

Battle Over the KJV

Vindicating the Source

of the

King James Bible

There is an immense amount of money to be made by major book publishers in the new-translation market, as well as fame and honor at the universities where members of translation teams are employed.

So desperate are the publishers for new translations, that they are working on street language translations and even "gender-equal" versions in which God becomes a "father-mother God," and "sons of God" are changed to "sons and daughters of God."

In order to increase new-translation sales, they subsidize research projects. These are intended to show that the King James Version (KJV) is defective and that modern versions will provide you with more accurate editions of the Bible.

There are those among the modern world of translators and textual critics who, frankly, are opposed to our beloved King James Version. A definite line of reasoning is used in an effort to accomplish this purpose.

It is inevitable that this disinformation campaign will more directly enter our own denomination. Unfortunately, at the present time, we are inundated by pastors who were trained at our colleges and seminary to only use modern versions. That is what their teachers, in turn, were taught during their doctoral work in Protestant, Catholic, and secular universities.

— PART ONE —

THE CASE AGAINST THE KJV

Here is the primary reasoning, as provided by the textual critics, about why you should get rid of your KJV Bible and run out and buy new translations. We believe their reasoning is incorrect.

The King James Version is based on the *Syrian Text* (also called the *Majority* or *Byzantine Text*), a manuscript family which, because most of its manuscripts are

said to be very late, are inferior to the *Alexandrian family*, which are thought to be the earliest manuscript family Text.

Because the *Codex Vaticanus* and *Codex Sinaiticus* are in the Alexandrian family, they are our best early manuscript sources.

But even earlier are a few Greek *papyri* (about a hundred), which also primarily contain Alexandrian Text readings. This is added proof that the Alexandrian must be the oldest.

In addition, New Testament citations by most of the *early church fathers* are in accordance with the Alexandrian. Lastly, two of the earliest *translations*, the Sahidic and Bohairic (both Coptic dialects) are Alexandrian.

As if to make matters worse, the oldest Syrian family manuscript which we have recovered is the *Codex Alexandrinus*, which was found near Alexandria, Egypt, and dates to the fourth century.

Therefore the oldest and best manuscript family is the Alexandrian family; and the most reliable modern translations will be those based on the Alexandrian Text, which was compiled into the *Westcott-Hort Critical Edition* of the New Testament by a large team under the direction of two dedicated Christians, B.F. Westcott and F.J. Hort, in the late 19th century.

In contrast, the King James was translated from a Greek text produced by *Erasmus* in the 16th century. Erasmus, in turn, based that text primarily on *Syrian (Byzantine) manuscripts*, which are far inferior to those in the Alexandrian. They are inferior because they are not as old as the Alexandrian.

So the King James Bible is inferior and should not be used.

— PART TWO —

DESTROYING THE CASE AGAINST THE KJV

The above theory was devised by Westcott and Hort in the late 19th century. They theorized that somebody named Lucian of Antioch made the first copy about A.D. 300; and that, in later years, a terribly corrupt set of manuscripts, called the Syrian (Byzantine) family, arose from it. As you will learn in my book, *The King James Bible and the Modern Versions*, **Westcott and Hort were spiritualists who founded séances at Oxford, which they headed for several years. Both secretly favored reunion with the Catholic Church.**

As the basis for New Testament translation, essentially all modern versions, including the New King James, have switched from the Textus Receptus, based on the Syrian (Majority) Text, to the Westcott-Hort Text, based on the Alexandrian text.

As the basis for all modern Old Testament translation, the modern versions have abandoned the traditional Old Testament Hebrew Text (which is the *Ben Chayyim Masoretic Text*) and are using *Biblia Hebraica*, the *critical* Hebrew Text prepared by Rudolph Kittel, who lived in 19th-century Germany during the time when German higher criticism was tearing the Old Testament apart.

Here is a somewhat detailed reply to why you should value, read, give Bible studies, and preach from your beloved—indeed, priceless—King James Version. For a far more complete study, you will want to obtain a copy of our book, The King James Bible and the Modern Versions (see box at the bottom of page 1 of this tract study).

If someone wants to read a modern version, we will not object. But no one should attempt to reduce confidence in the King James Version, in order to sell more modern Bibles.

The key charge: There is one pivotal point in this current attack on the KJV; **it is claimed that the manuscript family on which the KJV is based is not the oldest—and therefore does not go directly back to the original autographs.** That is a very strong charge.

In my book, *The King James Bible and the Modern Versions* (see bottom of p. 1), I state that the manuscript family on which the KJV is founded is the oldest. I believe this can be defended on the basis of extant manuscripts. But in this present study, **whether or not the charge is correct, I will reply to the claim that the earliest manuscripts which we have been able to locate are Alexandrian, not those that the KJV was translated from.**

SOME BASIC INFORMATION

Manuscript families: There are over 5,000 surviving manuscripts of the Greek New Testament. Most of these are quite small and consist of a few sheets. A few are large *codices* (the singular is *codex*), which are sheets written on one side and then pasted together somewhat like modern books.

Over the years, **attempts have been made to arrange these manuscripts into separate groups, or "families,"** based on which variations are in which manuscript or codex. That has not been an easy task. But, gradually, they were found to sort themselves into four major manuscript "families" (also called "Texts"

with a capital "T"). Here are these four: the *Alexandrian*, *Western*, *Latin*, and a fourth variously called the *Byzantine*, *Syrian*, *Majority*, and several other names. In my book, I called it the *Majority Text* (which it is, since it contains, by far, the most manuscripts. However, **in this present study I will call it the *Syrian Text*, or *Syrian family*, because we wish here to focus on its point of origin.**

With one exception, these **manuscripts** are all written on vellum (animal skin). The exception is **papyrus**. Papyrus manuscripts are written on paper, which was made in Egypt by pasting plant fibers together (actually a water reed). Only about 100 of these papyrus manuscripts, containing Bible quotations, have been found.

In the providence of the Lord, it is these manuscripts which tell us what was originally written in the New Testament.

Other sources: In addition, there are three other sources: (1) **Quotations**. These were New Testament passages quoted by early writers, most of whom were partly or wholly Christian. (These men are called the "early church fathers," or "anti-Nicene fathers" [that is, those who wrote prior to the First Council of Nicaea, A.D. 525].) (2) **Translations**. Several were made in the early centuries. Although in other languages, each provides partial help in analyzing the Greek family it was translated from. (3) **Lectionaries**. These were Bible passages written on sheets to be read in church services. Very few of these have been found.

Implications of this charge: According to this dramatic charge, we are supposed to believe that none of those sources provide us with much evidence that the Syrian family was the oldest of all families. Of course, if it was not the oldest, then it could not have reached all the way back to the Apostles. **This would mean that the KJV, which is based on the Syrian, is not as close to the original as the manuscript family which the critics say is the oldest: the Alexandrian.**

The Alexandrian is the basis of the Westcott-Hort Greek Text, since all modern translations are founded on that Text; therefore, **if the charge is true, the modern translations are superior to the King James.**

There you have the picture, and I guarantee that you are going to hear more of this charge in coming years. The prophet warned us that everything that could be shaken would be shaken. Every pin and pillar of our faith will be attacked. So we can expect our Bible to be the subject of fierce onslaughts as well.

We will now state the charge in much greater detail.

Detailing the charge: *We need a clearer understanding of what is involved in the attack. Prior to A.D. 300:*

1 - There are said to be very, very few early *Greek manuscripts* which are in the Syrian family. Most are said to be Alexandrian, but some are Western.

2 - It is said that almost no early *papyri* are in the Syrian family. The papyri are almost exclusively Alexandrian, with some Western.

3 - It is claimed that very few *quotations* from the early church fathers represent the Syrian family. Most are Alexandrian; some Western.

4 - It is said that, of the major *translations*, two especially—the Sahidic and Bohairic—are exclusively Alexandrian,

5 - The *lectionary* evidence is so meager as to not be of much help.

In summary, it is charged that all the evidence from the second and third century, A.D. (as early as we have any evidence) almost entirely points to an Alexandrian origin, along with a little Western.

Assuming that this charge is correct, how are we to interpret this?

ANSWERING THE CHARGE

The solution is rather simple, if we do that which the textual critics chose not to do. They studied linguistics and ancient manuscripts with narrowed focus; but we will take time to examine history, geography, and climate as well.

You will find this to be a workable and satisfactory solution to the supposed lack of evidence for the Syrian family prior to A.D. 300.

Location of the text families: The *Syrian* family of manuscripts were written in Palestine, Syria, and Asia Minor (modern Turkey). The *Western* family originated in central Italy and in North Africa, west of Egypt. Do not confuse these with the Italia (also called Old Latin), which was an ancient (4th century) translation into Latin by the Waldensians of northern Italy. The *Old Latin (Italia)* was produced outside of Rome, primarily in what is now northern Italy. The *Alexandrian* was written in Egypt, especially Alexandria, Egypt.

1 - **The vellum manuscripts:** All the Greek New Testament manuscripts, which were written prior to A.D. 300, have been found in Egypt. The reason for this is simple: It is dry there. The manuscripts were written on vellum (animal skins). Some may recall a study I wrote in 1997 on the Dead Sea Scrolls (*Story of the Dead Sea Scrolls [WM-753]*). Those scrolls remained intact nearly 2,000 years because the desert country was dry near the Dead Sea. After the magnificent Isaiah Scroll was brought to the United States, it was sold for millions to the

Israeli government. But there was a second scroll, just as large that was never sold. An Arab shepherd found it and immediately buried it, for safekeeping, in the ground by his hut in Bethlehem until he could arrange a sale. But, a few weeks later, when he dug it up, he found it to be a mass of gelatin. Totally lost.

Vellum manuscripts, dating from the first two centuries after Christ, have only been found in the sand of Egypt because it is so dry there.

But there was also a second reason why relatively few early manuscripts of any kind have been recovered outside of Egypt: The intense persecution throughout those centuries, prior to Constantine's ascension to the throne a little after A.D. 300, made it difficult to store manuscripts in dry areas within homes or churches. Homes were ransacked, people were hunted down, and anything stored in the ground was ruined by the dampness.

In those early centuries, people could live in such a dry land as Egypt because the entire nation was huddled close along the banks of the Nile River. So that is where most of the vellum manuscripts have been found.

Since all the manuscripts found in those pre-Constantine centuries were found in Egypt, would you not expect that the ones which were found were written by Egyptians? And so they were, plus a few which arrived from a close trading partner, Carthage to the west. But this does not prove that no one else in the Empire was copying manuscripts!

Alexandria was a great center of learning. Founded by Alexander the Great hundreds of years earlier, the city had the largest library in ancient times. Its genial climate and less persecution than elsewhere (because its Christians had adopted many of the heathen customs) also made it the center of semi-Christian "higher education." Historians will tell you that, prior to A.D. 300, the Christian seminary at Alexandria was the only modernist Christian theology school in the world.

While people had to work for a living elsewhere in the Roman Empire, the students at the seminary had more time to copy manuscripts. That is where the Alexandrian family of manuscripts came from. They had their own unique brand of theological mistakes.

What about the Syrian manuscripts? It is an interesting fact that **the most faithful Christians—the ones most loyal and obedient to Bible principles—lived in those areas where Christianity first penetrated: Palestine, Syria, and Asia Minor. These faithful souls avoided contact with the liberals down in Egypt; and they did not want their children raised in that environment. This helps explain why we do not find Syrian manuscripts in the sand of Egypt.**

The few Syrian manuscripts, which did survive, were repeatedly copied for centuries. **Gradually the second and third century Syrian manuscripts were lost, but the copies remained. By the seventh century, the faithful in Syria, Palestine, and Asia Minor kept making more copies while the liberals in Egypt and Rome had other pastimes to enjoy. This is why we have such an enormous number of manuscripts, in the eastern Mediterranean,** which the liberals today sneeringly call "Byzantine," implying that the Syrian family is only of late origin and somehow must have descended from the Alexandrian and Western. (The Byzantine Empire, itself, only existed after the time of Constantine, not before.)

2 - **The papyri:** Next, we consider the papyri. It is said that all the Biblical papyri which have been recovered is Alexandrian, with some Western. That is understandable; for **the fragile paper (papyri is paper) could only survive for centuries in the dry sand of Egypt. So we can understand why the papyri consisted almost entirely of the Alexandrian style, with its distinctive errors. That was where it was written. In the passing centuries, papyri written elsewhere crumbled away.**

3 - **Translations:** Next, we come to translations. **It is claimed that the Sahidic and Bohairic translations were fully Alexandrian in arrangement and flaws. But that proves nothing, because those were the two dialects of Coptic, the local language of Egypt back then!** No win here for those trying to destroy the credibility of the King James. (Coptic was the national language of Egypt until the Muslim invasion in A.D. 642.)

Other translations included the Syrian, Gothic, Armenian, Georgian, Ethiopian, and Old Latin. Of these, **the Ethiopian contained a fair amount of Alexandrian influence; but that would be expected, since Ethiopia (Nubia) was just south of Egypt.** The other translations served territories in northern and western portions of the Empire, and were not similar to the Alexandrian family.

One translation (to be mentioned again later) should be especially noted: The Italia, a subdialect of Old Latin is the language of the earliest Waldensians. Their translation is purer than Old Latin, which Jerome used in translating the Latin Vulgate.

4 - **Lectionaries:** So few church service books survived the persecutions, that no clear evidence is available for these compilations of Bible readings which were read in churches each Sabbath.

5 - **Church fathers:** Lastly, it is claimed that a majority of the Christian manuscripts, which have been recovered from the second and third centuries, A.D., only quoted Alexandrian manuscripts.

Here are the reasons for this:

First, the Christians in Egypt had more time to write theological comments.

All the major Christian heresies in the early centuries began in theological speculations written in Egypt. **Christians in other parts of the world field spent their time evangelizing, not in speculating** on the nature of Christ, the nature of God, the nature of the Godhead, and a variety of pagan and pantheistic theories. The heresies of Adoptionism and Nestorianism came chiefly from Alexandria.

Second, the letters and comments, written in Egypt, were preserved in dry sand while those in other areas disintegrated over a period of time.

Third, recognizing that these Alexandrian apostates could be polished instruments in his hands, to introduce errors into the Christian churches, **Satan shielded them and their commentaries from the heaviest of the persecutions** which devastated other portions of the Roman Empire. Persecutions indeed came to Egypt, but each one was rather brief.

Fourth, **Alexandrian Christians tended to receive less persecution, because they were already so much like the pagans** doing the persecuting.

As a result, it is said that nearly all of the early "Christian" writings (prior to A.D. 300) which we now have—come from Alexandria! They were nicely preserved in the dry sand.

FACTS ABOUT THOSE WHO PRODUCED THE ALEXANDRIAN FAMILY OF MANUSCRIPTS

Down in Egypt, the climate was perfect, people did not have to work as much to make a living, and there was more leisure time. Modernist Christians congregated there and studied the works of ancient Greek, Babylonian, and Egyptian philosophers. These liberal Christians were fascinated with the myths and rituals devised by the pagan religions.

Does this sound familiar? It is happening in Adventism again today. Our intellectuals are attracted to skepticism, modernism, feminism, abortion rights. Also, unfortunately, wine drinking. They are not interested in missionary work, giving Bible studies, defending historic beliefs, natural remedies, temperance, clothing standards, or vegetarian principles. Instead of concerning themselves

with such trivial matters, their focus is on closely watching the latest intellectual and modernist fads of worldlings, and then aping them.

This also happened nearly 2,000 years ago in Alexandria, Egypt. **Conceited young men from all over the Empire journeyed there to study the wisdom of the East in the Alexandrian Christian Seminary, with its access to the large pagan libraries in town. It was the leading modernist and intellectual capital of Christendom.** The liberals of the time proudly declared it to be the first Christian school of "higher learning" in the world.

THE ALEXANDRIAN SCHOOL

Officially known as the Catechetical School, its leading teachers in the late second and early third centuries were Clement of Alexandria and Origen.

Two fields of special interest were the writings of the Greek and gnostic philosophers, especially Plato, along with the mysteries and rituals of the ancient pagan religions.

From Plato and fellow travelers, these Christian apostates in Alexandria learned how to spiritualize away Scripture. How was this done? Taking a passage, they would apply totally different meanings to the words and concepts! instead of accepting its literal sense,

"The theology of the early Church at Alexandria came markedly under the influence of that Platonic tradition of philosophy which, beginning in the Graeco-Jewish period, was taken into the Christian system of thought by the Apologists, and later by Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and the Catechetical School . . . In their exegesis of Scripture, the Alexandrians were strongly drawn to mystical and allegorical exposition, in contrast with the literal and historical method of Antioch."—*Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, p. 36.

The Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325, which Constantine attended) **declared Alexandria to be second only to Rome in importance as a center of Christianity.** It was the center of Egyptian priestly studies, the mystery religions of Babylon and Asia Minor, and Hellenist (Greek philosophy) studies. It was where beads, the "sign of the cross" (with the fingers on the chest), processions, and Mithric Sunday worship entered the Christian Church.

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA

Historians believe that **Clement of Alexandria** (c.150- c.215) was probably an Athenian by birth. After studying Christianity and philosophy in several places, he became a pupil of Pantaenus, who was in charge of the Catechetical School at Alexandria. Clement was so brilliant and innovative in his thinking that, in A.D.

190, he succeeded Pantaenus as head of the school. In 212, in a brief wave of persecution, Clement thought best to leave town for a time.

This was the age of **gnosticism** and Clement was in full agreement with many of its teachings. But **he combined gnosticism with Greek philosophy, which he declared to be a divine gift to mankind.** Obviously, his was not really a Christian school.

We could fill a tract with the beliefs of the gnostics. But, briefly, they taught that "gnosis" (the Greek word of "wisdom") was inherent in certain philosophers and could be learned from them. One god was the "Demiurge" which had created the world. Another one was the divine god. The Demiurge had gradually evolved out of the other gods over many ages. Clement and Origen believed that Christ also had some gnosis for us, which must be combined with that of the other philosophers.

The Greek theorist, **Plato, was exalted by Clement as essentially equal to Christ in wisdom.** Platonic speculations were interwoven with Christian names. In grateful appreciation of how much his theories had helped Rome, a pope later declared Clement to be a holy saint.

Plato (428-347 B.C.), a native of Athens, had been a pupil of Socrates. After the death of the latter in 399, Plato became the leading philosopher of Greece until his death. One of his pupils was Aristotle.

Plato's teachings were extremely complex. His spiritualizing and allegorizing won the hearts of Clement and Origen who followed him, both of whom transformed the seminary at Alexandria into a school of Platonism.

ORIGEN

Origen (c.185-c.254) was born in Alexandria and narrowly escaped death in the short persecution of 202. **Extremely brilliant and original in the extreme, Origen wrote several theological works which formed the basis for every Christian heresy which came afterward, plus many Catholic trends** (such as vigils and asceticism, which laid the basis for monasticism). He was fervently admired by **Augustine** (354-430), who saw ideas in Origen's writings which helped him formulate his theories of original sin and predestination. **Jerome** (c.342-420), the translator of the Latin Vulgate, was strongly influenced in his thinking by Origen; and it affected his translation—which became the standard Scriptures of Rome. Origen's writings were regarded with deepest respect by **Eusebius** of Caesarea (c.260-c.340) who, with Pope Sylvester (reigned 314-335), led out in getting Constantine to enact his Sunday Laws (see quotation in *Beyond Pitcairn*, p. 53, and an excerpt from it in GC 574:2). **Tertullian** (160-225), deeply

influenced by both Clement and Origen, advocated frequently waving one's hand in the "sign of the cross" over one's chest, as a talisman of protection (*see quotation from Tertullian in Beyond Pitcairn, pp. 38-39*).

In later years, both Catholics and heretics pointed to Origen as the source of their ideas. He may have felt dedicated to Christianity; but his powerful mind had been warped by the gnosticism and Platonism, which he had learned from Clement. From 218 to 230, he wrote exhaustively. His earnestness was worthy of a better cause. **While, as predicted in Revelation 12, the faithful had hidden themselves in distant places, the main church became permeated with Origen's theories.**

I only mention this because part of the attack against the KJV involves a defense of the Alexandrian School and Origen. Yet he should not be defended. **Here are just three among dozens of Origen's strange theories:** The angels which fell either became demons or souls imprisoned in human bodies. At death, people ascend to heaven and back down again into human bodies, back and forth until the final Judgment. By obtaining "Wisdom," the soul can become purified and attain to total divinity.

ALEXANDRIAN BIBLE MANUSCRIPTS

Both in style and errors, **New Testament copies prepared in Alexandria, Egypt, were intermingled with their teachings.** That is why the manuscript family is termed "Alexandrian"!

It is well-known, by historians, that the Asian mind was inventive while the Roman mind was keyed to governing.

Where did Sundaykeeping enter the Christian Church? In Alexandria. That is where it was first adopted from Mithrism. The Roman soldiers worshiped Mithra, the Sun-god; and they were disinclined to persecute fellow Mithrites. **From thence it was taken to Rome, where it was eagerly adopted by the Roman bishop,** who commanded that the other churches keep Sunday. (But it was not until Constantine's time that the pope could begin enforcing it.)

Where did the **sunrise worship services**, with faces toward the rising sun, enter the church? In Alexandria. It was copied directly from Mithrism.

Where did **the "mother of God" heresy** enter the Christian church? In Alexandria. The half-baptized Christian philosophers, under the leadership of Clement, incorporated the Egyptian Isis and Horus worship into their church services. That is where **religious processions** began, as they carried around statues of the mother goddess (Isis, changed into Mary) and her infant god-son (Horus, newly

called Christ), following the priest in his ornate robes. Where did **tinkling bells and infant baptism** begin? In Alexandria.

To say it again, the Asian mind was inventive while the Roman mind was intent on enforcing.

A close tie of friendship and mutual sympathy existed between the Christian philosophers of Alexandria and the bishop of Rome. Since Rome was the center of the Empire, he was determined to issue orders to be obeyed by all the Christian churches everywhere. He spake big things.

Stop and think about it a minute. If you want to control other people at a distance, you need to require that they do something they have not been doing or stop doing something they regularly do.

It would be impossible for the pope to acquire control of Christendom, simply by asking all Christians to obey the Bible! They were already doing that, by the authority of Christ and the Bible itself. In order to gain control, the pope had to command something not in the Bible! And that is what he did.

The process worked like this: **The half-pagan Christians at Alexandria would, through their studies and ecumenical visits to heathen temples, find a new corruption and put it into practice.** That other half-pagan, the bishop of Rome (later to be known as the "pope," or "father" of all the churches) would start commanding it at Rome. (*Read the three quotations by Chalmers, Socrates Scholasticus, and Sozomen in Beyond Pitcairn, pp. 59-60.*) The result was that the essential rituals of Egyptian paganism (*see quotation, Beyond Pitcairn, p. 37*) were brought into the Roman Church. (*Additional errors from paganism are listed in Mark of the Beast, pp. 21-23, 25, 31.*)

In view of all this, do you really want to abandon the King James Bible—for modernist Bibles based on the Alexandrian Text family?

THE SINAITICUS AND VATICANUS

But there is more: **It was because of an order issued by Constantine for the production of 50 complete Bibles, that the Alexandrian manuscript family has become so influential with modernists today.** Two of these now exist, the **Codex Vaticanus** ("B") and the **Codex Sinaiticus** ("Aleph"). Scholars fully believe both were written in Egypt, probably at the Christian Seminary.

The **Sinaiticus**, discovered by Tischendorf in 1844, contains the Old and New Testaments, and two valued semi-gnostic books: The Shepherd of Hermas and the Epistle of Barnabus. Scholars have no doubt that it was written in Egypt,

probably at the Christian seminary there. False **Barnabus** (not written by the one in Acts) strongly attacks the Old Testament Sanctuary services, declaring that God never instituted them; he says the Old Testament only taught secret, allegorical truths which it told. This is obviously a typical gnostic production of the Alexandrian School. The other book, **Hermas**, contains a series of strange visions and teaches penance, Christ is the Holy Spirit, and the Godhead only came into existence after Christ's ascension.

The **Vaticanus** has been in the Vatican Library, at least since 1481, and contains all the New Testament up to Hebrews 9:14.

Westcott and Hort, two British spiritualists and pro-Catholics (mentioned in my book, *The King James Bible and the Modern Translations*), used Alexandrian manuscripts, and especially the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, as the primary basis for their Greek Text, from which all modern versions are translated.

Incidentally, it is an open secret that the **New King James Bible** is also based on the Westcott-Hort Text. This is a tragedy. Thomas Nelson, arranged with the translation team it funded to adjust the text of the New King James to agree with all the variants in the Westcott-Hort Text, which differed from those in the KJV. That was an unfortunately decision, rendering the NKJB equivalent to the NIV.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

ORIGINS OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE

As explained in great detail in my book on the King James Bible, the KJV (1611) was actually taken from, and is essentially identical to, the outstanding translation by **William Tyndale (1494-1536)**, a master linguist. **In preparing his translation, Tyndale used the Textus Receptus Greek Text prepared by Erasmus. The source of that Greek Text was the Syrian manuscript family—which, in this present paper, we have vindicated as being the best and earliest.**

In order to imply that the Greek Text which the Tyndale / KJV was translated from was worthless, it is charged that Erasmus (1469-1536) was a Catholic priest. But, although reluctantly ordained as a priest in 1492 and later a "time-server" in regard to uniting with the Reformation (GC 216), he spent his adult life studying and writing. Erasmus hated the popes and priests, for forcing his father and mother to leave one another and go separately into a monastery and convent. Erasmus also wrote papers and books ridiculing Catholicism. On the same page

in the Inspired Word in which Wycliffe's Bible, translated from the Latin Vulgate, is said to have contained "many errors," Erasmus' Greek Text is spoken well of (*GC 245*). He was a master both of Latin and Greek. Tyndale and Erasmus were the two great linguistic and translation geniuses of the Reformation. **Tyndale's translation was so superb that the King James translation committees essentially copied it.** Comparative studies reveal this. It is also charged that some of the KJV translators were not fervent Christians. The truth is that they copied from Tyndale, who was.

THE WALDENSIAN BIBLE

We should also mention the source of the **Waldensian Bible**, since that is also declared to be an extremely poor and almost useless translation.

The Waldensian Christians extend all the way back to early believers (the Italia) in northern Italy. At least as early as the fourth century, they separated from the apostates as soon as Constantine and the Bishop of Rome started bringing the world into the church.

By about A.D. 350, they had a translation of the Bible in their own language. They were "among the first" to do this (*GC 65*). Their Bible was translated into the Italia, which was the native dialect of this God-fearing people. The Italia, or Italic, people were later called the Waldenses. **Their translation is purer than the Old Latin translation** which Jerome used in translating the Latin Vulgate, which became the Latin Bible standard of the Catholic Church.

It is well-known that Jerome's Latin Vulgate contains many errors. But it is now charged that the Waldensian Bible is an equally poor translation, because it was also translated from the Old Latin.

However, the facts contradict the charge. Yes, it is true that Jerome's Vulgate is a very poor translation; this is well-known. But there is extremely good evidence that the Italia Bible was an outstanding translation. Here it is:

"Hundreds of years before the Reformation they possessed the Bible in manuscript in their native tongue. They had the truth unadulterated, and this rendered them the special objects of hatred and persecution."—*Great Controversy, 65*.

Against those words of Inspiration, all the arguments of the enemies fall flat. Very likely, in answer to their fervent prayers, the angels guided them in producing an outstanding translation into the Italia dialect.

The Old Latin was translated from the Greek as early as A.D. 167, and was a far more accurate translation than Jerome's Vulgate. The Waldensian Bible

was either translated from the Old Latin or, more likely, directly from the Syrian Greek family of manuscripts.

It is of interest that **Jerome** (c.342-420), a former personal secretary to Pope Damasus, preached extreme asceticism (including hermit living which he himself did for five years) and monasticism. **Jerome was fully dedicated to Catholicism and its multitude of errors and pagan rituals.**

APPLYING COMMON SENSE

For hundreds of years, millions were hunted to the death, dying at the hands of their persecutors. Then came that momentous transition, described so vividly and accurately in *Great Controversy*, p. 42. Satan saw that all he was accomplishing was to help souls on their journey to heaven. In the face of tremendous assaults, they were standing true.

So the devil switched to destruction by compromise. Paganism entered the churches and was christened as part of its beliefs and rituals soon after the enthronement of Constantine, the torturing and killing of Christians, and the burning of Bible manuscripts ceased for a time. The liberals in Alexandria had done their work well. They had prepared the way for what the papacy began enforcing on all the churches, from the time of Constantine onward.

But the churches of the **greater Syrian region**, those of **northern Italy and the Alpine piedmont** (later called the Waldenses, GC 64-78), and others on the outskirts of the Empire (including **Ethiopia [GC 577], Britain, Scotland, and Iona [GC 62]**) were the last to yield to the demand for compromise. As you know, many in those outlying areas never did lay down the banner of the true faith.

The great prophecy of Revelation 12 was being fulfilled! In the Final Crisis, as the faithful flee to the country, it will again be fulfilled.

Having gained control of the church (its doctrines, ceremonies, and pastors), the persecution against those who remained faithful began again. (A lesson for our own time in history; take note.)

However in later centuries, the papacy and the Eastern Church, which was centered in Constantinople (later called Byzantium), drew further apart. Faithful souls in the eastern territories took time to copy more Bible manuscripts while the papal church occupied itself with inventing holy water, sacred cloths, and baptism of bells.

Guess what manuscript family they copied those manuscripts from? Of course, the Syrian, which was born in that large region, stretching from what

is now western Turkey to Bethlehem. Gradually, an immense number of Syrian manuscripts and books were produced. This is why modern translators grudgingly call it the "**Majority Family.**" **Fully 80% of all extant Greek manuscripts are of the Syrian text style. That is about 4,000 of the 5,000 total manuscripts in existence today!**

It is obvious that the Syrian was the first, last, and best of the manuscript families; yet the modernists dare to dismiss it with the assertion that manuscript copying began in Egypt!

It is claimed that the Alexandrian family (the source for the modern versions) is the oldest!

But such a conclusion stands common sense on its head. The earliest church began in Palestine; and, from thence, it spread to Samaria, Antioch, and then (with Paul's pioneering journeys) to Asia Minor. (Read the book of Acts!) That is where all the Syrian manuscripts were translated!

Why would the earliest church, pure as the driven snow, go to Egypt in order to get its manuscripts or to copy them? **If you wanted to hand copy the Bible, would you move to Miami or Los Angeles to do it?** No, you would stay far away from those wicked metropolitan centers; so you could think clearly, work efficiently, and save your children.

If you lived back then, you surely would not go to Alexandria. It is a known fact that only 1% of the total New Testament manuscripts support the Alexandrian family; and they come from a half-Christian, half-pagan locality.

We are asked to believe that, for three centuries, the Syrian region Christians did all their evangelizing without manuscripts of their own to study and share; since almost none are found there. This is narrow-brained scholarship: seizing on one fact and ignoring all the others.

According to the Biblical book of Acts, the first Christian churches in the entire world were started in those territories which even the modernists today admit was where the Syrian family of manuscripts were produced.

Yet we are supposed to believe that no one in that entire territory made copies of the Scriptures for the first three centuries! **Prior to the time of Constantine, no Christian is supposed to have written even a note to a friend in which he quoted part of the Bible! This is Ph.D. nonsense,** achieved by ignoring the fact that only in the climate of Egypt would manuscripts from the first three centuries be able to survive.

You might ask, "What about Carthage and the Dead Sea area; were those areas not dry also?" Back then, Carthage received much more rainfall than Egypt which—just as now—received none. Egypt has always flourished only because it is crowded next to the River Nile, where it has an abundant drinking and irrigation supply. As for the Dead Sea area, no one lived there after the Essenes at Qumran were slain in A.D. 70 (shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem and Masada). But even that area experienced some rainfall. All of the Dead Sea Scrolls were recovered from dry, sheltered caves, not from open areas.

Listen closely: **According to the modernist theory, the first New Testament manuscripts were all penned in Egypt. Then, in the fourth century, and not until then, they began being copied in the territories where the Christian Church was first established.** This, we are told, is why the Syrian family is entirely different from the Egyptian (Alexandrian) family.

Ah, but wait a minute! **The theory has shot itself in the foot. If all the Syrian manuscripts were first copied from Alexandrian manuscripts—then there would be no Syrian manuscripts at all! They would all be Alexandrian!** Yet 80% of our present manuscripts are Syrian; and even the modernists agree that they are distinctly different than the Alexandrian.

In reality, the Syrian manuscripts were produced first; and, **when some of these manuscripts arrived in Alexandria, the liberals in charge changed things enough that rather quickly they arrived at a separate family. This was partly due to their strange theological beliefs and partly to sloppy work on the part of the copyists.** Why would someone, with little respect for the Bible, bother to make good copies of it?

Ellen White writes a paragraph about those earliest centuries:

"I saw that God had especially guarded the Bible; **yet when copies of it were few, learned men had in some instances changed the words**, thinking that they were making it more plain, when in reality they were mystifying that which was plain, by causing it to lean to their established views, which were governed by tradition. But I saw that the Word of God, as a whole, is a perfect chain, one portion linking into and explaining another. True seekers for truth need not err, for not only is the Word of God plain and simple in declaring the way of life, but the Holy Spirit is given as a guide in understanding the way to life therein revealed."—*Story of Redemption*, 391.

When were copies especially few? Where were the "learned men" living? It was only in the first three centuries, before Constantine ascended the throne, that "copies were few." It was at Alexandria where the largest collection of "learned men" resided. (It is significant that the context of the above quotation is speaking about hellfire; and mistranslations of that subject are in many Bibles.)

The truth is that, if there were no Syrian manuscripts to begin with—there could be no later ones at all! As soon as Paul sent his letters, they were copied. But **the liberals would have us believe that Paul's original epistles just sat around, ignored until the Alexandrian apostates began copying them!**

Most of **Paul's letters** were sent to Asia Minor, which is all part of Syrian territory, primarily Asia Minor. Is that not highly significant? The only place where they could be copied by "Syrian" believers. As soon as **Mark, Matthew, and Luke** wrote their gospels, copies were made. (It is expected that the originals would also have been originated and copied in Syrian territory: Palestine.) Shortly after **John** wrote his books on the Island of Patmos, they would have been copied by friends. Patmos was part of Asia Minor, which was a Syrian family territory.

So where would we expect the oldest copies of the New Testament to be made? In the place where Christianity started—and in the place where the books were first written—all Syrian territory. This would also include Paul's letters sent from the city of Rome to churches in Asia Minor and Luke's account of the voyage to Rome, which he probably wrote down after returning to Palestine. **Back in those early years, Jerusalem, Antioch (in modern Lebanon), and several cities in Asia Minor (which Paul first evangelized) were the centers of Christianity. All Syrian territory. You can know that Christians in every one of them were busily making copies.**

Yes, let us not lose our common sense, in our eagerness to listen to the so-called "wisdom" of the Ph.D.s. Who dares sit at the feet of the great men of earth, in the hope that they can provide safe guidance into the right path to the heavenly home?

When someone comes to you with a message that your Bible is no longer reliable, take your loved ones by the hand—and flee from the place as quickly as you can. Do not listen to such men. You have enough problems now, as you daily battle the devil and try to protect your family from his devices, without listening to peculiar theories of men who want to take your Bibles from you.

Attacking the Bible itself: This attack extends beyond the KJV. Aspects of the charges are leveled directly against the integrity of the Bible writings themselves!

It is claimed, by these liberals, that another reason why people should not value the King James more than other versions is because all the Bible writings—even before they were initially copied—have inherent errors in them! This my friends, is an attempt at overkill. In order to reduce confidence in the KJV, men desperate to prove their point attempt to reduce confidence in all Bibles! Whether they know it or not, the men doing this are valued servants of the devil.

These men seem maddened to desperation in their efforts to tear the King James Bible out of our hands and hearts.

As part of this thrust, an attack is made on the Septuagint, which is the Old Testament Greek translation of the Bible. Prepared about 260 B.C., the Septuagint was quoted by many New Testament writers. These attackers claim that no Old Testament quotations in the New Testament are worth anything, even when quoted by Jesus!

But the facts are these: In most instances, the differences between the Septuagint and the Hebrew Old Testament are merely differences in word order, synonyms, etc., but not in concepts. However, in some verses, there are distinct differences. At such times, the New Testament writers generally quoted the Hebrew instead of such variants. **This fact, that the Hebrew would be quoted in place of questionable passages in the Septuagint, should give us assurance that God was guiding in what was done.**

It is neither wise nor safe for men to attack God's holy Word; and it is dangerous for us to listen to such men.

WHY THE KJV IS SO IMPORTANT TO US

First, it was translated in a direct line, through Erasmus' Greek Text, from the Syrian manuscripts. It is more accurate than the modern versions which are based on copies made in Alexandria, Egypt. This alone is a good enough reason to adhere to the King James Bible.

Second, serious students of the Bible need a normative standard. Ten or 20 Bible versions (even 2 or 3), all saying something a little different, mystify the mind. Which translation is right? How can they be compared? Which ones contain errors slipped in by the doctrinal prejudices of the translator? It is all a confusion.

Someone will say that we can solve the problem by going to the Greek text. That is no solution, since few of us know Greek. Such a remedy would require us to trust someone else to interpret the Bible for us—and that person would usually be a scholar trained in outside universities! Oh no, we don't need that! Men cunning in churchcraft have, for centuries, taught that we must trust our souls to someone else to guide us aright in our study of God's Word. The concept is solidly papal, and was used by Rome for nearly 2,000 years to bring the souls of millions into captivity.

We have something solid on which to place our feet when we make the single, best version the one we will rely on as a standard by which to judge Bibles, doctrines, standards, and morality.

Third, we need a normative standard for preaching. Many no longer bother to take their Bibles to church, since the pastor is going to read out of something else. Trying to follow his words in the KJV (or whatever version you might have with you) only adds to the confusion. While you are trying to figure how this phrase is supposed to match that one, he has passed on to something else. It becomes an exercise in futility.

Fourth, we need a normative standard for giving Bible studies and evangelistic meetings. How can you give Bible studies to people, when everyone is reading out of a different version? More confusion. It is difficult enough to clarify doctrines and standards to individuals with no previous experience in such matters. Add to this the miserable diets they eat, which cloud the brains, and the innumerable daily pressures that they bring to the study. The result is not a situation calculated to bring conviction and conversions.

Would you want to give a Bible study with the RSV, NIV, or Phillips and attempt to explain away all the peculiarities and errors in them? And I assure you, there are very definite antinomian (anti-law) and anti-Sanctuary passages in those books.

Add to this the fact that many already rely on the KJV; and it will arouse suspicion when you bring something else to read out of.

Fifth, the KJV is the version (or used to be!) all our Bible studies and doctrinal books are in. Someone will say, No problem, just change them to another version. More confusion. And which version are we to change them to? We must have a single standard for faith, study, and work.

Sixth, the KJV is the version preferred by the Spirit of Prophecy. That is no little matter. At least 98% of all passages quoted by Ellen White are from the King James. There were other Bibles around, but she consistently quoted the KJV.

Seventh, attempts to downgrade the KJV impugn on God's sovereignty and care for His children. It is not the purpose of the great controversy to let the devil win the battles and provide generations of believers with Bibles which are not worth much.

Eighth, the KJV is an old and trusted friend, one which has faithfully helped you all your life. Why should you now turn your back on it when so many of the reasons for doing so do not make good sense.

Ninth, it has an enduring and lasting majesty and beauty, lacking in the others. This may seem like a small matter, but it too is significant. Just as the Lord is majestic, He intends that His Word be majestic also. Surely, the hand of God guided in this special detail. For example, consider this passage:

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night." (*Luke 2:8*)

I believe you have normal intelligence, just as I have. Rewrite that sentence in a more beautiful way, and I will wait until you have finished . .

Now that you have tried—and failed, can you not see that there is something very special in the King James Bible, which your heavenly Father wants you to have? Because you needed to trust your soul to its precious words, God arranged that those words would have an inherent beauty of form and flow of words.

Is it wrong to read another version? I will not say that. However, I will say it is wrong for anyone to try to grind the King James Bible in the dust and, in some cases, even attack the Bible writings themselves. He wants us to forsake that precious book, because it will help excuse the fact that he has already done so.

It is bad enough when you encounter men who are trying to wrest a passage of Scripture. But be horrified when they try to remove the entire Bible from your hands! When you meet such men, ignore their claims of friendship and concern for your best good. Ignore their claim to "know Greek." Ignore their spouting of big words about Biblical recensions, documentary research, uncials, minuscules, lectionaries, codices, textual apparatus, numbered papyri, Greek Texts, and paraphrastic editions. They are just frail, erring people like you and me. Beware of their objectives. Beware of their motives. If your Bible is an offense to them, it is best that you leave their presence.

The King James brought nearly every reader of this tract set to God. Its words placed most of our feet on the path toward ultimate redemption. Adherence to those words will keep us safe by His side. —*vf*

"The Bible presents a perfect standard of character; it is an infallible guide under all circumstances, even to the end of the journey of life."—*Signs, March 21, 1906.*

"In the Bible the will of God is revealed. The truths of the Word of God are the utterances of the Most High. He who makes these truths a part of his life becomes in every sense a new creature."—*Review, December 18, 1913.*

"Every day you should learn something new from the Scriptures. Search them as for hid treasures, for they contain the words of eternal life. Pray for wisdom and understanding to comprehend these

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holy writings. If you would do this, you would find new glories in the Word of God; you would feel that you had received new and precious light on subjects connected with the truth, and the Scriptures would be constantly receiving a new value in your estimation."—*5 Testimonies*, 266.

"The great truths necessary for salvation are made as clear as noonday . . . A single text has proved in the past, and will prove in the future, to be a savor of life unto life to many a soul. As men diligently search, the Bible opens new treasures of truth, which are as bright jewels to the mind."—*Signs*, July 11, 1906.

"You must dig deep in the mine of truth if you would find its richest treasures. Comparing scripture with scripture, you may find the true meaning of the text; but if you do not make the sacred teachings of God's Word the rule and guide of your life, the truth will be nothing to you."—*Youth's Instructor*, July 28, 1892.

"No other study will so ennoble every thought, feeling, and aspiration as the study of the Scriptures. No other book can satisfy the questionings of the mind and the craving of the heart."—*Signs*, April 11, 1906.

"God's Word is full of precious promises and helpful counsel. It is infallible; for God cannot err. It has help for every circumstance and condition of life, and God looks on with sadness when His children turn from it to human aid."—*Signs*, March 28, 1906.

"In the Scriptures thousands of gems of truth lie hidden from the surface seeker. The mine of truth is never exhausted. The more you search the Scriptures with humble hearts, the greater will be your interest, and the more you will feel like exclaiming with Paul: 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!' "—*5 Testimonies*, 266.

"The Christian evidence that we need, is found not in the experience of men, but in our Bibles. The Word of God is the man of our counsel; for it brings us down from age to age, bearing its testimony to the unchangeableness of the truth. Not one of the ancient defenses of the Word of God, appropriate for special times, has become worn out. No part of the Bible has died from old age. All the past history of the people of God is to be studied by us today, that we may benefit by the experiences recorded."—*Letter 117*, 1897.

"As an educating power, the Bible is without a rival. Nothing will so impart vigor to all the faculties as an effort to grasp the stupendous truths of revelation."—*Signs*, April 11, 1906.

"It is impossible for any human mind to exhaust one truth or promise of the Bible. One catches the glory from one point of view, another from another point; yet we can discern only gleamings. The full radiance is beyond our vision. As we contemplate the great things of God's Word, we look into a fountain that broadens and deepens beneath our gaze. Its breadth and depth pass our knowledge. As we gaze, the vision widens; stretched out before us, we behold a boundless, shoreless sea. Such study has vivifying power. The mind and heart acquire new strength, new life. This experience is the highest evidence of the divine authorship of the Bible."—*Signs*, April 25, 1906.