapter of the Book of Revelation (although Hoskier, the greatest authority on these manuscripts, doubts this). Yet even if this is granted, what doctrines are at risk with regard to the variant readings here? None. Indeed, Erasmus was using an edition which had been produced "from an ancient Greek exemplar representing a text from at least as far back as the third century when he employed the Vulgata for these last few verses. Unlike the Egyptian uncials, however, no doctrine is at stake whatsoever. The meaning is not even altered."¹

Any small variations among the editions of the *Textus Receptus*, other than typographical errors, should be indicated in the center column of future editions. The critic's allegation that God has not preserved every word of the inspired N.T. text solely in the TR is an un-provable and untruthful assertion. The Christian needs a firmer foundation than the ever shifting consensus of scholarly opinion upon which to anchor his faith. Only the existence of a continuously preserved, providentially determined text provides such a basis. The *Textus Receptus* alone affords such a cornerstone.

¹ Letis, "A Reply to the Remarks of Mark A. McNeil", *op. cit.*, p. 4.

The Christian must come to grips with and understand that a purely rational totally scientific method of dealing with the problems inherent with the text of Scripture can never really produce the desired result for in the ultimate sense, we can never **demonstrate** the agreement between the *Textus Receptus* and the original manuscripts since the originals have not survived to our day. Thus, once again, Hills' "logic of faith" is the only method that can bridge the gap back to the autographs.

However, it must be recognized that the same must be said for the majority or Traditional Text. Indeed, the hostile critics are themselves in the same predicament; none can compare their favored readings to the original in order to establish its superiority.¹ Inevitably we must "receive" the Received Text. The Church is utterly dependent upon God's providential preservation of the text. Moreover, the Reformers did not distinguish between the text they actually possessed and the originals. They believed they had the original wording preserved by the "singular care and providence" of God (See the Philadelphia Confession on this author's p. 81). Truly, the entire matter may be summarized by the words of the late Dr. D.O. Fuller:²

"If you and I believe that the original writings of the Scriptures were verbally inspired by God, then of necessity they must have been providentially preserved through the ages.

For those of us who comprehend and submit to the truth and logic embodied in this singular quote, there remains absolutely no need for textual criticism. Colwell himself acknowledged as much:³

It is often assumed by the ignorant and uninformed – even on a university campus – that textual criticism of the New Testament is supported by a superstitious faith in the Bible as a book dictated in miraculous fashion by God. That is not true. Textual criticism has never existed for those whose New Testament is one of miracle, mystery, and authority. A New Testament created under those auspices would have been handed down under them and would have no need of textual criticism.

¹ Douglas Taylor, "A Special Look at Appendix C", *Bible League Quarterly*, (Northampton, England: The Bible League Trust, Oct.-Dec., 1990), p. 379.

² Fuller, *Which Bible?*, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

³ Colwell, *What is the Best New Testament?* *op. cit.*, p. 8. This quote is typical of the modern critic's low view of Scripture.

Of course Colwell goes on to assure his reader that as such is not the case, textual criticism is a most necessary tool in determining the "best" New Testament.¹

The next question is, which of the versions – if any – reflects the original wording from the autographs in English? Without hesitation, we say that the King James "Version" is that entity. It is "the Bible" in the English language. Yet strangely when this and the overall message contained in this manuscript has been shared and explained by the author (as well as by others, present or past), the reaction from the vast majority of readers or listeners – whether laymen, pastors or professors – has been so bewildering and unexplainable. Not seeming to comprehend that help and warning are being offered rather than "criticism", most become very defensive and often irritated. A pall of apathy overshadows the subject. This is indeed a troubling tragedy in the extreme.

Yet, as things stand we are left in the strange circumstance whereby everyone is permitted and encouraged to come to the religion classroom, Bible study, Sunday School class, Church service, etc., all bearing different "textbooks". Such is never tolerated or practiced in any other learning situation. University professors of English, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, History, etc., do not permit such a practice for they well know the chaotic situation that would result. An atmosphere for real learning would not exist in such an environment. Even the authorities in the lower levels of education – the High Schools, Junior Highs, and Elementary schools – know better.

To the contrary, the institution selects the textbook (whether good or bad), and the student purchases it. Other material relevant to the subject are to be found and utilized in the reference area of the institution's library. It would seem that only within the confines of the Christian Church is such foolishness practiced and tolerated. Yet in so doing, have we not completely set aside all common sense and logic?

Finally, it is a fair and accurate statement that in direct proportion to how much text criticism was legitimized by the Churchmen of nineteenth century Britain (the bastion of conservatism at that time), to that

¹ Colwell, *What is the Best New Testament?* *op. cit.*, p. 9. Notice Colwell does not say the "true" or "original" N.T. but merely the "best". Like those listed on p. 131, he obviously neither believed the original text had been preserved nor that it could ever be fully recovered.

selfsame extent was a verbal view of inspiration surrendered.¹ Once the verbal infallible view was abandoned, the Bible ceased to be honored as a "sacred" book. Sadly, the Church slumbers on – deceived by so-called scholarship and oblivious to the singular truth penned over one hundred years hence:

"Vanquished by THE WORD Incarnate, Satan next directed his subtle malice against the Word written"²

The war rages on in unabated fury! The clarion has been sounded.³ "Choose you this day whom ye will serve; ... as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."⁴ How so? By believing His promises that He would preserve His infallible Word – forever!

**Heaven and earth shall pass away:
but my words shall not pass away.**

Mark 13:31

¹ Letis, p. 8 in a December 1988 formal correspondence to this author in which he outlined his doctoral dissertation approach.

² Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

³ *The Holy Authorized King James Bible*, I Corinthians 14:8.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Book of Joshua, 24:15.

APPENDIX A - The Pericope de Adultera

JOHN 8:1-11 The story of the woman taken in the act of adultery.

Most New Versions: The story is omitted or footnoted.

Comment: If the woman were caught in the very act, where was the man? God required that **both** should be stoned (Lev.20:10; Deu.22:22-24). Jesus knew the entire matter was a set up for the purpose of placing Him on the horns of a dilemma. If He said stone her according to the Law of the O.T., He would be in trouble with the Roman authorities. If He said to release her from the demand of the Law, the people would reject His claims as Messiah for Messiah would never go against the Word of God.

One reason that so many religious leaders and laymen oppose the inclusion of these verses, called the *pericope de adultera* in theological-scholastic circles ("pericope" is a short selection from a book), is due to their lack of understanding it and thus an inability to properly exegete the story. The forgiveness which Christ bestowed upon the adulteress is contrary to the conviction of many that the punishment for adultery should be very severe.¹ For most, the solution is to merely conclude that Jesus' coming to earth has somehow nullified the Laws of God; that God no longer punishes sin but has now "become" a God of mercy, love and compassion. The story seems to offer too many inexplicable contradictory problems for most, and since they cannot understand the verses – they raise their vote to exclude them from the Scriptures. It requires great humility to admit lack of insight. Such men rarely will humble their intellect before God, constantly labeling paradoxes contained within the covers of the Bible as "unfortunate scribal errors" simply because their wisdom has failed to unravel the paradox.

Far better to confess lack of scholarship, understanding or lack of revelation than to insist, as most do, that the short-coming must be with the Scriptures themselves (Man's pride and ego must be served at all cost!). Many of us are self deceived, imagining that we "believe" the Word of God. The Lord has deliberately written as He has to bring us to the point of honesty. When we are confronted with seemingly contradictory

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

places in Scripture, what is our response? The response reveals the actual condition of the heart and ego. Do we now still believe or do we place our intellects above the Word, deciding that because we could not solve the apparent discrepancy – the Scripture must contain error.

Although not claiming inerrant insight into all such matters, we do not allow any errors within the Holy Writ – scribal or otherwise. We confess ignorance, even hardness of heart, in areas that result in our lack of revelation from above. We cannot explain all paradoxical parts of Scripture, but in calm assurance we rest in faith that the solutions are present within the pages of Scripture itself. No outside information need be brought to bear on the problem to "add light" to the Word. How does one add light to blinding revelation?

THE "PERICOPE" EXPLAINED¹

As to the story before us, we find Jesus conducting a "Bible study" at the Temple area. Suddenly the lesson is interrupted by a commotion as the scribes and Pharisees cast before Jesus and the "Church" a terrified believer, possibly clutching ashamedly at a bed sheet in an attempt to clothe herself and hide her humiliation. These religious leaders care nothing for her life or her shame. For them she is but the means, the bait for the trap with which they seek to hopelessly ensnare our Lord. These men are not "seekers of truth" as they pretend. Their motive is to secure the death of their antagonist, and if this woman must die also in securing that end, so be it.

When Jesus saw that the equally guilty man was not present, He knew their motive. Further, He knew the man must be of some importance, influential in the community or else the man would also now be before Him. Moreover it is quite possible that the man was himself one of the leaders – having deliberately seduced the woman thereby "sacrificing himself" to commit the act as part of a conspiracy for the very purpose of entrapping Jesus. "But what sayest *thou*?" that they might have something with which to accuse Him, they inquired. Thus, the real issue before us is actually that of "**authority**" (cp. verse 36!).

It is most important that the reader realize that Jesus did not set aside the Laws of God or make an exception with this woman as though God

¹ The author must bear the full responsibility to the reader and before the Lord for the entire exegesis under this heading.

had changed His mind or had "softened" from the Old Testament to the New Testament – that God was a God of wrath in the Old but had somehow "evolved" into a God of love, grace, and compassion in the New. God loved and had compassion on the exposed adulterers all throughout the Old Testament. He certainly did not love or feel more compassion for her than any before her. It was always the sin itself that He hated, but His holy nature and justice then as now, called for righteous judgment and punishment. God never changes (Mal.3:6).

First, this was still the time of the Old Covenant. The New Covenant could not come into effect until the required blood of the Covenant was shed. But the reader must come to see that Jesus perfectly upheld the demand of the Law – Jesus actually told these religious unbelievers to stone her (verse 7)! He told them to obey the Law – but dealt with their consciences, bathed in murder as they were, by the prefacing remark "He that is without sin among you" let him cast the first stone. The idea behind this stipulation was twofold. First, Jesus caught them unawares in that rather than having the "Bible study group" carry out the stoning, Jesus called on the unregenerate scribes and Pharisees to perform the deed. Thus if they so did, it would be they whom the Roman authorities would come against and not Jesus. They would have fallen into the pit that they themselves had dug (Pro.26:27). The Romans had taken the power of life and death away from the conquered Jews (Joh.18:31), and Roman law did not condemn an adulteress to be put to death.

In the second place, Jesus is challenging **them** to merely **obey** the law to which they so devotedly cleave. Jesus is calling on the required two or three eye witnesses (Deu.17:6-7) to now step forward. If they are credible witnesses, they must now identify themselves and also make known the identity of the man. If they will not identify the man they will be disobeying the law and thus will incur guilt. The man having been summoned, the stoning could continue but the first stones must be cast by these same men.

The qualifying "without sin" in Scriptural context with regard to witnesses, does not mean "moral perfection" as many suppose, thereby creating a problem here that does not exist. The context refers to the witnesses not being guilty of sin with respect to their being false or unrighteous witnesses *in the matter at hand* (cp. Lev.20:10; Deu.17:6-7; Exo.23:1-2 & 7; Deu.19:15-19 and Pro.6:16-19). This is especially made clear in Exodus 23:1-2, 7. The Deuteronomy 19 passages continue the theme of dealing with false witnesses by God's charging the judges with

the responsibility of having the sentence that would have been applied to the accused meted out to the false witness. The implication from Jesus' stipulation is that if they obey God, being innocent and without sin regarding this matter, God would doubtless protect them from the Roman authorities. If, however, they are not – well then, they could not expect to be so delivered could they? They would thus incur the same penalty.

What the Lord wrote upon the ground is not recorded, but whatever it was, it had the effect of convicting each of the accusers in his conscience. As one of the main functions of the Law was to convict of sin (Rom.3:20, 7:7 & 8b; 7:13), we are certain that which He wrote was Scripture and from the Law. Besides, it was the Law upon which they hoped to trap Jesus (vs.5), yet now through a word of wisdom (I Cor.12:8; Heb.2:4) the Lord Jesus had used the very same to ensnare them in their own pit. We do not wish to be dogmatic or presumptuous; nevertheless, we strongly maintain that the narrative's context makes plain that Jesus included at least part of Leviticus 20:10 in what He wrote the first time.

And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death (Lev.20:10).

We further affirm, judging from the effect upon these men bent as they were on the destruction of the Lord, the second time Jesus stooped down He wrote from Deuteronomy 19:15-19. These verses have the sobering effect of reminding any "unrighteous" or "false" witnesses that the penalty which they had hoped to inflict upon the accused, would instead be carried out on them! Even though the woman was actually guilty, without two or three of them stepping forward and identifying the man – they would be false and unrighteous with regard to the matter. Moreover, if they now come forward and attempt to only stone the woman, not being willing to also name the man, they will bring upon themselves the selfsame judgment. They filed out from the most honorable to those of the least repute (the probable sense). No one came forward.

The Lord Jesus did not condone the woman's adultery but, as merely the "second man" and the "last Adam" (I Cor.15:45,47), He had no authority to overturn the Roman law and have her stoned. What we are saying is that even though Jesus was God come down to earth, the Judge of all flesh – He had not come in that capacity at this time. This He shall do upon His return. As Philippians 2:5-8 and Hebrews 2:5-18 explain, Jesus

took upon Himself the form of a servant, humbled Himself to human limitations, entered the arena of human affairs and though He never ceased to be God, He went about defeating the Devil and redeeming the fallen race purely as an unfallen man. In so doing, He demonstrated that the first Adam could have defeated Satan in the contest in Eden – that Satan is so limited that an unfallen man can defeat him and be victorious over temptation and sin by standing on God's Word, be it written as in Jesus' case (Mat.4:1-11) or only spoken as in Adam's case (Gen.2:16-17).

Thus the Judge had laid aside His Judicial Robe and had voluntarily accepted certain limitations including that of submission to the will of the Father in all matters. Jesus had divested Himself of all authority to act in the capacity as a Judge. Lest the reader doubt this or consider such a declaration offensive or demeaning to the person and Holy character of our Lord, remember that Jesus Himself so taught on another occasion (Luk.12:13-14).

Now observe what the Master teacher has accomplished. The Lord Jesus would not deal with the woman in the presence of unbelievers (I Cor.6:1 & 6). His tactic emptied the "Bible study" of the lost hypocrites. This freed Him to deal with her among and within the family of God. The unnamed woman was said to be standing "in the midst" (vs.9). Had **everyone** left, how *could* she have been "in the midst"? It does not say that all the people whom our Lord had been instructing went out, but only her accusers, having been convicted. The rest (vs.2) continued with their teacher, the adulteress being in **their** midst (cp. vs 3b, "in the midst"). Jesus is "left alone" in the sense that His antagonists, having departed, left Him with only true seekers – those of His own "family". It cannot mean "alone" in the absolute sense for we know that the woman was there. The "none" of verse 10 is with regard to the accusers who had burst in with her.

The point being made is that the Lord does not deal with His own concerning their sins in the presence of the wicked. Now that the "courtroom" had been cleared of the infidels, the problem at hand could be handled as a family matter. She is dealt with fully in accord with the principles of the Law, and with "Church" discipline! Jesus had not accepted the testimony of these wicked lost men, men with murder in their hearts, as being credible or valid against a sinning saint. The matter would be handled much as an **unconfirmed** bad report.

Now He, according to the exact instructions of the Law, brought the "court" to order – calling for the credible witnesses against her (vs.10)!

Reader, see it clearly that Jesus is not abrogating the Law as nearly all teach. He said He had not come to do that (Mat.5:17-19)!

Two eye witnesses were required by the law to implement its being carried out (Joh.8:17) and the eye witnesses had to cast the first stones. The death penalty could not be meted out as there were **none** present. To now do so would actually violate the specific instructions so carefully detailed within the Law. As only an earthly human Judge – Jesus **cannot** now lawfully condemn her to death; there are no witnesses to her deed present! Truly, the Law had been used by Jesus "lawfully" (I Tim.1:8).

"But how do we know that she was a believer?", one protests – by the way Jesus handled the matter as explained above. Were she a pagan, the manner with which she was dealt within the "Bible study" would make no sense. Next, though not of itself conclusive, she addressed Jesus as "Lord" (vs.11).

Decisive, however, was Jesus' final remark to the woman. Were she unregenerate the Lord's words "go, and sin no more" would be meaningless and vacuous. In the first place, without the Holy Spirit's presence and power in her life, she would be helpless to refrain for long without sin again taking dominion over her.

Secondly and conclusively, she would be no better off with such instructions from Christ as she had been when she had been so unceremoniously brought to Him at the first – for she would still be lost and hell bound even if she never sinned again. The sin she had just committed would doom her apart from a sin substitute – a Savior. Such instructions would only benefit a believer who has fallen into the snare of sin.

But was not Jesus letting her off too easy for such a flagrant shameful sin? Shouldn't she have gotten what she deserved? First, we all deserve to be banished to hell forever – we all have dared to sin against a three times Holy God. By His marvelous plan of redemption through faith in Christ Jesus, God has made a way for Him to deal with us in both mercy and justice such that we are disciplined but not condemned. When He deals with our sin in any way that is less than eternal exile to the lake that forever burns with fire, we all get off "easy" – though it may not seem so at the moment.

Next, we affirm that she did not get off easily. Forever with her would be the humiliation of being caught in the very act of adultery. She had been brought out and terrified with the threat of public execution. What wild fear must have raced through her heart! Consider the shame of being thrust before your own local Bible study half covered – men so bent on the destruction of another would certainly not have allowed time for her to have made herself more "presentable". Brought low before those who know you and the fact of your hypocrisy laid open for all to see – was this really getting off "easy"?

But there is more. To be brought, degraded and disheveled, before the Savior face to face after having just failed Him so ignominiously would not be light discipline. Further, the Name of her God had been dishonored for now the scoffers would mock.

Finally, though forgiven of this sin – and let all observe and mark that Jesus did call adultery "sin", not an "affair between consenting adults" or "a meaningful relationship" – the woman had lost **eternal rewards**. Blessings that God desired to heap upon her for all eternity, He now in righteousness could not so shower. Oh reader, to forever lose something that He who loves you and died for you would have given you, is not that just punishment? Yes, for such is the actual discipline that was discharged.

Moreover, we do not know if further ramifications followed as venereal disease, pregnancy, loss of husband and/or children (if applicable in her case), loss of job, depression, guilt, etc. Having one's sins forgiven does not mean that the consequences of the sin are obliterated in this life. David was forgiven in the matter of Uriah and Bathsheba, but the consequences that were set in motion by the sin followed David to his grave. It is to David's credit that he never accused God of dealing too severely with him or whined concerning the matter. For many, stoning would have been the preferred choice over the above. No, her sin was neither condoned nor soft peddled.

Lest the reader still have the slightest reservation that our major points have been inaccurate or mistaken, we call to his attention that these same points are confirmed, being presented afterward in the same chapter! Jesus asserted that He was not there to judge men (vs.15), not yet (cp. John 5:22; 18:36 - i.e., "now")! But if He does judge now (in questions other than civil or criminal matters) in "Family" matters and the like, His judgment will be true (vs.16). In the same verse, Jesus

acknowledges that He is not executing this wisdom by His own God power and attributes, but by the power and wisdom of His Father (via the gifts of the Holy Spirit, Heb.2:4 etc.). He then brings up the point from the Law which calls for the necessity of at least the attestation of two witnesses in establishing truth (vs.17), and in verse 36 Jesus makes unmistakably clear that He has final authority.

Majestically, we have seen the Lord Jesus the Christ in an awesome display of wisdom, mercy, love and compassion employ only several Scriptures from the Law and merely 15 words (only 9 in the Greek) to vanquish the wicked. Then with only 21 words (Greek = 18), He both judged **and** restored a sinning saint. Truly – He is Worthy!

BACK TO THE PROBLEM

Why then was the story deleted or footnoted? Again, no name was given for the man but had he not been influential (even a scribe or Pharisee) he would have been brought out with the woman. Perhaps a certain religious Gnostic (Origen) who walked about castrated and barefoot while trying to work his way into the Kingdom of God might be offended by a story which, as originally written, exposed a religious leader as having committed adultery. Of this we are not certain, but as to the interpretation of the story given above, that we proclaim to the glory of God.

Tragically, most naturalistic scholars today feel so certain that the pericope is not genuine that they regard further discussion of the matter as unprofitable.¹ Their arguments against the authenticity of the section are largely arguments from silence and the most telling of these silences is generally thought to be that of the Greek Church "Fathers".² Bruce Metzger (1964) affirms that no Greek Father refers to the pericope until the first part of the 12th century.³ For the critic, this frail *external evidence* is conclusive. However, Constantine von Tischendorf lists nine manuscripts of the 9th century which contain the verses under discussion

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 154. Most of the remainder of this defense of the *Pericope* has been gleaned from Dr. Hills excellent critique; see his pp. 150-159.

² *Ibid.*, p. 156.

³ Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

and also one which may be of the 8th century.¹ Yet not one Father commented upon these verses from the 9th until the 12th century, demonstrating that silence is not a trustworthy measure upon which to place one's confidence. The entire matter of this silence is of no force whatsoever as we shall demonstrate.

First, we remind the reader that many of the Greek Fathers may well have been influenced against the pericope by the moralistic prejudice of which we have spoken; also, some may have been intimidated by the fact that several manuscripts known to them omitted it.² Augustine wrote that these verses were being left out by some "lest their wives should be given impunity in sinning."³ Hills adds that a 10th century Greek named Nikon accused the Armenians of removing the account because "it was harmful for most persons to listen to such things".⁴

Burgon mentions another most relevant reason why these early Fathers did not comment on this section.⁵ Their comments were connected to the subject matter they preached and the "pericope de adultera" was omitted from the ancient Pentecostal lesson of the Church. Burgon concludes that this is why Chrysostom (345-407) and Cyril (376-444), two early church Fathers, "in publicly commenting on John's Gospel, pass straight from ch. 7:52 to ch. 8:12. Of course they do. Why should they – indeed, how could they – comment on what was not publicly read before the congregation?"⁶

Hills continues: "At a very early date it had become customary throughout the Greek Church to read John 7:37-8:12 on the day of Pentecost. This lesson began with 7:37-39, verses that are very appropriate to the Pentecostal feast day in which the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is commemorated: 'In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink ... But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

² *Ibid.*, p. 157.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

⁶ Burgon, *The Causes of the Corruption of the Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels*, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

him should receive.' Then the lesson continued through John 7:52, omitting 7:53-8:11, and concluded with John 8:12 - 'Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.'"¹ Had the teaching ended at 7:52, the anomalous result would have been a lection concluding on an inconclusive remark ("Search and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet."). Hence, 8:12 was appended as a more appropriate conclusion to the Pentecost lesson.

GREEKS BEARING ANSWERS

Why then was the story of the Adulteress omitted from the Pentecostal lesson? Obviously because it was inappropriate to the central idea of Pentecost.² The content of the *Pericope* did not pertain to the theme of that day's teaching, thus it would have interfered with its flow. However, the critics insist that it was not read because it was not part of the Gospel of John at the time the Pentecostal lesson was selected – that it was added to the original reading hundreds of years later. Yet by so insisting they shoot themselves in the foot. As Hills has asked: "Why would a scribe introduce this story about an adulteress into the midst of the ancient lesson for Pentecost? How would it ever occur to anyone to do this?"³ Besides, such a well known section could not be altered without the Church's awareness of the change and, tradition bound as people are, an outcry of major proportion would have been forthcoming from clergy and laity alike. Also, such a momentous change would have aroused much written protest and debate. Where is the historical evidence of such – but forgive us – we now argue from silence!

Moreover, although the Greek Fathers were silent about the "*pericope de adultera*" the Church was not silent. John 8:3-11 was chosen as the lesson to be read publicly each year on St. Pelagia's day, October 8th.⁴ John Burgon first pointed out the significance of this historical circumstance: "The great Eastern Church speaks out on this subject in a voice of thunder. In all her Patriarchates, as far back as the written records of her practice reach – and they reach back to the time of those

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

⁴ *Ibid.*

very Fathers whose silence was felt to be embarrassing – the Eastern Church has selected nine of these twelve verses to be the special lesson for October 8."¹ As Burgon remarked, this is not opinion – but a fact.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The **internal evidence** for the verses is compelling. Looking back at John 7:37-52, we note that two hostile parties crowded the Temple courts (vv.40-42). Some were for laying violent hands upon Jesus (vs.44). At the same time, the Sanhedrin disputed among themselves privately in closed chambers. Some were reproaching their servants for not having taken Jesus prisoner (vv.45-52).

How then could John have proceeded "Again therefore Jesus spake unto them, saying, I am the light of the world"? What are we supposed to imagine that John meant if he had penned such words immediately following the angry council scene?²

Hills rightly observes that the rejection of the pericope leaves a strange connection between the seventh and eighth chapters: "the reader is snatched from the midst of a dispute in the council chamber of the Sanhedrin back to Jesus in the Temple without a single word of explanation."³ If the pericope is left between these two events, it accounts for the rage of the leaders having been temporarily diffused through the encounter over the woman such that the narrative beginning at 8:12 could transpire without being so out of place. Though their hatred for Jesus remained, the pericope incident brought its intensity down until the following confrontation.

To this we add Jerome's testimony (c.415) "in the Gospel according to John in many manuscripts, both Greek and Latin, is found the story of the adulterous woman who was accused before the Lord."⁴

Finally, Dr. Maurice Robinson's recent 1998 preliminary report based upon 1,665 "fresh collations of nearly all continuous-text" Greek New

¹ Burgon, *The Causes of the Corruption of the Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels*, *op. cit.*, pp. 259-260.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 237-238.

³ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

Testament manuscripts revealed that around 1,350 (81%) included the *Pericope*.¹

We ask the reader's indulgence over the space allotted to this explanation, but the author deemed it necessary to so do in order that you may better judge whether this story be Scripture. The 1611 translators may or may not have understood the account; regardless, they faithfully penned it without detraction.

For ever, O LORD, thy word

is settled in heaven.

Psalm 119:89

¹ Maurice A. Robinson, "Preliminary Observations regarding the *Pericope Adulterae* based upon Fresh Collations of nearly all Continuous-Text Manuscripts and over One Hundred Lectionaries". Dr. Robinson is Professor of New Testament and Greek at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary at Wake Forest, North Carolina. This paper reflects his nine-month study conducted at the Münster, Germany *Institut* which was founded by Kurt Aland. The *Institut* serves as the official registry center for all known Greek N.T. manuscripts and also possesses microfilm copies of nearly all those MSS. Dr. Robinson's paper was presented at the 50th annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society held 19-21 November 1998 in Orlando, Florida.

APPENDIX B - The Johannine Comma

FIRST JOHN 5:6-8

6. This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. 7. For there are three that bear record **in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.** 8. **And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. (KJB)**

The embolded portion of the passage is omitted from the NIV and RSV and is footnoted or missing in nearly all modern versions, reading instead, "There are three that bear record, the Spirit, and the water and the blood" or something closely akin.

Comment: This Scripture has been entitled the "Johannine Comma" by textual critics. The verse as found in the King James is the strongest single Scripture on the Holy Trinity. As such, it is not surprising that it should be the subject of vehement debate and an object of Satan's attack. It is a shameful, sad comment upon our time as to how readily modern Christians will surrender this and other passages on "textual grounds" without bothering to delve more closely into the evidence.

Dr. J.A. Moorman – a dedicated Godly minister, capsuling the posture of modern textual criticism which insists upon the omission of the passage, has set forth the following particulars:¹

1. The passage is missing from every known Greek manuscript except four, and these contain the passage in what appears to be a translation from a late recension (revision) of the Latin Vulgate. These four are all late manuscripts. They are a 16th century ms (#61), a 12th century ms (#88) which had the passage written in the margin by a modern hand, a 15th century ms (#629), and an 11th century ms which has the passage written in the margin by a 17th century hand.

¹ Moorman, *When The KJV Departs From The "Majority" Text*, op. cit., pp. 115-123. Appendix B is largely dependent upon Dr. Moorman; this work of his is full of pertinent data and is a most excellent manuscript.

2. The passage is not quoted by any of the Greek Fathers who would have employed it as proof in the Trinitarian controversies (Arian and Sabellian) had they known of the section. Its first appearance in Greek is in a Greek version of the (Latin) *Acts of the Latern Council* in 1215.
3. The section is not present in the mss of all the ancient versions except the Latin. Even then, it is not found in the Old Latin in its early form and it is not in Jerome's Vulgate (c.405).

The earliest instance of the passage being quoted as part of the actual text of First John is a fourth century Latin treatise. Supposedly the "gloss" arose when the original passage was understood to symbolize the Trinity (through the mention of three witnesses; the Spirit, and the water and the blood). This interpretation, they tell us, may have been written as a marginal note at first and, as time went on, found its way into the text.

The "gloss" was quoted by Latin Fathers in North Africa and Italy in the 5th century as part of the text of the Epistle. From the 6th century on, it is found more and more frequently in mss of the Old Latin and Vulgate.

4. If the passage were original, a compelling reason or reasons should have been found to account for its omission, either accidentally or deliberately, by all of the copyists of hundreds of Greek mss and by translators of ancient versions (called "transcriptional probability" – page 124). Lastly, they inform us that the passage makes an awkward break in the sense (called "intrinsic probability" – page 124).

There it is! These are the standard arguments that have been repeated *ad nauseam*. It certainly sounds convincing, but is the entire story being told?

THE EXTERNAL EVIDENCE FOR THE "COMMA"

First, we straightforwardly concede that the Johannine Comma has the least Greek supportive evidence by far of any New Testament passage. However, there is much to be offered in defending its inclusion in Scripture. As to *external evidence*, we begin by apprising the reader that the Nestle-Aland 26th edition lists 8, not 4, Greek manuscripts as having the section.¹ Another is cited by Metzger and the UBS 1st edition,

¹ Moorman, *When The KJV Departs From The "Majority" Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

bringing the total to nine.¹ Yet even this is incomplete. As of 1997, the following cursive mss are known to include the passage: 34, 88 (margin), 99, 105, 110, 162, 173, 181, 190, 193, 219, 220, 221, 298, 429, 629 (margin), 635, 636, and 918. In addition, 60 lectionaries contain the reading as do uncials R, F, M, and Q.² Thus, the list of Greek mss known to contain the "Comma" is not long, but it is longer (and growing) than many would have us believe.³

Though there is a paucity of support for the text in the Greek speaking East, there are some late versions that include the portion under question such as the first Armenian Bible (1666) which was based primarily on a 1295 mss and the first printed Georgian Bible, published at Moscow in 1743.⁴

As to the critics' contention that "the passage is not quoted by any of the Greek Fathers who would have employed it as proof in the Trinitarian controversies had they known of the section", our first reply is that *no such controversy existed*.⁵ During the first age of the Church, the subjects debated between the Christians and the heretics were over the divinity and the humanity of Christ. The contests maintained with and between these heretics did not extend beyond the consideration of the second Person – whether the Son possessed one subsistence or two persons instead of two subsistences and one person, etc. They did not assume the

¹ Further, the Nestle-Aland critical apparatus mentions that other Greek manuscripts contain the reading in the margin. It is usually held by critics that a number of these mss are merely copies of the Vulgate at I John 5:7, but their wording is carefully couched with subtle qualifying words (e.g., "appears to be") which reveals that such is by no means certain.

² Gerardus D. Bouw, *The Book of Bible Problems*, (Cleveland, OH: Asso. for Biblical Astronomy Pub., 1997), pp. 232-234.

³ Moorman, *When The KJV Departs From The "Majority" Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 120; also see Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction*, *op. cit.*, Vol II, p. 401.

⁵ Nolan, *An Inquiry into the Integrity of the Greek Vulgate*, *op. cit.*, pp. 525-557. Dr. Nolan points out that all the heretics would have subscribed to the letter of this text as they all admitted to the existence of "three" powers, or principles, in the "one" Divinity. This included the Gnostics, Ebionites, Valentinians, Sabellians, Arians, Nestorians, etc. Moreover, the Sabellians and Arians agreed as to the existence of "three" making up the Divine Nature. The controversy between the two cults centered on the force of the term "Son" as opposed to the term "Word" or Logos. As the text uses the term "Word" instead of "Son", the term *trei*" (three) in the context of the 7th verse was as unsuitable to the purpose of the Sabellians who confounded the Persons as was *toleḥ* (that one) to Eusebius – for the Arians divided the substance.

form of a Trinitarian controversy, hence no suitable occasion arose to cite the verse in question.

Secondly, the early eastern Fathers are silent on nearly everything for the simple reason that their literary works have not survived to the present.¹ Relevant to this, Harry A. Sturz has made the point "... there are no earlier Antiochian Fathers than Chrysostom (died 407) whose literary remains are extensive enough so that their New Testament quotations may be analyzed as to the type of text they support".² Moorman notes that there is reason to doubt that any serious search has been carried out on the eastern Fathers from Chrysostom forward or on the versions, for since Westcott and Hort a cloud has fallen on the textual scene and very little attention has been given to I John 5:7.³ Yet crucial to the issue at hand is whether there are any references to the passage prior to 1522, the year it was supposedly added to the Bible by Erasmus.

The favorable evidence is stronger in the early Latin west. The "three heavenly Witnesses" is contained in practically all of the extant Latin Vulgate mss.⁴ Although not included in Jerome's original edition, around the year 800 it was taken into the text of the Vulgate from the Old Latin mss.⁵ It was part of the text of a 2nd century Old Latin Bible. The passage is cited by Tertullian (died 220), Cyprian of Carthage (died 258), and Priscillian, a Spanish Christian executed on a charge of heresy in A.D. 385.⁶ It is found in "r", a 5th century Old Latin manuscript, and in a confession of faith drawn up by Eugenius, Bishop of Carthage, in 484.

After the Vandals over-ran the African provinces, their King (Hunnerich) summoned the bishops of the African Church and the adjacent isles to deliberate on the doctrine bound within the disputed passage.⁷ Between

¹ Moorman, *When The KJV Departs*, *op. cit.*, p. 121. Though the "Comma" itself is not quoted, Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, used the word "Trinity" c.168 and Athenagoras, writing in Greek to Roman emperors c.177, alluded to the 3 heavenly witnesses: "God the Father, & of God the Son, & of the Holy Spirit" (*Ante-Nicene Fathers*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 101 & 133).

² Sturz, *The Byzantine Text Type And New Testament Textual Criticism*, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

³ Moorman, *When The KJV Departs From The "Majority" Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

⁴ *Ibid.* A few early copies do omit the verse.

⁵ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

⁶ Moorman, *When The KJV Departs From The "Majority" Text*, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-122.

⁷ Nolan, *An Inquiry into the Integrity of the Greek Vulgate*, *op. cit.*, pp. 295-296.

three to four hundred prelates attended the Council at Carthage while Eugenius, as bishop of that See, drew up the Confession of the orthodox in which the contested 7th verse is expressly quoted.¹ That the entire African Church assembled in council should have concurred in quoting a verse which was not contained in the original text is altogether inconceivable. Such loudly proclaims that the 7th verse was part of its text from the beginning. The verse was cited by Vigilus of Thapsus (490), Cassiodorus (480-570) of Italy, and Fulgentius of Ruspe in North Africa (died 533). Moreover, this is not a complete listing. Therefore, **early** testimony for this key Trinitarian verse **does** exist.

CRITICAL INTERNAL EVIDENCE SUPPORTS THE "COMMA"

If I John 5:6-8 is removed from the Greek text, the two resulting loose ends will not join together grammatically. The noun endings in Greek (as in many other languages) has "gender". Neuter nouns normally require neuter articles (the word "the" as in "the blood" is the article). But the article in verse 8 of the shortened reading as found in the Greek that is the foundation of the new versions (verse 7 of the King James Greek text) is *masculine*. Thus the new translations read "the Spirit (neuter), the water (neuter), and the blood (neuter): and these three (masculine!! - from the Greek article "hoi") are in one." Consequently three neuter subjects are being treated as masculine (see below where the omitted portion is italicized).² If the "Comma" is rejected it is impossible to adequately explain this irregularity. In addition, without the "Comma" verse 7 has a masculine antecedent; 3 neuter subjects (nouns in vs.8) do not take a masculine antecedent. Viewing the entire passage, it becomes apparent how this rule of grammar is violated when the words are omitted.

5:6 ... And it is the Spirit (neuter) that beareth witness (neuter), because the Spirit (neuter) is truth.

5:7 For there are three (masculine) that bear record (masculine) [*in heaven, the Father (masculine), the Word (masculine), and the Holy Ghost (neuter): and these three (masculine) are one (masculine).*]

5:8 *And there are three (masculine) that bear witness (masculine) in earth,* the Spirit (neuter), and the water (neuter), and the blood (neuter): and these three (masculine) agree in one.

¹ Nolan, *An Inquiry into the Integrity of the Greek Vulgate*, op. cit., pp. 295-296.

² Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, op. cit., p. 211.

When we inquire of the scholars an accounting for this strange situation, the reply is that the only way to account for the masculine use of the three neuters in verse 8 is that here they have been "personalized".¹ Yet we observe that the Holy Spirit is referred to twice in verse 6 and as He is the third person of the Trinity this would amount to "personalizing" the word "Spirit" – but the neuter gender is used. Therefore – as Hills noted – since personalization did not bring about a change of gender in verse 6, it cannot fairly be pleaded as the reason for such a change in verse 8.²

What then is to be done by way of explanation? The answer is that something is **missing!** If we retain the Johannie Comma, a reason for referring to the neuter nouns (Spirit, water, and blood) of verse 8 in the masculine gender becomes readily clear.³ The key is the principle of "influence" and "attraction" in Greek grammar.⁴ What influence would cause "that bear record" in verse 7 and "these three" in verse 8 to suddenly become masculine? The answer can only be: due to the influence of the nouns Father and Word in verse 7 which are masculine – it is the inclusion of the Father and the Word, to which the beginning and ending of the passage are attracted, a principle well known in Greek syntax. In effect then, the only way the spirit, the water and the blood can be "personalized" is by retaining the reading of the 1611 King James and the Greek text upon which it is based where all three words are direct references to the Trinity (vs.7). Where is the "Person"? "The Person" is in verse 7 of the Authorized Version of 1611.

The reader will note that the underlined phrase, "that bear witness", occurring three times in the preceding passage is a participle which is a type of verbal adjective.⁵ As adjectives, they modify nouns and must agree in gender. Thus if a text critic wishes to remove this passage (enclosed in square brackets) with integrity, he should be able to answer the following:⁶

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Moorman, *When The KJV Departs From The "Majority" Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

⁶ *Ibid.*

1. Why after using a neuter participle in line one is a masculine participle suddenly used in line two?
2. How can the masculine numeral, article (in the Greek), and participle (the 2nd of the three masculine adjectives) of line two be allowed to directly modify the three neuter nouns of line five?
3. What phenomena in Greek syntax (the part of grammar dealing with the manner in which words are assembled to form phrases, clauses or sentences in an orderly system or arrangement) would cause the neuter nouns of line five to be treated as masculine by the "these three" on the same fifth line?

There is no satisfactory answer! Leading Greek scholars as Metzger, Vincent, Alford, Vine, Wuest, Bruce, Plummer etc., make no mention whatever of the problem when dealing with the passage in any of their works to date.¹ *The International Critical Commentary* devotes twelve pages to the passage but is ignorantly or dishonestly silent regarding the mismatched genders.

Finally, with regard to internal evidence, if the words were omitted, the concluding words at the end of verse 8 contain an unintelligible reference. The Greek words "kai hoi treis eis to hen eisin" (kai|oi|trei" ei]" to|eñ ei]sin) mean precisely – "and these three agree to that (aforementioned) One."² If the 7th verse is omitted, "that One" does not appear. It is inconceivable how "that One" (Grk = to hen = to|eñ) can be reconciled with the taking away of the preceding words,³ that is – by taking out the "Comma". As Gaussen remarked: "Remove it, and the grammar becomes incoherent."⁴

¹ Moorman, *When The KJV Departs From The "Majority" Text*, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

² *Ibid.*, p. 118; here Moorman quotes an extract from Robert Dabney [*Dabney's Discussions Evangelical and Theological*, (Trinitarian Bible Society, n.d.)] but he gives neither date nor page.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 118; here Moorman cites Gaussen (*The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures*, p. 193; he does not give the publisher or date) who is quoting from Bishop Middleton's 1828 A.D. eighteen page discussion of the Greek Article.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

A FEASIBLE EXPLANATION FOR THE OMISSION OF THE "COMMA"

We take our long overdue departure from this much disputed verse by offering the following as a plausible explanation for the omission of I John 5:7 which is taken from the late (1981) Christian text critic, Dr. Edward Freer Hills:¹

"... during the second and third centuries (between 220 and 270, according to Harnack) the heresy which orthodox Christians were called upon to combat was not Arianism (since this error had not yet arisen), but Sabellianism (... after Sabellius, one of its principal promoters), according to which the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit were one in the sense that they were identical. Those that advocated this heretical view were called Patripassians (Father-suffers), because they believed that God the Father, being identical with Christ, suffered and died upon the cross; ...

"It is possible, therefore, that the Sabellian heresy brought the Johannine comma into disfavour with orthodox christians. ... And if during the course of the controversy manuscripts were discovered which had lost this reading..., it is easy to see how the orthodox party would consider these mutilated manuscripts to represent the true text and regard the Johannine comma as a heretical addition. In the Greek-speaking East especially the comma would be unanimously rejected, for there the struggle against Sabellianism was particularly severe.

"Thus it is not impossible that during the 3rd century, amid the stress and strain of the Sabellian controversy, the Johannine comma lost its place in the Greek text but was preserved in the Latin texts of Africa and Spain, where the influence of Sabellianism was probably not so great. ... it is not impossible that the *Johannine comma* was one of those few true readings of the Latin Vulgate not occurring in the Traditional Greek Text but incorporated into the *Textus Receptus* under the guiding providence of God. In these rare instances God called upon the usage of the Latin-speaking Church to correct the usage of the Greek-speaking Church."

¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, pp. 212-213. Also see pp. 107, 188 and 200 for similar statements. Most of the wording of the third paragraph in my previous editions were erroneously attributed to this citation but were actually from page 193 in Hills' 1967 version of *Believing Bible Study*. Unfortunately, the two quotes were inadvertently combined.

So to Hills, although the traditional text found in the vast majority of the Greek manuscripts was a fully trustworthy reproduction of the divinely inspired original text, it could still be possible that the text of the Latin Vulgate, which really represents the long-established usage of the Latin Church, preserved a few genuine readings not found in the Greek manuscripts.

Thus with regard to external evidence, we have seen that for the most part if I John 5:7 is received, it must be admitted mainly on the testimony of the Western or Latin Church. Admittedly, it seems unwarranted to set aside the authority of the Greek Church and accept the witness of the Latin where a question arises as to the authenticity of a passage which properly belongs to the text of the former. Still, when the doctrine contained within that passage is taken into account, reasons do exist for giving preference to the Western Church's authority over that of the Eastern.

As the quote from Dr. Hills indicates, shortly after the period in which the Sabellian heresy flourished, Arianism arose. Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria (d. 336 A.D.) and pupil of Lucian of Antioch, denied the deity and eternity of Christ Jesus. The Greek or Eastern Church was completely given over to that heresy from the reign of Constantine to that of Theodosius the Elder, a span of at least forty years (c.340-381, the convening of the fourth Council of Byzantium). Conversely, the Western Church remained uncorrupted by the Arian heresy during this period.¹ Thus if the "Comma" problem did not develop during the Sabellian controversy as Dr. Hills proposes, it may well have so done during the time of the Arian dominion of the Greek Church as Dr. Frederick Nolan has forcefully propounded. Dr. Nolan argues that with the Arians in control of the Greek Church for the forty or so year span, Eusebius was able to suppress this passage in the edition that he revised which had the effect of removing the verse from the Greek texts.² Thus the disputed

¹ Nolan, *An Inquiry into the Integrity of the Greek Vulgate*, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-29, 293-306. Indeed, Dr. Frederick Nolan's defense of I John 5:7 is without equal. See especially pp. 525-576 where his insight, logic, and powers of deduction are par excellence.

² *Ibid.*, p. 305. Dr. Nolan is quick to point out that the verse as preserved in the Latin manuscripts is consistent and full whereas the Greek is internally defective grammatically (pp. 259-261, 294) – as we have already seen. Thus Nolan notes that here where the testimony of the two Churches has been found to vary, the evidence is not so much to be seen as contradictory, but rather that one is merely defective. Having confronted the two witnesses, the best way to account for all that has been stated heretofore is to suppose that there was a time when the two agreed in the more full and explicit reading (p. 306).

verse was originally *suppressed*, not gradually *introduced* into the Latin translation.¹

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

There remains one more valid and compelling reason for the acceptance of the section under discussion as being genuine. As stated on page 183, the *Textus Receptus* always has been the New Testament used by the true Church! We have cited Parvis' admission of this conclusively decisive point and Aland's concession that it undoubtedly has been the N.T. of the Church from the Reformation until the mid twentieth century. This is the most important justification why not only this passage, but all of the passages that would be deleted or altered by the destructive critics should be retained in the confines of Scripture.

Finally, it cannot be overly stressed that the successive editors of the TR could have omitted the passage from their editions. The fact that Stephens, Beza, and the Elzevirs retained the Pericope, despite the reluctance of Erasmus to include it, is not without significance. The learned Lutheran text critic J.A. Bengel also convincingly defended its inclusion² as did Hills in this century. The hard fact is that, by the providence of God, the Johannine comma obtained and retained a place in the *Textus Receptus*. We emphatically declare that the most extreme caution should be exercised in questioning its right to that place.

Moorman reminds us that the fate of this passage in the written Word indeed parallels the many times Satan sought to destroy the line through which Messiah – the Living Word would come.³ We are reminded, for example, of wicked Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, slaying all of the seed royal of the lineage of David – save for Joash!

Moreover, this author concurs with Moorman – the passage has the ring of truth.⁴ Like him, we proclaim that it is the Holy Spirit who "guides into all truth" (John 16:13) who has given it that "ring".

¹ Nolan, *An Inquiry into the Integrity of the Greek Vulgate*, op. cit., p. 561.

² John Albert Bengel, *Gnomon*, 5 Vols., 6th ed., trans by The Rev. William Fletcher, D.D., (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Pub., 1866), Vol 5, pp. 140-150 (orig. pub. 1742).

³ Moorman, *When The KJV Departs From The "Majority" Text*, op. cit., p. 123.

⁴ *Ibid.*

APPENDIX C - Examples of Modern Criticism

TEXTUAL SAMPLING

It seems unreasonable that individuals and organizations professing to champion a high view of Scripture and defending its inerrancy and verbal plenary inspiration should embrace a Greek text which effectively undermines their belief. Since their sincerity is evident, one must conclude that they are uninformed, or have not really looked at the evidence and weighed the implications.

In the small sampling of modern textual scholarship that follows,¹ the reading of the *Textus Receptus* is transliterated first and that of UBS³ second, followed by any others. Beside each variant, in parenthesis is a literal equivalent in English. To each variant is attached a statement of manuscript and versional support similar to that found in the "critical apparatus" of UBS³ (If the reader is unfamiliar with the process of interpreting the statements of support; he should move on to the discussion). "**Byz**" usually represents **over** 90% of the extant (known) Greek MSS/mss. The set of variants with their respective supporting evidence is followed by a brief critique of the implications.

Luke 4:44

"Galilaias" (of Galilee) - A, D, E, G, K, M, U, X, Y, G, D, Q, P, Y, 047, 0211, +6unc, f¹³, 33, **Byz**, lat, syr^p

"Ioudaias" (of Judea) - P^{75vid}, Aleph, B, C, L, Q, R(W)f¹, **Lect**, syr^{s,h}, cop

Problem: Jesus was in Galilee (and continued there), not in Judea.

Discussion: In the parallel passage, Mark 1:35-39, all texts agree that Jesus was in Galilee. Thus UBS³ contradicts itself by reading "Judea" in Luke 4:44. Bruce Metzger, writing as spokesman for the committee which edited the issue, makes clear that the UBS editors did this on purpose when he explains that their reading "is obviously the more difficult, and copyists have corrected it ... in accord with the

¹ This entire Appendix has been adapted from: Wilbur N. Pickering, *What Difference Does It Make?*, (Dallas, TX:, 1990), pp. 1-17.

parallels in Mt.4:23 and Mk.1:39."¹ This error in the eclectic text is reproduced by the LB, NIV, NASB, NEB, RSV, etc.

Luke 23:45

"eskotisthe" (was darkened) - A, C^c, D, E, G, K, M, Q, R, U, V, W, X, Y, G, D, Q, P, Y, 0117, 0135, +5unc, f^{1,13}, **Byz, Lect**, lat, syr, Diat

"eklipontos" (being eclipsed) - P⁷⁵, Aleph(B,C^{vid}), L, 0124, (cop)

Problem: An eclipse of the sun is impossible during a full moon. Such an eclipse may only occur at the new moon phase. Jesus was crucified during the Passover, and the Passover is always at full moon (which is why the date for Easter shifts around). UBS introduces a scientific error.

Discussion: The Greek verb "ekleipw" (ekleipw) is quite common and has the basic meaning "to fail" or "to end", but when used of the sun or the moon it refers to an eclipse. Moreover, our word "eclipse" comes from this Greek root. Indeed, such versions as Moffatt, Twentieth Century, Authentic, Phillips, NEB, New Berkeley, NAB and Jerusalem overtly state that the sun was eclipsed. While versions such as NASB, TEV and NIV avoid the word "eclipse", the normal meaning of the eclectic text that they follow is "the sun being eclipsed."²

Mark 6:22

"autes tes Hrodiados" ([the daughter] herself of Herodias) - A, C, E, G, H, K, M, N, S, U, V(W,q)U, G, P, S, F, W, f⁽¹⁾¹³, 33, **Byz, Lect**, lat, (syr,cop,Diat)

autou ... Hrodiados (his [daughter] Herodias) - Aleph, B, D, L, D

Problem: UBS in Mark 6:22 contradicts UBS in Matthew 14:6

Discussion: Matthew 14:6 states that the girl was the daughter of Herodias (the former wife of Philip, King Herod's [Herod Antipas])

¹ *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, (New York: United Bible Societies, 1971), pp. 137-138.

² Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 242. Metzger dismisses the reading of the vast majority of the MSS as "the easier reading" (p. 182).

brother, who was then living with Herod). Here UBS makes the girl out to be Herod's own daughter, and calls **her** "Herodias". Metzger defends the choice of the UBS Committee with these words: "It is very difficult to decide which reading is the least unsatisfactory" (p. 89)! The modern versions, usually identifying with UBS, part company with this rendering.

Matthew 5:22

eikh (without a cause) - 01^c, D, E, K, L, M, S, U, V, W, D, q, P, S, 0233, f1.13, 33, **Byz**, **Lect**, it, syr, cop, Diat

(missing!) - P⁶⁷, Aleph*, B, 045, vg

Problem: A contradiction is introduced – cp. Eph.4:26, Psa.4:4, etc. Anger is to be controlled and properly directed, but not absolutely forbidden (as the UBS reading does, in effect).

Discussion: Anger is ascribed to Jesus (Mk.3:5) and to God, repeatedly. Again Metzger appeals, in effect, to the "harder reading": "it is much more likely that the word was added by copyists in order to soften the rigor of the precept, than omitted as unnecessary" (p. 13). Are there not other reasons why it might have been omitted? The external evidence against the omission is massive, as well as being the earliest. Most modern versions join UBS in this error.

I Corinthians 5:1

onomazetai (is named) - P⁶⁸, 01^c, 044, **Byz**, syr

(missing) - P⁴⁶, Aleph*, A, B, C, D, F, G, 33, lat, cop

Problem: It was reported that a man had his father's wife, a type of fornication such that not even the Gentiles spoke of it. Notwithstanding, the UBS text affirms that this type of incest did not even exist among the Gentiles – a plain falsehood.

Discussion: Strangely, such evangelical versions as NIV, NASB, Berkeley and LB propagate this error. Interestingly, versions such as TEV, NEB and Jerusalem, while following the same text, avoid a categorical statement.¹

¹ The UBS apparatus gives no inkling to the user that there is serious variation at this point; Metzger also doesn't mention it.

Luke 3:33

tou Aminadab (of Aminadab) & tou Aram (of Aram) - A, E, G, K, N,
U, D, P, Y, 047, 0211 (D,Q)+7unc, 33, **Byz, Lect**, lat, syr^{p,h}

tou Aminadab (of Aminadab), tou Admin (of Admin), & tou Arni (of Arni)

tou Admein,		tou Arnei - B
tou Adam,		tou Arni? - syr ^s
tou Adam,	tou Admin,	tou Arnei - 01*
tou Adam,	tou Admein,	tou Arnei - cop ^{sa}
tou Admein,	tou Admin,	tou Arni - cop ^{bo}
tou Aminadab,	tou Admin,	tou Arnei - 01 ^c
tou Aminadab,	tou Admin,	tou Arhi - f ¹³
tou Aminadab	tou Admh,	tou Arni - X
tou Aminadab	tou Admein,	tou Arni - L
tou Aminadab	tou Admein,	tou Aram 0102 (P ^{4?})

Problem: The fictitious "Admin" and "Arni" have been intruded into Christ's genealogy.

Discussion: UBS has misrepresented the evidence in its apparatus so as to hide the fact that no Greek MS has the precise text it has printed – a text which is a veritable "patchwork quilt". In Metzger's presentation of the UBS Committee's reasoning, he writes, "the Committee adopted what seems to be the least unsatisfactory form of text" (p. 136). The UBS editors concoct their own reading and proclaim it "the least unsatisfactory"! What is so "unsatisfactory" about the reading of the vast majority of the MSS except that it doesn't introduce any difficulties?

There is complete confusion in the Egyptian camp. That confusion must have commenced in the second century, resulting from several easy transcriptional errors, simple copying mistakes. "ARAM" to "ARNI" is very easy (in the early centuries only upper case letters were used); with a scratchy quill the cross strokes in the "A" and "M" could be light, and a subsequent copyist could mistake the left leg of the "M" as going with the "K" to make "N", and the right leg of the "M" would become "I".

Very early Aminadab was misspelled as Aminadam, which survives in some 25% of the extant MSS. The "Adam" of a, syr^s and cop^{sa} arose through an easy instance of homoioarcton (the eye of a copyist went from the first "A" in "Aminadam" to the second, dropping "Amin" and leaving "Adam"). "A" and "D" are easily confused, especially when written by hand.

"Admin" presumably came from "AMINadab", though the process was more complicated. The "i" of "Admin" and "Arni" is corrupted to "ei" in Codex B (a frequent occurrence in that MS). Codex a conflated the ancestor that produced "Adam" with the one that produced "Admin", etc. The total confusion in Egypt should not surprise us, but how shall we account for the text and apparatus of UBS³ in this instance? And whatever possessed the editors of NASB, RSV, TEV, LB, Berkeley, etc. to embrace such an outrageous error?¹ Not one MSS has this reading!

Matthew 19:17

Ti me legeis agathon; oudeis agathos ei me eis, ho Theos (Why do you call me good? No one is good but one, God) - C, E, F, H, K, M, S, U, V, W, Y, D, S, F, W, f¹³, 33, **Byz, Lect**, syr^{p,h}, cop^{sa}, Diat

Ti me erotas peri tou agathou; eis estin ho agathos (Why do you ask me about the good? one is good) - Aleph, L, Q(B,D,f¹,syr^s)

Ti me erotas peri tou agathou; eis estin ho agathos, ho Theos - lat, syr^c, cop^{bo}

Problem: UBS in Matthew 19:17 contradicts UBS in Mark 10:18 and Luke 18:19 (wherein all texts agree here with the Byzantine).

¹ Luke 3:33 offers yet another related textual difficulty. The H-F Majority Text (not the TR) has been misled by von Soden and inserts Joram between Aram and Hezron. Out of 26 extant uncials only nine read Joram; 17 do not, and they are supported by the three earliest Versions. Joram was probably an early corruption of Aram that was subsequently conflated with it; the conflation survives in a large segment of the Byzantine tradition, which is seriously divided here. It is possible that defenders of the eclectic text will appeal to the case of Cainan in verse 36 as being analogous to "Admin" and "Arni". Cainan as son of Arphaxad does not occur in the Masoretic Text, but does in the Septuagint. Any analogy must be denied as "Cainan" is attested by all texts, whereas the UBS reading in verse 33 is the creation of the editors, based on the complete hodgepodge among the "Egyptian" witnesses.

Discussion: Presumably Jesus spoke in Aramaic, but there is no way that whatever He said could legitimately yield the last two translations into Greek given above.¹ That the Latin versions offer a conflation suggests that both the other variants must have existed in the second century. Indeed, the Diatessaron overtly places the Byzantine reading in the first half of that century.

During the 2nd century, the Church in Egypt was dominated by Gnosticism. That such a "nice" gnostic variant came into being is no surprise, but why do modern editors embrace it? Because it is the "more obscure one" (Metzger, p. 49). This "obscurity" was so attractive to the UBS Committee that they printed another "patchwork quilt". The precise text of UBS³ is found only in the **corrector** of Codex B. Further, no two of the main Greek MSS given as supporting this eclectic text (a,B,D,L,Q,f¹) precisely agree! Most modern versions join UBS in this error also.

John 6:11

tois mathetais, hoi de mathetai (to the disciples, and the disciples) – 01^c,
D, 038, 044, f¹³, **Byz**(syr^s)

(all missing) – P^{66,75vid}, Aleph*, A, B, L, N, W, 063, f¹, 33, lat, syr^{c,h}, cop

Problem: UBS in John 6:11 contradicts UBS in Mat.14:19, Mk.6:41 and Luk.9:16 (all agree here with the Byzantine).

Discussion: Mat.14:19, Mk.6:41 and Luk.9:16 all have Jesus giving the broken bread and fish to the disciples, who then distributed to the crowd. They do not have Jesus Himself giving directly to the crowd. The attempt to defend the UBS reading here by an appeal to an "analogy" like Herod's slaughter of the innocents is lame. Mat.2:16 records that Herod "sent and killed" all the male children in Bethlehem, but the actual killing would have been done by soldiers, not by Herod the Great himself. But even this statement says that he "**sent**", which overtly means it was an order carried out by others.

John 6:11 is in the middle of a detailed narrative account wherein the disciples have already been actively participating. In fact, verse 10

¹ In His teaching on general themes, the Lord Jesus presumably repeated Himself many times, using a variety of expressions and variations on those themes. But in this case we are dealing with a specific conversation, which in all likelihood was not repeated.

records that Jesus had given them an order. The UBS rendering of verse 11 is unacceptable.¹ Inconceivably, almost all modern versions join UBS in this error.

Acts 19:16

auton (them) – H, L, P, S, Y, **Byz**, syr^s

amfoteron (both of them) – P, Aleph, A, B, D, 33, syr^p, cop

Problem: The sons of Sceva were *seven*, not two.

Discussion: To argue that "both" can mean "all" on the basis of this passage is to beg the question. An appeal to Acts 23:8 is likewise unconvincing. "For Sadducees say that there is no resurrection – and no angel or spirit; but the Pharisees confess both. "Angel" and "spirit", if not intended as synonyms, at least belong to a single class, spirit beings. However, the Pharisees believed in "both" – the resurrection and spirit beings.

There is no basis here for claiming that "both" can legitimately refer to seven (Acts 19:16).² Yet, most modern versions do render "both" as "all". The NASV actually renders "both of them," making the contradiction overt!

Matthew 1:7-8

Asa (Asa) – E, K, L, M, S, U, V, W, G, D, P, S, W, 33, **Byz, Lect**, lat^{pt}, syr

Asaph (Asaph) – Aleph, B, C, f^{1,13}, lat^{pt}, cop

Problem: Asaph does not belong in Jesus' genealogy.

¹ As in 1 Corinthians 5:1, the UBS apparatus again gives the user no inkling that there is serious variation at this point. Metzger also offers no comment.

² Metzger's discussion is interesting: "The difficulty of reconciling [seven] with [both], however, is not so great as to render the text which includes both an impossible text. On the other hand, however, the difficulty is so troublesome that it is hard to explain how [seven] came into the text, and was perpetuated, if it were not original, ..." (pp. 471-472). Note that Metzger assumes the genuineness of "both" and discusses the difficulty that it creates as if it were fact. His assumption is baseless and the difficulty it creates is the result of his presuppositions.

Discussion: Asaph was a Levite, not of the tribe of Judah; he was a psalmist, not a king. It is clear from Metzger's comments that the UBS editors understand that their reading refers to the Levite (p. 1).

In fact, "Asaph" is probably not a misspelling of "Asa". Not counting Asa and Amon (see v.10), Codex B misspells 13 names in this chapter; Codex a misspells 10. These misspellings involve dittography, gender change, or a similar sound ("z" for "s", "d" for "t", "m" for "n"). They are not harmless misspellings such as adding an extraneous consonant, like "f", or trading dissimilar sounds, like "s" for "n".

In response to Lagrange, who considered "Asaph" to be an ancient scribal error, Metzger writes: "Since, however, the evangelist may have derived material for the genealogy, not from the Old Testament directly, but from subsequent genealogical lists, in which the erroneous spelling occurred, the Committee saw no reason to adopt what appears to be a scribal emendation" (p. 1).

Thus Metzger frankly declares that the spelling they have adopted is "erroneous". The UBS editors have deliberately imported an error into their text, which is faithfully reproduced by NAB (New American Bible). RSV and NASB add a footnote stating that the Greek reads "Asaph". It would be less misleading had they said that a tiny fraction of the Greek MSS so read. The case of Amon vs. Amos in verse 10 is analogous to this.

Matthew 10:10

mede hrabdous (neither staffs) – C, E, F, G, K, L, M, N, P, S, U, V, W, Y, G, D, P, S, F, W, f¹³, **Byz**, syr^h, cop^{bo}

mede hrabdon (neither a staff) – Aleph, B, D, Q, f¹, 33, lat, syr^p, cop^{sa}

Problem: In both Matthew 10:10 and Luke 9:3 UBS has "neither a staff," thus contradicting Mark 6:8 where all texts have "only a staff."

Discussion: In Luke and Matthew the Byzantine text reads "neither staffs", which does not contradict Mark. The case of the staffs is analogous to that of the tunics; they were to take only one, not several. A superficial reader would probably expect the singular. That some scribe in Egypt should simplify "staffs" to "a staff" comes as no surprise, but why do the UBS editors import this error into their text? Almost all modern versions follow UBS here and in Luke 9:3.

John 7:8

oupo (not yet) – P^{66,75}, B, L, T, W, X, D, Q, Y, f^{1,13}, **Byz, Lect**, syr^{pt}, cop, Diat^{pt}

ouk (not) – Aleph, D, K, P, lat, syr^{pt}, Diat^{pt}

Problem: Since Jesus did in fact go to the feast (and doubtless knew that He was going), the UBS text makes Him a liar.

Discussion: Since the UBS editors usually attach the highest value to P⁷⁵ and B, isn't it strange that they reject them in this case? Here is Metzger's explanation: "The reading ["not yet"] was introduced at an early date (it is attested by P^{66,75}) in order to alleviate the inconsistency between ver. 8 and ver. 10" (p. 216). So, they rejected P^{66,75} and B because they preferred the "inconsistency". NASV, RSV, NEB and TEV read the same as the eclectic text.

Acts 28:13

perielthontes (fetched a compass) – P⁷⁴, 01^c, A, P, 048, 056, 066, 0142, **Byz, Lect**, syr^{p,h}

perielontes (taking away [something]) – Aleph*, B, Y, cop^{sa(bo)}

Problem: The verb chosen by UBS, "periairew", is transitive, and is meaningless here.

Discussion: Metzger's lame explanation is that a majority of the UBS Committee took the word to be "a technical nautical term of uncertain meaning" (p. 501)! Why do they choose to disfigure the text on such poor evidence when there is an easy transcriptional explanation? The Greek letters omicron (o) and theta (q) are very similar. When one follows the other in a word, it would be easy to drop out one of them, in this case the "theta". The word "perielthontes", which means "sailed in a circuitous route", is hardly "a technical nautical term".

2 Peter 3:10

katakaesetai (shall be burned up) – A, 048, 049, 056, 0142, 33, **Byz, Lect**, lat, syr^h, cop^{bo}

heuresetai (shall be found) – (P⁷²)Aleph, B, K, P, syr^{ph} (cop^{sa})

Problem: The UBS reading is nonsensical; the context is clearly one of judgment.

Discussion: Metzger actually states that their text "seems to be devoid of meaning in the context" (p. 706)! So why did they choose it? Metzger explains that there is "a wide variety of readings, none of which seems to be original." "Shall be burned up" certainly cannot be said to be meaningless. NASV abandons UBS here, giving the Byzantine reading; NEB and NIV render "laid bare"; TEV has "will vanish".

The previous examples may not strike the reader as being uniformly convincing; however, there is a cumulative effect. By ingenuity and mental gymnastics, it may be possible to appear to circumvent one or another of these examples but with each added instance, credibility decreases. One or two such circumventions may be deemed as possible, but five or six become highly improbable. There are dozens of further examples any one of which taken singly may not seem to be all that alarming. But they too have a cumulative effect and **dozens** of them should give the responsible reader pause. Is there a pattern? If so, why? But for now, enough has been presented to permit us to turn to the implications.

IMPLICATIONS¹

How is all of this to be explained? The answer lies in the area of presuppositions. There has been a curious reluctance on the part of conservative scholars to come to grips with this matter. To assume that the editorial choices of an unbelieving scholar will not be influenced by his theological bias is naive in the extreme.

To be sure, both such scholars and the conservative defenders of the eclectic text will doubtless reply "Not at all – our editorial choices are derived from a most straightforward application of the generally accepted canons of N.T. textual criticism." And what are those canons? As stated in chapters VI and VII herein, the four main ones are:

- (1) the reading that best accounts for the rise of the other reading(s) is to be preferred;
- (2) the harder reading is to be preferred;

¹ The reader is reminded that this Appendix has been adapted from Dr. Pickering's 1990 *What Difference Does It Make?* Beginning at this section to the end of Appendix C has been adapted from his pp. 12-16.

- (3) the "shorter" is to be preferred; and
- (4) the reading that best fits the author's style and purpose is to be preferred.

From B.M. Metzger's presentation of the UBS Committee's reasoning in the cited examples, it appears that for nearly half their decision was based on the "harder reading canon". But, how are we to decide which variant is "harder"? Will not our theological bias enter in?

Consider, for example, Luke 24:52. The Nestle editions 1-25 omit "they worshipped him" (and in consequence NASV, RSV and NEB do also). UBS retains the words, but with a {D} grade (a very high degree of doubt). Yet only one solitary Greek manuscript omits the words (Codex D) supported by part of the Latin witness. In spite of the very slim external evidence for the omission, it is argued that it is the "harder" reading.

If the clause were original, what orthodox Christian would even think of removing it? On the other hand, the clause would make a nice pious addition that would immediately become popular, if the original lacked it. However, not only did the Gnostics dominate the Christian church in Egypt in the second century, there were also others who did not believe that Jesus was God come in the flesh. As unbelievers, would they be likely to resist the impulse to delete such a statement?

How shall we choose between these two hypotheses? Will it not be on the basis of our presuppositions? Indeed, in discussing this variant, along with Hort's other "Western non-interpolations", Metzger explains (p. 193) that a minority of the UBS committee argued that "there is discernable in these passages a Christological-theological motivation that accounts for their having been added, while there is no clear reason that accounts for their having been omitted." Had no one on the entire committee ever heard of the Gnostics?

THE MYTH OF NEUTRALITY

The myth of neutrality and scholarly objectivity needs forever to be laid to rest. Anyone who has been inside the academic community knows that it is liberally sprinkled with bias, party lines, fads, vendettas, personal ambition, spite, and just plain meanness – quite apart from those with a hatred of the truth of personal accountability to an intelligent and moral sovereign Creator. Neutrality and objectivity should never be assumed,

most especially when dealing with God's Truth – because in this area neither God nor Satan will permit neutrality. The Lord Jesus said: "He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters abroad (Mat.12:30)." Thus, God Himself declares that neutrality is impossible; one is either for Him or against Him.

Christ Jesus clearly and unmistakably claims to be God. Faced with such a claim we have only two options, to accept or reject ("Agnosticism" is really a passive rejection). The Bible claims to be God's Word. Again our options are but two. It follows that when dealing with the text of Scripture, neutrality is impossible.

The Bible is clear about satanic interference in the minds of human beings, and most especially when they are considering God's Truth. II Corinthians 4:4 states plainly that the god of this age/world blinds the minds of unbelievers when they are confronted with the Gospel. The Lord Jesus said the same thing when He explained the parable of the sower: "When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts" (Mk.4:15, Lk.8:12).

Furthermore, there is a pervasive satanic influence upon all human culture. I John 5:19 states that "the whole world lies in wickedness." The picture is clearly one of massive influence, if not control. All human culture is under pervasive satanic influence, including the culture of the academic community. Ephesians 2:2 is even more precise: "in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience." Satan actively works in the mind of anyone who rejects God's authority over him. For someone who claims to believe God's Word to accept an edition of the Bible that was prepared by unbelievers is to ignore the teaching of that Word.

Interpretation is preeminently a matter of wisdom. An unbelieving textual critic may have a reasonable acquaintance with the relevant evidence, he may have knowledge of the facts, but that by no means implies that he knows what to do with it. "The fear of the Lord is the **beginning** of wisdom" (Prov.9:10). Thus the unbeliever has none, at least from God's point of view. Wisdom is not the same as I.Q., knowledge or education. It is not merely the acquisition of facts. It entails knowing what to do with those facts. This comes not only from the experiences of life, but above all else – by the guiding and revelation from God. Anyone who edits or translates the text of Scripture needs to

be in spiritual condition such that he can ask the Holy Spirit to illumine him in his work as well as protect his mind from the enemy.

WHY USE SUBJECTIVE CANONS?

It is clear that the four canons mentioned above depend heavily upon the subjective judgment of the critic. But why use such canons? Why not follow the mss evidence and faith in God's promises?

It is commonly argued that the surviving manuscripts are not representative of the textual condition in the early centuries of the Church. The official destruction of MSS by Diocletian (A.D. 300), and others, is supposed to have decimated the supply of MSS such that the transmission was totally distorted to the extent that, presumably, we cannot be sure about anything. Such an argument not only "justifies" the eclectic proceeding, it is used to maintain its "necessity". However, the effectiveness of the Diocletian campaign was uneven in different regions.

Even more to the point are the implications of **the Donatist** movement which developed right after the Diocletian campaign. It was predicated in part on punishing those who had betrayed their manuscripts to destruction during the recent persecution. Obviously, some did **not** betray their MSS or there would have been no one to judge the others. Moreover those whose commitment to Christ and His Word was such that they who withstood the torture would be the most careful about the pedigree of their MSS. Hence, the purest specimens would have been the most likely to have survived. The main stream of transmission would have this fountain as its origin.

Since the Byzantine (majority) textform dominates over 90% of the extant MSS, those who wish to reject it cannot concede the possibility that the transmission of the text was in any sense normal. If it had been, then the majority must reflect the original wording, especially since the consensus is so massive. Thus, it is argued that the "ballot box" was "stuffed" – that the Byzantine text was imposed by ecclesiastical authority, but only after it was systematically concocted from other older texts in the early 4th century. Yet, as we have already stated, there exists absolutely no historical evidence to support this conjecture.

Also, numerous studies have demonstrated that the mass of Byzantine MSS are not monolithic; there are many distinct strands or strains of transmission, seemingly independent. Some of these go back to the 3rd

century (if not earlier). This is demonstrated by Codex a in that it conflates some of those strands in Revelation. Asterius, a pupil of Lucian of Antioch (d. 341) used MSS that were clearly Byzantine. His *Syntagmation* is generally believed to have been published before the Council of Nicea (325); accordingly, his MSS would have been 3rd century.

But why is "the shorter reading to be preferred?" Because, we are told, scribes had a propensity to add bits and pieces to the text. But that would have to be a deliberate act, for it has been demonstrated that accidental loss of place (a parablepsis) results in omission far more often than addition. For the most part, the only way to add accidentally is to copy part of the text twice, however the copyist would have to be really drowsy not to catch himself at it. So, any time a shorter reading could be the result of parablepsis, it should be viewed with suspicion.

Even when deliberate, omission should still be more frequent than addition. If there is something in the text that someone doesn't like, it attracts his attention and he may be tempted to do something about it. Correspondingly, it requires more imagination and effort to create new material to add than to delete that which is already there. Material suggested by a parallel passage would be an exception. Further, it has been demonstrated that most scribes were careful and conscientious, avoiding even unintentional mistakes. Those who engaged in deliberate editorial activity were really rather few, but some were flagrant offenders (like Aleph in Revelation).

Why is "the harder reading to be preferred?" The assumption is that a perceived difficulty would motivate an officious copyist to attempt a "remedy". But in the case of a such a presumed deliberate alteration, how can degrees of "hardness" actually be ascribed? We don't know who did it or why. Due allowance must be made for possible ignorance, officiousness, prejudice, and malice. Moreover, this canon is unreasonable for the more absurd a reading is, whether by accident or design, the better is its claim to be "original" since it will certainly be the "hardest".

It does not take a prophet or an apostle to see that this canon is wide open to satanic manipulation, both in the original creation of variants and in their present day evaluation. Nevertheless, since it is demonstrable that most copyists did not make deliberate changes, where there is massive agreement among the extant MSS this canon should not

even be considered. Indeed, where there is massive agreement among the MSS none of the subjective canons should be used – they are unnecessary and out of place. Of the more than 6,000 differences between UBS³ and the *Textus Receptus*, the vast majority of the readings preferred by the UBS editors have slender MS attestation. That liberal critics would reject the witness of the MSS in favor of subjective considerations should come as no surprise; but why do conservative believers embrace their conclusions?

CONCLUSION

In Jesus' day there were those who "loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:43), and they are with us still. But, the "praise of men" comes at a high price. One must accept their value system, a value system that suffers direct satanic influence. To accept the world's value system is basically an act of treason against King Jesus; it is a kind of idolatry. Those conservative scholars who place a high value on "academic recognition," on being acknowledged by the "academic community," and known for "scholastic excellence," etc., need to ask themselves about the presuppositions that lie behind such recognition.

We are not decrying true scholarship. We are challenging conservatives to make sure that their definition of scholarship comes from the Holy Spirit, not from the world. Were this implemented, there would be a dramatic shift in the conservative Christian world with reference to the practice of N.T. textual criticism and to the identity of the true N.T. text.

What difference does it all make? Not only do we have the confusion caused by two rather different competing forms of the Greek text, but one of them (the eclectic text) incorporates errors and contradictions that undermine the doctrine of inspiration and invalidate the doctrine of inerrancy. The other (the Traditional majority Text) does not. The first is based on subjective criteria, applied by liberal critics; the second is based on the consensus of the manuscript tradition and actual usage by the true followers (the real Church) down through the centuries.

Because the conservative evangelical schools and churches have generally embraced the theory (and therefore the presuppositions) that underlies the eclectic text (UBS³ - Nestle²⁶), there has been ongoing compromise or defection within the evangelical camp with reference to the doctrines of Biblical inspiration and especially inerrancy. The authority of Scripture has been greatly undermined; no longer does it command immediate and

unquestioned obedience. Consequently, there is a generalized softening of our basic commitment to Christ and His Kingdom. Equally dismaying, through our missionaries we have exported all of this to the emerging churches in the "third world". Alas! Truly, the ancient landmark is being removed (Prov.22:28)!

What then shall we do, throw up our hands in despair? Indeed no! With God's help let the people of God work to undo the damage. We must start by consciously making certain that all our presuppositions, our working assumptions, are consistent with God's Word. If we approach the evidence – the Greek MSS, patristic citations, ancient versions and most especially, God's many promises to preserve His Word – if we acknowledge the fact that the faithful have used the *Textus Receptus* as their N.T. down through the years as retained to this day by the Greek Church; we will have a credible, demonstrable basis for proclaiming and defending both the inspiration as well as the inerrancy of the New Testament text. We **have** a compelling basis for total commitment to God and His Word. The trumpet has been clearly sounded (I Cor.14:8). Whom will you believe? What will you do?

APPENDIX D - HISTORY OF TEXTS TRANSMISSION

It has been established that textual critics acknowledge that without a viable history of the transmission of the Biblical text, lower criticism is unworkable as the choice between variants becomes reduced ultimately to subjective conjecture (page 130). This was the reason Hort devised his genealogical-conflation theory and invented the Lucianic revision (page 120 ff.). It has also been noted that modern eclecticism is likewise doomed to failure as its proponents basically ignore this vital component (page 127). Yet incongruously, we have further documented from the citations of leading moderns that, without a history of the text, critical techniques are unable to determine and hence restore an "original" reading (page 146).

Remember, there is no actual recorded history regarding the transmission of the New Testament documents. We have the resulting manuscripts of that transmission and now are faced with the problem of attempting to work backward while seeking to establish a reasonable, logical history which would account for the present condition of those documents and their variants. This hypothetical reconstructed history must especially account for the fact that we have no extant mss of the Byzantine Textform predating A.D. 400 as this is the most common criticism charged against the TR/Majority Text position by the naturalistic critics.

Indeed this appears a formidable and valid objection since no physical data is available which might be used for refutation. As previously stated, all the extant early manuscript evidence comes from the arid Egyptian region and reflects the mixed types of text prevalent there during the second century.

The fact that the Church was experiencing great and prolonged persecution during the first few centuries under discussion forms the basis for understanding, unraveling, and explaining the current status of the extant mss data. Taking into account this single historical *fact* forms the setting for establishing a comprehensible solution and defense for the Byzantine (Syrian) texttype as well as the phenomenon present in the

other text "Families".¹ Toward achieving the above stated purpose, the foregoing is offered as a general historical framework.

Having been initially written in Koine or common Greek, the geographical region in which that language flourished and from whence the autographs originated would tend to act as a safe haven for the original wording. That region would center around Jerusalem (Gal.2:1-9; Acts 21:17-20 etc.), Syria (especially Antioch from whence Barnabas and Paul labored - Acts 11:25-26; 14:26-28; 15:35; 18:22-23 etc.) extending to the western portion of Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece.

Indeed, Antioch became Paul's home church from which he launched his three missionary journeys. As the Hebrew people were populous in this area and since most of the early Church was comprised of Jews who had received Jesus as the long awaited Messiah, these followers would have been especially jealous over the New Testament readings for such had been their culture and tradition regarding the Old Testament. Therefore, the manuscripts in this "inner" zone would maintain their purity as appeal to the apostles' autographs (or faithful copies of same) would have been possible for many years after their having been written.

Here a qualifying clarification is necessary to distinguish between that which we might label "Church manuscripts" and "Non-church manuscripts".² By "Church" manuscripts is meant those used by the early Churches during public worship and those prepared and distributed from local churches to individual Christians. The "Non-church" designation refers to documents prepared by individuals for personal use outside the church context proper. It is the former that this author defends as being that text to which God's preservation promises apply, not the "Non-church" copies which account for the numerous variant readings.

Conversely, when the early faithfully copied manuscripts of the autographs arrived in regions distant from their sources (in which the

¹ Maurice A. Robinson and William G. Pierpont, *The New Testament in the Original Greek According to the Byzantine/Majority Textform*, (Atlanta, GA: The Original Word Pub., 1991), pp. xxvi-xxxviii. Many of the insights included within this historical reconstruction were gleaned and adapted from the introduction of this work. Of course as the authors, like Pickering et al., are purely Majority Text advocates (vis-a-vis the *Textus Receptus*) and thus "limited restorationists" (shunning theological factors and providential preservation considerations as well, see his pp. xli-xlii), some disparities will be found between their approach and that of this author's.

² *Ibid.*, p. xxviii.

Hebrew mind-set regarding Sacred Writ was greatly diminished and the Gentile frame of reference prevailed), far less constraint would have existed against altering their wording in such locales. This proposal is substantiated by that which prevails even today. The Rabbis continue to safeguard the wording of the Hebrew text; yet, from the days of Marcion and Origen through those of Westcott and Hort unto the present, Gentile scholars – whether unregenerate or Christian conservative – continue to alter the wording of the New Testament, producing edition after edition.

Regardless of motives, over time "popular" alterations and regional as well as personal "corrections" would have been combined in a continual process of scribal corruption. As the various altered mss were cross-corrected with others possessing differing readings, an admixture of texts would have resulted. Thus, in the first few centuries some localities experienced *uncontrolled* non-church types of copies which were widely distributed throughout those areas. These circumstances would have been further complicated due to ever increasing persecution to which the Church was subjected. This persecution would have effectively served as a barrier, hindering movement from region to region thereby cutting off vital controlling and correcting factors.

The reversal of such an uncontrolled process could only have been due to the existence of a protected original autographic text. Otherwise the result would have been that of a patch-work quilt of variant readings created by the individualistic scribes with no prevailing "majority" text ever coming to the fore. Such in fact was the very situation when Jerome was commissioned to attempt to make sense out of the Old Latin translation and produce a "standard text" in order to unify the Latin tradition.¹ Apart from a similar Byzantine revision (of which there is no historical evidence), the dominance of this textform cannot be satisfactorily explained by those who reject the TR as representing the original readings. Only the persisting existence of the autographic text for comparison against these corrupted manuscripts would have ever allowed order to have come out of such chaos.

Thus the proposed theory is that, due to the events and circumstances in which the New Testament documents were copied over the time span of the first three centuries, the original Text rapidly deteriorated into the various uncontrolled popular texts which prevailed in differing localities

¹ Robinson, *The New Testament in the Original Greek According to the Byzantine/Majority Textform*, *op. cit.*, p. xxix.

that were removed from the general Greek speaking Syrian area. Over the normal process of copying and re-copying during which scribal "improvements", "corrections", blunders, and cross-correlation changes from other exemplars added to the corruption process, these "popular" texts eventually would have developed into the distinctive local text forms which centered around the metropolitan regions. These became the birthplaces of differing "texttypes" such as the Western, Alexandrian, and Caesarean (if such an entity actually exists) as well as others which may have been produced but have long since vanished due to a moist climate hostile to their preservation.

The foregoing would have dramatically changed with the advent of Constantine (288-337 A.D.). Upon his granting the Church official endorsement and acceptance, the predominantly "local" nature of the scattered churches became permanently altered. Approval from the throne precipitated greater freedom to the individual Christians resulting in wider travel with greater communication and intercourse between the churches from region to region all across the Empire.

A natural consequence of this would have been the cross-comparison and subsequent correction of these local textforms once they could be compared to the faithful copies of the archetype which had been providentially preserved in the Syrian Churches – the very cradle of Christianity. Thus the archetype itself – the *Textus Receptus* – would then have been available on a major scale for correcting the various local texttypes.

This spontaneous "improvement" would have proceeded on a numerical and geographical scale far greater than ever before possible; nevertheless, it would have taken some period of time until the result would have fully manifested itself. Slowly yet inevitably, nearly all the manuscripts would tend toward a common and universally shared text. Still, some minor distinct readings would have remained yielding their own subgroups among the manuscripts. This "universal text" would have been the only one which could closely approach the common archetype from which all the local text forms had originated. This scenario views this emergent "Byzantine" (Syrian) text as being almost exclusively that of the "non-church" variety described previously whereas the archetype which gave it life is of the "Church manuscript" – namely, the autograph form itself.¹

¹ Herein lies the main conceptual difference between Robinson's theory of the transmission of the N.T. text and the present author's, cp. Robinson's p. xxxi.

The present theory envisions many more "non-church" copies resulting from the above described process than those in the Syrian churches themselves. The increasing number of manuscripts would slowly have overcome the influence of "local" texts to eventually become the dominant text of the Greek-speaking world. This accounts for both the origin and dominance of Byzantine/majority Textform as well as the fact that the Greek Church continues to use the *Textus Receptus* exclusively.

Allusion has been made within the body of this study that scribes are assumed by critics to tend to alter the text being copied into readings with which they are more familiar. Such harmonizing was not a major factor among Byzantine-era scribes as may be proven by comparing the extant N.T. documents themselves. Were this type of alteration widespread, how does one account for the numerous often obvious and sensitive places left completely unchanged. Citing from his own Ph.D. dissertation on the subject of scribal habits, Maurice Robinson states:¹

"Byzantine-era scribes as a whole were less inclined to gratuitously alter the text before them than simply to perform their given duty. It was the earlier scribes in some locales who, during the uncontrolled 'popular' era of persecution and the initial years of Imperial 'freedom,' felt more at liberty to deal with the text as they saw fit.

This suggested transmissional history exposes the fallacy of the maxim "oldest is best". Again, it is not the age of the manuscript itself. The issue is the age and reliability of the **text** contained within the manuscript – that is the real substance of the matter. Robinson is correct when he reminds us that:²

¹ Robinson, *The New Testament in the Original Greek According to the Byzantine/Majority Textform*, *op. cit.*, p. xxxiv. Robinson continues adding that if the Byzantine readings in the early Fathers which are being summarily dismissed by the critics were legitimately included, the Father's overall text would be seen as being more Byzantine than is currently acknowledged by these scholars – exactly as Burgon contended a century ago. Burgon was ignored because he used "uncritical" editions of the Fathers. Today's "critical" editions eliminate distinctive Byzantine readings in places where they are unconfirmed by direct comment. Robinson states that were this practice not implemented, the Fathers' writings would be recognized as containing many more Byzantine readings than current opinion allows. The present reconstruction of the history of transmission would account for the presence of a Byzantine Textform in the writings of the 5th-century Fathers.

² Robinson, *The New Testament in the Original Greek According to the Byzantine/Majority Textform*, *op. cit.*, pp. xxxvi-xxxvii.

"Most early manuscripts in existence today have been affected by the uncontrolled nature of textual transmission which prevailed in their local areas, as well as by the persecutions which came continually against the church. The whole matter of early copying practices is hypothetical, regardless of which textual theory one prefers. We know nothing beyond what can be deduced from what survives. In the early papyri, we may have only *personal* copies, and not those which were generally used by the churches themselves. Also, the papyri all come from a single geographic area, and reflect a good deal of corruption, both accidental and deliberate."

Moreover, it is reasonable to presume that most early copies – many having been made directly from the autographs themselves – would have been as accurate as care would permit. In particular, the Churches in the general Syrian region would not have knowingly allowed defective copies to have been sent forth. The persecution would have engendered deep abiding commitment resulting in the appearance of responsible, dedicated scribes. Thus the first and second copying generations would have yielded faithful reproductions of the sacred deposit.

In view of the existing confused status of the surviving Greek papyrus and uncial MSS, the herein contained general reconstruction of the history of textual transmission seems not only justified but demanded. Only the continual process of manuscript comparison and cross-correction carried out over the centuries would have succeeded in "weeding out" the early scribal corruption and conflicting variant readings. The increased cross-cultural travel and communication which followed Constantine's formal act of tolerance and legitimization of Christianity would have had the natural effect of slowly purging from the manuscripts the conspicuous as well as the less obvious early adulterations. This course would have resulted in a truly "older" and purer text. Such a process would not have been possible unless the basic text of all the Greek manuscripts had been essentially "secure".

After the 9th century the production of most uncial MSS ceased and were systematically replaced by the miniscule style. These predominated until the invention of printing. This "copying revolution" resulted in the destruction of hundreds of previously-existing uncial MSS once they had been copied in cursive script.

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