

MODERN BIBLE VERSIONS ARE DANGEROUS – HERE IS WHY

THE BIBLE IS THE MOST WONDERFUL and precious book in the world. In these days of rapid change and crumbling foundations, what a blessing it is to be reminded that our Lord Jesus Christ said, *“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away”* (Matthew 24:35). What a comfort and encouragement come as we read Psalm 119:89: *“Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in the heaven.”* How thankful we are that *“the foundation of God standeth sure”* (2 Timothy 2:19).

We must also be aware that the Bible is under attack. Satan, who succeeded in selling the first “revised” edition of God’s Word to Eve in the Garden of Eden, has surely been busy in this 20th century along the same lines. We know about the “population explosion” and the “explosion of scientific knowledge,” but we are also in the middle of a “Bible translation explosion” – a veritable flood of new Bible translations, versions, revisions and paraphrases, all claiming to be the “most accurate,” the “most readable” and the “most up to date.” The publishing and sale of these *new* Bibles has become a highly profitable business, employing all the psychological approaches of modern advertising to sell them to the public. Some think this proliferation of Bible versions is wonderful. But serious-minded, thoughtful people must eventually ask, “Which Bible is the real Bible, the true Word of God?”

In 2 Corinthians 2:17, the Spirit of God warned against the *“many which corrupt the word of God.”* Therefore, it is not surprising in studying Church History to discover that such attempts to corrupt the Word of God are clearly evident in the altered, polluted and revised manuscripts purporting to be the Word of God. Unfortunately, many people today fail to see that even greater corruptions of the Word of God are taking place before our eyes. The purpose of this leaflet is to share with God’s people, simply and briefly, some of the important information we have found in studying this important subject.

It is impossible in such a limited space to trace the history and preservation of the true Word of God down through the centuries. However, in the providence of God, two very important things happened in the 15th and 16th centuries for which we should all be eternally grateful. First, was the invention of the printing press and second, the Protestant Reformation. It was the combination of these two developments that made possible the translation and publication of the Authorized King James Version of the Bible in 1611. From then until now,

this wonderful gift of God and its subsequent translation into every known major language in the world has changed the course of history and we enjoy its benefits today.

In the latter part of the 19th Century, Satan and his angels of light set out to destroy the Church by undermining its foundation, the Bible. Charles Darwin's *Origin of the Species* was blindly accepted as "new light on an old problem" by the scholarship of that day which had become largely obsessed with rationalism and humanism. Theories and methods of "higher criticism" and "textual criticism" were developed and couched in such scholarly language that most people failed to recognize that these were actually attacks upon the Word of God – even though carefully disguised as an effort to "supply the English reader with a more correct text of the New Testament" and to "render the New Testament more generally intelligible." The rush toward new versions was on and though the early progress was slow, we are seeing the results today.

In order to properly comprehend the problem of modern Bible translations, it is important to remember these two important factors: first the reliability of the document being translated; second, the knowledge, skill and fidelity of the translators. On both counts, the King James Bible still stands supreme. In 1881, influenced by and sympathetic to the Darwinian theory of evolution, two men, Brooke Foss Westcott and Fenton J. A. Hort brought forth a very different version of the Greek New Testament – one which differed from the *Textus Receptus* (the underlying Greek text of the KJV), in over 5700 places. This Westcott-Hort Greek Text was later to become the basis for the English Revised Version and the American Standard Version. It gave great weight to two corrupted manuscripts – the *Vaticanus* (Codex B) which was found in the Vatican Library in 1481 and was known to the KJV translators but was not used by them, and the *Sinaiticus* (Codex Aleph) which was found in a monastery wastebasket at the foot of Mount Sinai in 1844. The *Vaticanus* and *Sinaiticus* appear to have been copied from the same source in the 4th century and held great weight with Westcott and Hort because of their antiquity. Tischendorf, the discoverer of the *Sinaiticus* manuscript, noted at least 12,000 changes which had been made on this manuscript by others than the original copyist. It is difficult to understand why such documents as these could lead one to ignore the simple fact that the Greek text underlying the King James Version (the *Textus Receptus*) was in basic agreement with 90 – 95% of all known Scripture – related manuscripts, numbering over five thousand.

English Revised Version (1885)

American Standard Version (1901)

The first full-scale frontal attack on the Word of God came with the publication of the ERV in 1885, and its counterpart, the ASV in 1901. Only a few voices of protest were raised. Most staunch defenders of the faith of that day were apparently unaware that the ASV differed from the KJV in over 36,000 places or that the Greek text underlying the translation of the ASV (the Westcott-Hort Text) differed from the *Textus Receptus* (underlying the KJV) in over 5,700 instances. Possibly it was because the Fundamentalists then were too busy combating the modernists' infiltration of seminaries and churches; or, perhaps it was due to the fact that the ASV never really found great acceptance publicly. It was not until the publication of the *Revised Standard Version* in 1946 and 1952 that many Fundamentalists became aware of how effectively a new Bible version or translation could be used as a tool of Satan.

Revised Standard Version (1946, 1952)

Some of God's people woke up with a start when the *Revised Standard Version* was published in 1952. This version, supposedly a revision of the ASV of 1901, eliminated the word *virgin* in the prophecy of Christ's birth in Isaiah 7:14; made numerous other blatant changes; and was copyrighted by the apostate National Council of Churches. Protests were heard far and wide! Sadly, many failed to recognize that some of the things they found so objectionable in the RSV were also true with the ASV. The furor over the RSV gradually died down. But this was the version which plowed the ground and paved the way for future perversions of the Scriptures. It had conditioned people to accept *changes* in the Bible – changes dictated by modern *scholarship*. At least the RSV left the word *virgin* in the New Testament references of the birth of Christ. It remained for the *Good News Bible* to remove it in both the Old and New Testaments.

Good News for Modern Man (1966)

Good News Bible (1976)

When the first edition of *Good News For Modern Man* (The New Testament in Today's English) was published in 1966, the word *virgin* appeared in all the texts in Matthew and Luke referring to the birth of Christ. But, when the 2nd and 3rd editions were published and then the entire Good News Bible was published in 1976, the word *virgin* had mysteriously disappeared from Luke 1:27 while remaining in Luke 1:34 and Matthew 1:23. Of course, the latter two verses have no meaning at all if the word *virgin* is removed or replaced. Also, the *blood of Christ*, a most important and precious word and theme, was lacking in many key New Testament references. It was replaced by "death" or "costly sacrifice," both good words in their own place but not what the Holy Spirit gave in the original text. The heretical views of the main translator, Dr. Robert Bratcher, help to explain the many places in which the Deity of Christ is played down or omitted. *The Good News Bible* is one of the worst versions, yet it has been distributed by millions, largely due to endorsements by Billy Graham, Bill Bright and other evangelical leaders.

The Living Bible (1967, 1971)

This is neither a translation nor a version – it is a paraphrase. *The Living Bible*, praised by Billy Graham and other new-evangelical leaders, has reached a publication figure of 37 million copies and has made its author, Ken Taylor, a wealthy man. IT is very readable, but at the expense of the truth in so many places. Taylor admits that the principle he worked from was not a "word-for-word" translation but rather a "thought-for thought paraphrase" which he called, "dynamic equivalence." Taylor said he worked for the most part from the ASV or 1901, a corrupt translation to begin with. *The Living Bible* decimates the Scriptures, almost completely eliminating important and precious words and truths as *grace* (see John 1:17; Acts 4:33, 15:11, 20:24; Romans 3:24; 2 Corinthians 9:8; Ephesians 2:8-9; Jude 4) and *repentance* (see Matthew 9:13 and Acts 17:30). "Honor" is substituted for "begotten" in Acts 13:33, Hebrews 1:5 and 5:5. Significant changes were made regarding such matters as creation in Genesis 1:1-2 and a prophecy of Christ in Zechariah 13:6. The meaning of Romans 8:28 is changed completely. Vulgar language is used in John 9:34, 11:39 and 2 Kings 18:27. The language of 1 Samuel 20:30 in early editions of TLB shocked many but it has now been softened. The author has left the door open for further suggestions, corrections and clarifications. Who knows what future editions may contain? Do you want a Bible what is being constantly revised?

New American Standard Version (1960, 1971)

The NASV was to be the Bible for conservatives, evangelicals and fundamentalists. The *Forward* states that the NASV "has been produced with the conviction that the words of

Scripture as originally penned in the Hebrew and Greek were inspired of God.” The basic problem with this translation, however, is revealed in this statement: “This translation follows the principles used in the *American Standard Version* 1901 known as the Rock of Biblical Honesty.” Who gave the ASV such a title? In the Principles of Revision, it is stated: “In revising the ASV consideration was given to the latest available manuscripts with a view to determine the best Greek text. In most instances the 23rd edition of the Nestle Greek New Testament was followed.” This gets right to the heart of the major difficulty of all modern Bible versions – most are patterned after the corrupted Westcott-Hort Greek Text instead of the *Textus Receptus*. The word *virgin* does appear in Isaiah 7:14, but a footnote says, “or, young woman” – no doubt a sop to the liberals. Verses like Matthew 18:11 and Matthew 23:14 appear in brackets with a footnote saying, “most ancient manuscripts omit this verse” or, “this verse is not found in earliest manuscripts.” A corrupted Greek text thus becomes the basis for raising questions about the entire verse. In other instances, as in Luke 24:40, the number of the verse appears followed by “see marginal note” which explains that “some ancient Mss. add verse 40.” One wonders if the NASV translators were determined to list everything anyone ever added or left out of the manuscript until one discovers that some parts of verses were left out with no explanation whatsoever as in Colossians 1:14 and 1 Timothy 6:5. It is sad to see so many conservatives pushing this version and downgrading the KJV.

New International Version (1973, 1978, et.al)

Like the NASV, the NIV was produced by those who are said to “Hold a high view of Scripture.” Sponsored by the New York Bible Society, they admitted the NIV translators represent a “Broad spectrum in evangelical Christianity” and the list of names confirms the *broadness* of the spectrum. Instead of being a revision of a previous version, the Preface says, “It is a completely new translation made by many scholars working directly from the Greek.” The Greek text used is an “eclectic one.” Translated into common language means they made a choice of different texts supposedly in “accord with sound principles of textual criticism.” However, they did not state what those principles were – and much of the previous undermining of the Scripture has been done on the supposed basis of “sound principles of textual criticism.” Examining the text, you find that the NIV leaves out many of the same verses and portions that the ASV and the NASV also omit. An added problem, however, stems from the fact that where an entire verse is omitted, even the verse number is missing and only a small letter refers to a footnote of explanation. A careful study of this version confirms what one Christian leader said several years ago, “For every verse or word clarified in these new translations, two new problems are created.” We agree with his statement. In a critique of the New International

Version, one Fundamentalist scholar correctly objected that “words were dropped out; words were added; and key words were sometimes changed.” Yet, the same objection must also be raised concerning the New American Standard Version which this same Fundamentalist scholar defends and recommends. This objection – the deletion or addition of words – also applies to all the other modern versions. We still insist on using and recommending only the Authorized Version.

New King James Version (1979, 1982)

The NKJV is now deceiving more believers than any of the previous polluted Bible versions. Claims that the NKJV has “preserved the authority and accuracy,” and “improved the purity and beauty” of the original KJV, are impressive but patently false. The NKJV text is actually a hybrid mixture which incorporates many word changes identical with or similar to the corruptions found in the other modern Bible versions. Late editions of the NKJV contain changes in text and footnote from that of the first editions and further changes are contemplated. The NKJV is not the pure word of God. [Write us for a free copy of “The New King James Bible Examined”] Address found at bottom of this document.

New Revised Standard Version (1990)

The NRSV is the latest product of ecumenical scholarship and will soon replace the RSV, thus helping to fill the financial coffers of the apostate National Council of Churches which holds the copyrights on both the RSV and NRSV. Translated by liberal Protestant, Catholic and Jewish scholars, and eliminating so-called sexist language, the NRSV with the Apocrypha, has already received the Imprimatur of the Roman Catholic Church and may well become the ecumenical Bible of the future.

The more we have studied and researched this question of Bible versions, the more convinced we are that many of our dear brethren in the ministry and many Fundamentalist leaders have not taken time to look at the abundant evidence now available that clearly demonstrated the inaccuracies, inconsistencies and confusion resulting from new translations. It is clear that many scholars who consider themselves to be evangelical have been influenced by the apostate scholarship of the past and present. We recognize the difference between “higher criticism” (which would be rejected by most Fundamentalists) and “textual criticism” (which is accepted by most Fundamentalists). But many do not see how the whole field of “textual criticism” has been shaped and molded by false premises and conclusions of “higher criticism.” The central issue

goes back to the acceptance of the Westcott-Hort Text instead of the *Textus Receptus* as the basis for Bible translations, versions and revisions.

While recognizing the extreme difficulties involved in translations of any kind and especially of a book as important as the Bible, we are convinced that God gave us the King James Bible – and that it will be far better for us to expand our vocabulary in order to understand its terminology than to continually re-write the Bible to suit those who will not be able to understand it anyway apart from the New Birth, or Christians who are too lazy to study. It is true that some English words have changed in their meaning and others are no longer in common usage. Such words are comparatively few and can easily be comprehended with the use of a good dictionary; but if the word is missing altogether, what then?

Untold confusion is caused by the promotion and use of so many different Bible versions. Why don't more pastors and Christian leaders see this? Congregational reading is becoming virtually impossible. Bible memorization is most difficult. And just think of the uncertainty which results when some verses are in the Bible, some are in with brackets around them, and some are missing completely. And many, whether in the text or in the footnotes, have their validity challenged.

For all these reasons and many more, we conclude that modern Bible versions are dangerous and that God's people should beware of them. We close with a plea to all who love the Lord and His Word – look into this important question quickly and carefully. Then join us in seeking to alert and warn others concerning these subtle and devastating attacks being made upon God's Holy Word.

– M. H. Reynolds, Editor, Foundation Magazine

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