

Weeks 4, 5, and 6, Wednesdays, October 6, 13, 27 (Pastor will be at Presbytery on the 20th), 2021

Why We Use the King James Version of the English Bible (Spanish version: Reina Valera; Portuguese version: João Ferreira Almeida Atualizada). Supplement to WCF Chapter 1, “Of the Holy Scriptures” (2011 marked the 400th anniversary of the KJV). Charles Jefferson writes: “The purest, noblest English ever written is that of our King James Bible. Its unfading glory is no mystery to those who have come to know the beautiful and saintly soul of William Tyndale.”²⁷ In *The Story of English*, we are impressed to read: “The First Edition of the King James Bible, 1611, probably the single most influential book ever published in the English language.”²⁸

1. Review Steven Houck’s *The King James Version of the Bible* (previously assigned).
2. The goal of this lesson is to develop further love of the KJV and a deeper understanding of how we have it and why we use it. More than anything, the goal is that we would cherish and devotedly and reverently read God’s Word more as a result, that our Bibles would be marked with the signs of constant study and devotion.
3. Two principles will guide this study:
 - 1) “*If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.*” That’s the summary of why we use the Kings James Bible.
 - 2) “*Don’t recreate the wheel.*” Pastor Grant has spent a lot of time researching many resources, and has come to the conclusion that it is best to use one main article by the Trinity Bible Society to review today with some details “peppered” in from other sources. A long list of resources will follow at the end. As the discussion is a complex issue, especially as it relates to textual criticism, those who want a detailed understanding will benefit from their own further study. The “peppered in” sections throughout the article below will always be indented and italicized to visibly separate what is not part of the article.
4. See handouts: Hebrew and Greek text copies; excerpts from Dean Burgon’s *The Revision Revised*.

What today’s Christian needs to know about The Greek New Testament (Issue is the Greek sources; the Old Testament Hebrew is the Maesoretic Text for all English Bibles)
Source: <http://www.trinitarianbiblesociety.org/>

G. W. Anderson, Editorial Manager

In recent years there has been much confusion concerning modern translations and editions of the Greek New Testament. Some people make claims regarding the Greek New Testament without having information and facts to support their claims. Many people claim that their translations are accurate because those translations are based upon the best available Greek texts. Some claim that

²⁷ Charles Jefferson, *Quiet Hints to Growing Preachers in My Study* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Company Publishers, 1901), 182. Some estimate that 75 percent of the KJV is mainly the sacrificial work of Tyndale.

²⁸ Robert McCrum, William Cran, and Robert MacNeil, Editors, *The Story of English* (New York: Elisabeth Sifton Books – Viking, 1986), 109. They add, “Out of their deliberations [at Hampton Court] emerged a plan which would provide the English language with one of its great Renaissance masterpieces, a work whose impact on the history of English prose has been as fundamental as Shakespeare’s: the Authorized Version of the Bible.”, 110.

their translations are better than the Authorised Version because the Authorised Version and its underlying Greek Textus Receptus add variants and extra readings to the text. Others, however, claim that the Greek text of the New Testament is not important because their favourite translation is better than any Greek text. Still others say that the Greek text is not important because most people cannot read the Greek of the New Testament era. However, the Greek text upon which a translation is based will have an impact upon both a Christian's reading of Scripture devotionally and the proclaiming of the Word of God in bearing witness to the saving grace of Jesus Christ. It is necessary that today's Christian understands the importance of the traditional Greek text in his Christian life.

The Traditional Text [Greek source of all English Bibles from Tyndale to KJV]

First of all it is necessary to understand what is meant by the term 'traditional text'. During the 1st century following the resurrection of Christ, God moved men to pen His Word (2 Peter 1.21). The result was a group of letters and books, written in *Koine* Greek (called the 'original autographs'). These letters and books were copied and recopied throughout the centuries and distributed throughout the world. These copies comprise the manuscripts of the New Testament. Over 5,000 of these Greek manuscripts have survived to this day. The great number of these Greek manuscripts supports what is called the Byzantine textual tradition, Byzantine because it came from all over the Greek-speaking world at that time. These Byzantine manuscripts make up what is called the Traditional Text of the New Testament. The best printed representation of this Byzantine text-type is the Textus Receptus (or Received Text). In addition to the manuscripts, we also have available many works in which numerous Church Fathers quoted from the manuscripts. The work of John Burgon has established that the basic text used by numerous Church Fathers is the same as the text now known as the Byzantine Text.

The Textus Receptus was compiled from a number of Byzantine manuscripts by numerous editors from the early 1500s. There were editions from textual editors such as Erasmus, Stephens, Beza, the Elzevirs, Mill and Scrivener. These editions differ slightly from one another but still are regarded as the same basic text. Certain editions were popular in different countries and provided the basis for New Testament translations. The Textus Receptus (as it later became known) was the text used by Tyndale and in turn by the translators of the English Authorised (King James) Version of 1611 and other Reformation era translations.

- A. *The Byzantine Text-Type [Manuscript source of Erasmus' Textus Receptus, KJV, NKJV]*
1. *Takes its name from the Byzantine Empire – which included Rome, Asia Minor, and parts of the Mid-East. [See Map, pg. 31]*
 2. *These texts are thought to have been collated by the martyr Lucian of Antioch (240-312 A.D.).²⁹*
 3. *Dr. Holland writes: “The Church at Antioch has a noteworthy position in Scripture as the first place believers were called Christians (Acts 11:26). It is also interesting that where both Antioch and Alexandria are mentioned in the same passage, Antioch is listed as a place of service and Alexandria as a place of disruption (Acts 6:5-10). Could it be that God, who foreknows all things, provides for us our starting point in searching for the original text? If so, the direction would not be in Alexandria,*

²⁹ See, Kurt Aland, *The Text of The New Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans, 1995), 64-66.

Egypt. Instead, it would be in the cradle of New Testament Christianity at Antioch of Syria, where the Traditional Text originated.”³⁰

The Critical Text [Modern translations other than the NKJV]

During the 19th and 20th centuries, however, another form of Greek New Testament has come into the forefront and is used for most modern New Testament translations. This Critical Text, as it is called, differs widely from the Traditional Text in that it omits many words, verses and passages which are found in the Received Text and translations based upon it.

The modern versions are based mainly upon a Greek New Testament which was derived from a small handful of Greek manuscripts from the 4th century onwards. Two of these manuscripts, which many modern scholars claim to be superior to the Byzantine, are the Sinai manuscript [Codex Sinaiticus, “Aleph” or “A” discovered by Tischendorf in the Convent of St. Catherine’s on Mt. Sinai in 1844 -- in a waste paper basket waiting to be burned!] and the Vatican manuscript (c. 4th century) [Codex Vaticanus, “B”, found in the Vatican Library in 1481, only photographs have ever been seen of it]. These are derived from a text type known as the Alexandrian text (because of its origin in Egypt); this text type was referred to by the textual critics Westcott and Hort as the 'Neutral text'. These two manuscripts form the basis of the Greek New Testament, referred to as the Critical Text, which has been in widespread use since the late 19th century. In recent years there has been an attempt to improve this text by calling it an 'eclectic' text (meaning that many other manuscripts were consulted in its editing and evolution), but it is still a text which has as its central foundation these two manuscripts.

- A. *Before 1481, the whole church used the Textus Receptus [Although Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (a second Latin Vulgate) reflected a Greek OT and NT that included the Apocrypha of which the Greek resembled the Alexandrian text type).*
- A. *The Alexandrian Text-Type: [manuscript sources combined and proliferated by Westcott and Hort (of their predecessors like Tischendorf and Wiesman), which led to the new Revised Greek Text that became the basis of the English Revised Version, etc.] [Wieland, Ibid]*
 - 1. *The Alexandrian Texts can be found mostly around the city of Alexandria, Egypt, and the Sinai Peninsula ... [See Map, pg. 31]*
 - 2. *The Alexandrian copies are considered the older manuscripts.*
- C. *The Witness of the extant manuscripts. [Ibid]*
 - 1. *There are 5,686 manuscripts (mss) of the New Testament available today.*
 - 2. *5,401 are Byzantine in nature!*
 - 3. *18 are Alexandrian in nature.*
 - 4. *12 are Western.*
 - 5. *15 are Caesarian.*
 - 6. *The remainder of the mss cannot be determined.*
 - 7. *These mss ranges in content from full books of the Bible to postage-stamp size texts.*
- D. *Where did the New Testament originate? [Ibid] Matthew – Antioch; Mark – Rome; Luke – Written to “Theophilus” a Greek. According to tradition Luke came from Antioch. The*

³⁰ Thomas Holland, *Crowned With Glory* (New York: Writers Club Press, 2000), 43. Source: Robert Wieland, Pastor Grant’s fellow 2010 RPTS Graduate, “A Brief Summary Of Reformed Textual Criticism”, unpublished. Footnotes in these sections are also from MR. Wieland’s work.

Gospel of Luke is evidently written for non-Jews, and Greeks in particular; John – Written sometime prior to his martyrdom: John in Rome, Patmos, and/or Asia Minor; Acts – Written during Paul’s Second Missionary journey, and Paul’s passage to Rome; Romans – Rome; 1 and 2 Corinthians – Corinth; Galatians – Galatia; Ephesians – Ephesus; Philippians – Philippi; Colossians – Colossai; 1 and 2 Thessalonians – Thessalonica; 1 Timothy – Macedonia/Greece; 2 Timothy – Rome; Titus – Macedonia/Greece; Philemon – Rome; Hebrews – Jerusalem/Diaspora Jews; James – Jerusalem; 1 and 2 Peter – Churches in Asia Minor; 1, 2, and 3 John – Patmos; Jude – Jerusalem; Revelation – Patmos/Asia Minor. All of these locations are within the Byzantine Empire. [SEE MAP Pg. 31]

- E. *Over the next 1,500 years the Byzantine mss would be the official Greek text of the church. [Wescott and Hort’s Revised Greek Text was published in 1881, the source of modern translations].*

Erasmus, Beza, Tyndale were aware of the Aleph [Codex Sinaiticus] and ignored it when preparing their Greek or English translations of the Bible. So too were the editors/translators of the King James Bible, and so were the divines of the Westminster Confession.

Problems in the Critical Text

There are many problems of omission which characterize this Greek New Testament. Verses and passages which are found in the writings of Church Fathers from around 200 to 300 A.D. are missing in the Alexandrian Text manuscripts which date from around 300 to 400 A.D. In addition, these early readings are found in manuscripts in existence from 500 A.D. onwards. An example of this is Mark 16.9-20: this passage is found in the writings of Irenaeus and Hippolytus in the 2nd century, and is in almost every manuscript of Mark's Gospel from 500 A.D. onwards. It is missing in two Alexandrian manuscripts, the Sinai and the Vatican.

Other omissions from the Alexandrian Greek texts are John 7:53-8:11 (woman caught in adultery), Matthew 6:9-13 (end of the Lord’s prayer is missing, although it also is in Luke 11 in the TR); Matthew 22:19-20 (Christ’s explanation of the Lord’s Supper is gone); and 1 John 5:7 (Trinity missing). There are many others, but these are some of the most discussed.

This is but one of many examples of this problem. There are many words, verses and passages which are omitted from the modern versions but which are found in the Traditional or Byzantine Text of the New Testament, and thus in the Textus Receptus. The Critical Text differs from the Textus Receptus text 5,337 times, according to one calculation. The Vatican manuscript omits 2,877 words in the Gospels; the Sinai manuscript 3,455 words in the Gospels. These problems between the Textus Receptus and the Critical Text are very important to the correct translation and interpretation of the New Testament. Contrary to the contention of supporters of the Critical Text, these omissions do affect doctrine and faith in the Christian life.

Several examples of doctrinal problems caused by the omissions from the Critical Text follow. This is by no means an exhaustive list. The modern reconstructed Critical Text

- omits reference to the Virgin Birth in Luke 2.33
- omits reference to the deity of Christ in 1 Timothy 3.16
- omits reference to the deity of Christ in Romans 14.10 and 12
- omits reference to the blood of Christ in Colossians 1.14

In addition, an error is created in the Bible in Mark 1.2; in this passage in the Critical Text Isaiah is

made the author of the book of Malachi. In numerous places in the New Testament the name of Jesus is omitted from the Critical Text; seventy times 'Jesus' is omitted and twenty-nine times 'Christ' is omitted.(1)

Another problem with the modern Critical Text is that the two main manuscripts upon which this text is constructed, the Sinai and the Vatican, disagree between themselves over 3,000 times in the Gospels alone. Thus, the Alexandrian text presents itself as a text type which is characterized in many places by readings which are not common to the manuscripts of their own tradition. The Critical Text is characterized by wording which in the original language is difficult, abrupt or even impossible. It appears that no matter how peculiar or aberrant the variant reading is, it must have been in the original autographs because (as is sometimes claimed) a scribe would never make a change which disagrees with other manuscripts; he would, instead, make a change which would make a passage read more smoothly.

Much is said about the Alexandrian manuscripts being very old. This is true, but the emphasis in the study of textual criticism should not be upon how old the manuscript is but upon how many copies removed from the original it is. A manuscript which is dated as having been copied during the 10th century could have been the fifth in a line of copies originating with the original autograph, whilst a manuscript dated as having been copied during the 3rd century could have been the one hundredth in the line of copies. Since it is difficult to tell the genealogy, the family of any given manuscript, it is important to note that age is relative in the sense that you could have a corrupt 3rd century manuscript or a faithful 10th century manuscript.

A good illustration would be to suppose that, in the year 3000, a copy of the English Bible was found which dated from the 1970s. Suppose this Bible happened to be the oldest existing Bible available, and this Bible happened to differ in hundreds of places from the Bible that was in use by Christians in the year 3000. One could well imagine the scientific critics, with their methodology, extolling the virtues of the ancient age of this Bible, the page design showing quality, careful care in the layout and the paper of this particular volume, the binding and so on. But their arguments would tend to fall apart when, after beginning to translate Bibles into modern languages on the basis of this ancient book, Christians discovered that this version of the Scriptures was the New World Translation of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

We have seen that heretics, like Marcion, have been tampering with the text from the 2nd century onward. An "older" mss that has no attestation from the church may be one of these mss used by heretics. We have seen that the Jewish tendency is to acknowledge the younger mss as more authoritative – because they are free from being corrupted by age. [Their practice was to discard of older manuscripts that were wearing out in favor of newer copies that preserved their best texts]. The attestation of the church through all ages has been that the Alexandrian mss were never used or copied. [Wieland, Ibid]

Illustration by Dr. Jack Kinneer, Adjunct Prof. of NT Studies at the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary (Pastor Grant's alma matter): Certain versions of his Greek NT sit pristine on his shelves because he does not use them. The copies he uses are held together with packing tape, etc., quite worn down and eventually will need to be replaced by new copies. The versions that the church used (Byzantine) would have worn out and needed constant copying and replacement. The ones the church discarded as inferior (Alexandrian) would be found discarded, as they were, and survive as the oldest extant copies only because they weren't used.

Providential Preservation [See WCF 1:8]

The Traditional Text of the New Testament is understood by conservative Bible-believing Christians to have been providentially preserved by God. God has promised in His Word that He would not only preserve His Word for generations to come, but that His Word was permanent and would be kept free from corruption.

- *Matthew 5.18* states "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled".
- *Isaiah 59.21* says "As for me, this *is* my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that *is* upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever".
- *John 10.35* says "and the scripture cannot be broken".

These verses demonstrate that God has not left His church for centuries without an authoritative copy of the Word of God, but that God's people down through the ages have faithfully copied and recopied copies of the original autographs. The church all over the world has used the Traditional Text in all of its various forms, and God has seen fit to multiply multitudes of copies and has brought salvation to many generations through this preservation process. This doctrine of providential preservation is succinctly stated in the Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter 1, paragraph VIII:

The Old Testament in Hebrew, which was the native language of the people of God of old, and the New Testament in Greek, which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations, being immediately inspired by God and by His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic; so as, in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them.

This precious doctrine of the providential preservation of the Scriptures has been all but forgotten by modern textual scholars. Many of them treat the Word of God as just another book that can be submitted to the whims and changing norms of modern scientific methods. Many of the destructive forms of higher criticism of the 19th century have come from a lack of belief that the Bible is a supernatural book. The Bible has the marks of inspiration which clearly can be seen by believing eyes, but which can be trampled under the feet of men rushing headlong toward destruction. But, in spite of this, God has raised up His people who love and cherish His Word and recognize the marks of inspiration that the early believers recognized, and that these copies which have been handed down through the ages represent well what God has intended to be used. This does not mean that any particular printed edition of the Greek New Testament today is perfect, but what it does mean is that the New Testament that we have today is essentially the same as that passed down through the ages through various groups of believers who have loved and kept His Word.

The strength of this preservation in the Old Testament comes in the quality of scribe that copied the Old Testament Hebrew. In the New Testament this is seen in the abundance of manuscripts which we possess today. This has been God's method for keeping His Word pure. This preservation provides that no one local text, such as the one from Alexandria, Egypt, would become the dominant text. It took liberalism and unbelief to challenge this preservation process. It has never been proven that these few Alexandrian manuscripts ever existed outside of Alexandria, Egypt. Many of God's people around the world reject the Critical Text in all of its forms. The practical application of providential preservation is that the believer today must choose between a modern reconstructed text based essentially upon two manuscripts from the 4th century, which omits the deity of Christ in many

places and is estimated by some to leave out approximately 200 verses (the equivalent of 1 and 2 Peter), or that he must choose as a text one which God has used through the centuries. Do we use the text which God has blessed, and which best honours and glorifies the Lord Jesus, or do we not?

The printed editions of the Greek New Testament which were published during the 1500s and 1600s were produced by men who understood what the glory of God meant and the importance of having accurate copies of the Bible. From the work known as the Complutensian Polyglot to the various editions of Erasmus, to the four editions of Robert Stephens (the best known of which is the 1550 text and which is the basis for what is called the Berry Interlinear or the *Englishman's Greek New Testament*), to the work of the great critic Theodore Beza in his five editions, to the editions of the Elzevirs in 1624 and 1633, and ultimately to the work of F. H. A. Scrivener in the 1870s and '80s, we have scholarship in textual criticism and the most faithful and careful attitude toward the manuscripts that one can imagine. The Traditional Text of the New Testament was the text of the Reformation period, so that whether it was the work of Erasmus or of Stephens, Luther's own translation or that of the heirs of the Reformation such as the Westminster Divines and the translators of the Authorised Version in English, this text has been widely used and tremendously blessed by God.

Considering the historical argument only there is no warrant for using the Alexandrian MSS in the Greek Text. Since it has been demonstrated from the very first century that heretics and false teachers have tampered with the text of the New Testament, it then follows that simply because a text is ancient does not necessarily mean that it is authentic. Modern Textual Criticism has sought to undermine the Traditional Greek Text of the church by questioning its ancient source. However, when the transmission of the Greek Text is investigated historically, then the simple conclusion which can be derived from it is that the Modern Greek Text (Nestle-Aland, or, UBS) is not a legitimate copy of the originals. [Wieland, Ibid]

Consider also the difference between the quality of men both academically and spiritually from Tyndale, Luther, Beza and the editors/translators of the KJV with those of the often unbelieving editors of the Revised Greek Text and the Revised English version. For the KJV, 54 Hebrew and Greek scholars of 17th century English Puritan theology and spirituality were appointed to make a Bible. Each book passed around an entire body for review. At the close, a committee made from men out of each of the three sub-groups scrutinized the whole translation again, consulted with other scholars throughout the country, and were so meticulous that any word that was put there to make the sense clear but was not in the original was put in italics. In contrast, Westcott and Hort were influenced by 19th-century German liberal and existential theology, High Church Anglicanism, and Romanism. They edited their Revised Greek Text in secrecy without peer review. They were Darwinian evolutionists. And these men insisted that a Universalist (denies the Trinity) be on their revision committee. They also denied the inspiration or Scripture. For example, on August 11, 1848, Westcott wrote in a letter: "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." On March 4, 1890, Westcott wrote: "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" (Source: <http://www.jesus-is-lord.com/hort.htm>).

The Responsibility of Believers Today

The textual critic J. Harold Greenlee has said, "New Testament textual criticism is, therefore, the basic Biblical study, a prerequisite to all other Biblical and theological work".(2) This is not an

overstatement of the importance of this issue. As believers we have the responsibility in our day and age of proclaiming the Gospel, the pure Gospel, the undiluted Gospel. We also have the right and privilege of being the next in the line of protecting God's Word and proclaiming it. Each individual Christian will make a decision on this matter, of which text is correct. Unmistakably, this decision will be made, consciously or unconsciously, by every single believer. This decision is made when the believer decides which edition of the Bible he will use to read and study; and if he chooses a translation based upon corrupted manuscripts which reflect views which omit the deity of Christ, His blood atonement, His virgin birth, then the decision has been made to extend this error to the next generation. If, however, today's Christian chooses a translation of the Word of God which is translated from the Traditional Text of the New Testament, the decision has been made to continue to see God working through His providence in providing His Word in its complete form, for not only this generation but for those to come.

Endnotes

- (1) See "The Great Omission", *The Quarterly Record* (London, England: The Trinitarian Bible Society, no. 524, July-September 1993).
 - (2) J. Harold Greenlee, *Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism* (Grand Rapids, MI, USA: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), p. 17.
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A Bibliography In Support of The Traditional Text of the New Testament

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Further considerations from Pastor Grant:

1. The vast majority of the Critical text agrees with the Textus Receptus; most estimate that 95 percent of them actually agree. And within the remaining 5 percent of differences, the variants are mostly not theologically significant. This is not to say the issue is not significant, nor that we shouldn't still want the best and be concerned to have every word out of the mouth of God (and some variants are significant). For instance, in the Westminster Shorter Catechism Q&A 6, the proof text is 1 John 5:7. Many subscribing to the Westminster Standards will qualify this verse, saying: "the oldest and most reliable manuscripts do not have this verse" and direct us to look past it for other verses to prove the Trinity. This is terribly unnecessary, because the Textus Receptus is in fact the most reliable, based on copies of the oldest and most trustworthy texts that the Church of almost all her history chose to use and copy. Thankfully, the Trinity is not lost in the Bible without 1 John 5:7 (See Christ's Baptism and Baptism Command in the Great Commission for instance). Neither is 1 Timothy 3:16 the only place we can turn to prove Christ's deity (see Colossians 2:9 and John 1:1). But the question remains, is it correct to dismiss such time-tested Scriptures that were the Church's Bible for almost all her history, and decidedly so? Are the more recently discovered "older" manuscripts (that there are infinitely less copies of and disagree with one another thousands of times) actually better? While no main doctrines are lost as a whole in the Alexandrian manuscripts that are the source of modern texts, there is no good reason to abandon the Byzantine manuscripts of the Textus Receptus, and no good reason to abandon the KJV and other versions that are based on the original Greek texts of the Early Church and the Reformation, over against the NT source text that the Roman Catholic Bible and almost all modern translations are actually more connected to (all roads really do lead back to Rome). As well, for the majority of where the Greek text types agree, the King James Version still translates better as a whole than any of the modern translations (this was constantly observed in Pastor Grant's Greek Exegesis classes and the impetus for him choosing the KJV for his new devotional Bible). PRPC chooses what is by far the best, and we expect the best for our people in personal and corporate reading. The Alexandrian source texts said to be "the oldest and most reliable translations" is a naïve farce, and so is the argument for newer English translations.
2. Important to keep in mind in discussions:
 - a. Ninety-five percent of the Byzantine and Alexandrian texts agree. What Pastor usually sees when doing exegesis and comparing the Greek sources side by side is word for word agreement. For example:

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος (Joh 1:1 STE) – Byzantine Text

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ἰ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος. (Joh 1:1 BYZ) – Alexandrian Text
 - b. "Word for word" of KJV needs to be qualified: True reflection of the original order of words would create a Yoda translation (this also is true for Hebrew). For example, see the text above in John 1:1. Literally, the order is (in a wooden translation): *In beginning was the Word, and the Word was with the God, and the God was the Word.* This is a mild case.

A Hebrew example: *The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.* (Pro 18:10)

קהוי־מוֹסְרֵי וְאַל־בָּסָף וְיָדַעַת מִתְרִוּץ גְּבָהָר: **Proverbs 8:10**

More literally: *Tower strength [is the] name of Yahweh; in Him runs [the] righteous and [they] are exalted* (e.g., *set high, unattainable = safe*). Notice also the supplied words.

Often, the KJV, like any version, must switch the order of words and supply words (not all are actually italicized), sometimes because it takes five English words to say what one Hebrew or Greek word (or a word “block” with lots tagged on the beginning and end) says. However, the KJV does stay much closer to idiomatic phrases (such as 1 Kings 14:10). Still, of minor significance but relevant to such discussions, the KJV, like all the other English translations, omits “of an ass” after “millstone” in Matthew 18:6, but it is there in the Greek (This omission by all English versions was noticed in exegesis for a sermon Pastor gave on this text, and it is not a textual criticism issue, as both Greek sources have the word for “of an ass”. Interesting to note, and the Spanish Reina Valera version, update does include the Greek after the word for millstone as “de asno”; in this case, we give a hearty shout out to our Hispanic brethren, GOOOAAAALLLLLLL!!!!).

The KJV is not exempt of “Dynamic equivalence”, although it is much more cautious about it. For instance, Philippians 2:7 is more literally – word for word -- “emptied Himself” or “make void” – and this is the same in both the Textus Receptus and Alexandrian text types. But the KJV renders it “made himself of no reputation” to guard against misunderstanding the text as Christ losing His divinity; this was a wise move against heresies that would use the more literal phrase wrongly to deny the deity of Christ. It still does get the sense of the text best, but it is not as word-for-word as are other translations in this case. It also is important to understand that the KJV is sparing in such things, unlike the broad and unnecessary dynamic equivalence found in the NIV that often weakens the text.

KJV is not itself inspired. That would mean the translators were inspired like the original authors: “The eighth section of the chapter [WCF] treats of the original text and translations of Scripture, and is directed, as to both these points against the doctrine and practice of the Church of Rome. In the first place, it is declared that the text in the original tongues alone is authentic, and therefore ultimately to be appealed to in all controversies of religion. This is directed against the assertion of the Council of Trent that the Vulgate Latin version is to be held as authentic, so that none on any pretext should dare to reject it. It is obvious that, as the question here is as to the text of Scripture, the word *authentic* is used, not in the modern sense in which it has been employed by many since Bishop Watson’s *Apology for Christianity*, as meaning historically true, but in its more literal sense, attested as a correct copy of the author’s work.”³¹

³¹ Theodore Letis, *The Majority Text: Critical Essays*, (Philadelphia: Renaissance and Reformation, 1996), 173-174. Source: *A Brief Summary Of Reformed Textual Criticism*, Robert Wieland (fellow RPTS 2010 graduate with Pastor Grant), unpublished, 4.

- c. KJV is a vulgar language. Thees, thous, and thines are grammatical distinctions that modern English has sadly lost (they are more precise), but they are not matters of eloquence or reverence (see comments below comparing it as “homely English for everyman” in contrast to Shakespearean verses). They sound pretty to our ears, but remember the English chosen was the vulgar (lacking refinement, every day use) language of the time, as were the original Hebrew and Greek, Luther’s German Bible, etc. We don’t have to pray in Thees and Thous to be more holy, although some do this and think so. It is natural to reflect what you read in prayer, but don’t confuse it with *ipso facto* reverence. It is a grammatical issue. Some otherwise very scholarly and godly representatives of using the Textus Receptus err, it seems to Pastor, on this issue, speaking of the KJV English as elevated and more reverent (especially pointing to “thee’s” and “thou’s” and “thy’s” for example). But if reverence were intended by these simply grammatical variations on “you” to indicate tenses singular or plural tenses (and genitive, dative, or accusative cases), why would God say to Abraham to “Get **thee** out of **thy** country” in Genesis 12:1, and why would Jesus say to Satan (via Peter in rebuking him), “Get **thee** behind me, Satan: for **thou** ...” in Mark 8:33?: it would seem obvious in both examples that the Almighty God’s uses of “thee”, “thy”, and “thou” are not intended to express reverence toward His inferior, sinful, and in the latter case, evil and unredeemable object. That being said, the King James English is still the standard basis of the English of our day and best to practice.
- d. Why not the NKJV? Not just updating of older language alone (See Trinity Bible Society articles online).
- e. Why not the Geneva Bible? This is a frequent accusation against our church for not using it while having the name “Puritan”. First, they don’t understand history: King James didn’t ask for the Bible because he didn’t like the Geneva Bible marginal notes (of course this would be another advantage). It was the only thing he was willing to say yes to for the Puritans who asked for it, and he liked the idea because it offered formalizing more unity (control) over all kingdoms while he still acted as the head of both State and Church. The KJV was requested by the Puritans and was a work of the Puritans. But also, the committee working on the Geneva Bible clearly had in view improving it. One example is in Acts 1:18, where the KJV renders it as Judas “falling headlong”, more faithful to the Greek that literally reads, “and headfirst (or forward) he became”. The Geneva Bible renders it, “and when he had throwen downe himselfe”, which causes a conflict of potential contradiction with Matthew 27:5. In the Greek, there is no contradiction of these two accounts (one at the cause of death, the other at the scene of its final effects). The KJV is an obviously conscious improvement here over the GNV, and further evidence why we who bear the name “Puritan” in our Church embrace their translation. Further, our accusers seem to be naïve about how new translations would take time to work through society due to printing processes and affordability at that time.
- f. Be gentle in how you try and persuade people to use the KJV (and be ready to do so):

When someone dismisses the KJV with, “I don’t read Shakespeare.” You can answer, “Well, you must have either never read Shakespeare, or never read the KJV, because they’re entirely different.” Consider this comparison: “The King James Bible was published in the year Shakespeare began work on his last play, *The Tempest*. Both the play and the Bible are masterpieces of English, but there is one crucial difference between them. Whereas Shakespeare ransacked the lexicon, the King James Bible employs a bare 8000 words –

God's teaching in homely English for everyman. From that day to this, the Shakesperian cornucopia and the biblical iron rations represent, as it were, the North and South Poles of the language, reference points for writers and speakers throughout the world, from the Shakesperian splendor of a Joyce or a Dickens to the biblical rigour of a Bunyan, or a Hemingway."³² Shakespeare's vocabulary makes the KJV's 8,000 words seem almost infantile. It's not hard to grasp and use, and not foreign to our English.

Concede the point: some old English words I need to look up. That's why I'm thankful for appendices that give the meaning of some words we don't use today. But context usually makes it clear enough, and my young children have no trouble reading it as a whole. See Reformation Heritage Books' new KJV Study Bible.

Suggested Readings for further study:

Many very well done articles and booklets (writing and production) to read free online are at this website: www.trinitarianbiblesociety.org. Among them (all are brief and for the laymen), a few are highlighted:

- *Plain Reasons for Keeping to the Authorised Version*
- *The Received Text: A Brief Look at the Textus Receptus*
- *How we got our English Bible*
- *Bible Word List and Bible Reading Scheme*
- *What Today's Christian Needs to Know About the About the New King James Version*
- *The New King James Version: A Critique (by Rev. Malcolm Watts)*

Major works on the textual criticism issues between the Byzantine and Alexandrian texts:

- Dean John William Burgon (Burgon was a contemporary critic of Westcott and Horton).
 - *The Traditional Text, and Causes of Corruption of the Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels*
 - *The Revision Revised*
- Rev. Frederick Nolan, *An Inquiry into the Integrity of the Received Text*.
- Dr. Edward F. Hills, *The King James Version Defended*.

Videos:

- See also: Robert Weiland's various youtube.com videos on these subjects at: <http://www.youtube.com/user/RobW0071/videos> (He was the main personal source inserted above in Pastor's notes)
- *KJB: The Book That Changed the World*, by John Rhys-Davies (DVD Theatrical Documentary)

Assigned reading for Wednesday, November 3, 2021: "Of God and the Holy Trinity"

- WCF 2:1-3 and accompanying Scripture references.
- LC 6-11 and accompanying Scripture references.
- SC 4-6 and accompanying Scripture references.

³² McCrum, Cran, and MacNeil, *The Story of English*, 113.



Green circle = Byzantine Empire wherein the original churches that were written to in the NT resided, and the geographic area where the Byzantine Text sources of the Textus Receptus were located. These texts were “generally regarded as the authoritative form of the text and was the most widely circulated and accepted” (Dr. Jack Kinneer).

Red circle = Alexandria/Egypt/Sinai area where the few “older” existing Critical Text sources originated. Far from native Greek lands where the early Church developed and the letters were written and sent.