

TRANSMISSION OF THE TEXT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT:

The abundance of the manuscripts. We possess more than four thousand manuscripts of the Greek New Testament. Some were written a fairly short time after the original. The most ancient text, on papyrus, containing a short fragment of the gospel of John, goes back to the beginning of the second century. The Chester Beatty Papyri, from the third century, include whole books of the New Testament. Over two hundred manuscripts were written on vellum in uncials (Greek capital letters) and date from the fourth to the eighth centuries. The most famous and the best are these:

1. The Sinaitic Codex, discovered by Tischendorf in 1859 in the Convent of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai. From the beginning of the fourth century, this manuscript contains all of the New Testament. It is in the British Museum.
2. The Vatican Codex, also from the fourth century, is in the Library of the Vatican. One hundred forty-two of the 559 pages contain almost the whole New Testament.
3. The Alexandrian Codex, from the fifth century, is also in the British Museum. It contains almost all of the Old Testament (in Greek) and almost all of the New.
4. The Ephraem Codex, from the fifth century, is in the National Library in Paris. It consists of 64 sheets for the Old Testament and 145 for the New.

More than 2,400 manuscripts, in cursive writing, date from the ninth to the sixteenth centuries. There are also more than 1,600 lectionaries - (a series of scriptures to be read in church services).

Moreover, there are in existence about 1,000 old manuscripts of numerous translations of the New Testament; and besides these, there are at least 8,000 manuscripts of the Latin Vulgate alone. Finally, the church fathers furnish a considerable number of quotations from the New Testament, most of them in Greek. 1,819 come from Irenaeus, 17,922 from Origen; 7,258 from Tertullian; and 5,176 from Eusebius.



THE HISTORICAL BOOKS OF ANTIQUITY HAVE A DOCUMENTATION INFINITELY LESS SOLID:

1. For the Gallic Wars of Julius Caesar (written between 58 and 50 B.C.), there are several manuscripts, but only nine or ten of the are valid, and the oldest is dated about 900 years after Caesar.
2. Of the fourteen books of the Histories of Tacitus (around A.D. 100), only four and a half have been preserved; and of the sixteen books of his Annals, only ten remain in toto and two in part. All that is left of those two great works rests on just two manuscripts, one from the ninth century, and the other from the eleventh.
3. For the History of Thucydides (about 460-400 B.C.) we have no more than eight manuscripts the oldest which dates about A.D. 900.
4. The same is true of the History of Herodotus (about 480-425 B.C.)

Note: Still, no scholar would question the authenticity of Herodotus or of Thucydides merely because the only usable manuscripts of their works are 1,300 years more recent than the originals.

5. We have also only one manuscript for all the works of Sophocles, and this was copied 1,400 years after his death.

The Variants Of The New Testament:

In the Greek text there are somewhat fewer than 150,000 words. In more than 4,000 Greek manuscripts, about 200,000 variants have been picked out, most of little importance. Westcott and Hort estimate that the proportion of words accepted by virtually all and without the slightest doubt is very high; it is estimated (on the whole) to be seven-eighths of the total. The remaining eighth, mostly consisting of changes in the order of words and in other minor details, constitutes the field for textual criticism. Hort adds that, in his opinion, scarcely more than a thousandth part of the text can be called, in any sense whatever, a substantial variation.

Dr. Benjamin Warfield says that the great bulk of the New Testament has been transmitted to us without, or almost without, any variations. It can be asserted with competence that the sacred text is exact and valid and that no article of faith and no moral precept in it has been distorted or lost. Moreover, the same author expresses his conviction, that in the New Testament of Westcott and Hort, we have "in substance" the original text.

Dr. Philip Schaff, states that the great number of variants in the Greek Text should not surprise or trouble any Christian. They are the natural result of the enormous wealth of our documentary sources, and they are a testimony to the immense significance of the New Testament. They have no slightest bearing on the integrity of the of the text; on the contrary, they reinforce it. The study of them is very useful and stimulating. Out of the 150,000 variants, only 400 materially alter the sense. Among these, no more than about 50 have real importance for any reason whatever, and even in the case of these 50, not one touches on any article of faith or any moral commandment not forcibly supported by other entirely clear passages, or by the teaching of the Bible as a whole. The Textus Receptus (Received Text) of Stephanus, Beza and Elzevir and our present version teach the same Christianity as the uncial text of the Sinaiticus and Vaticanus of the oldest manuscripts.

Louis Gaussen, The inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, trans. David D. Scott, p.177 brings out in a remarkable way all that the Scriptures have undergone throughout these thousand years:

"When one thinks that the Bible has been copied during thirty centuries, as no book has ever been, or ever will be; that it was subjected to all the catastrophes and all the captivities of Israel; that it was transported seventy years to Babylon; that it has seen itself so often persecuted, or forgotten, or interdicted, or burnt, from the days of the Philistines to those of the Seleucidae; when one thinks that since the time of Jesus Christ it has had to traverse the first three centuries of the Imperial persecutions, when persons found in possession of the holy books were thrown to the wild beasts; next the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries, when false decretals were everywhere multiplied; the tenth century, when so few could read, even among the princes; the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, when the use of the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue was punished with death, and when the books of the ancient fathers were mutilated, when so many ancient traditions were garbled and falsified, even to the very acts of the emperors and to those of the councils - then we can perceive how necessary it was that the providence of God should have always put forth its mighty power, in order that the Jews... and the Christian Church (especially during the Middle Ages),, should transmit to us, in all their purity, those Scriptures."

BRIEF REVIEW OF MISTRANSLATIONS OF THE TEXT:

The Living Bible - Paraphrased (One man translation by Nathaniel Taylor as he commuted back and forth to work) - 1971

1. Teaches the doctrine of original sin.

Matt. 18:4 (KJV et al) "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

➤ Living Bible in Psalms 51:5 says, But I was born a sinner. Yes from the moment my mother conceived me" Also in Ephesians 2:3 Paul is quoted as saying, "We started out bad being born with evil natures and were under God's anger just every-one else."

2. The Living Bible, Paraphrased teaches premillennialism.

Isa 2:2-4 "For in those days the world will be ruled from Jerusalem. The Lord will settle international disputes; all nations will convert their weapons of war to implements of peace, Then at last all wars will stop and all military training end."

2 Tim. 4:1-2 Paul is quoted as saying..."who will judge the living and the dead when he appears to set up his kingdom."

3. The Living Bible teaches error concerning WHEN a man is saved.

Romans 4:12 Abraham found favor with God by faith alone before he was circumcised."

Rom. 6:3-4 "Your old sin-loving nature was buried with him by baptism when he died, and when God the Father with glorious power, brought him back to life again, you were given this wonderful new life to enjoy. For you have become a part of him, and so you died with him, so to speak, when he died, and now you share his new life, and shall rise as he did."

1 Peter 3:21 "In baptism we show that we have been saved from death and door by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

John 3:5 "being born of water means physical birth."

4. The Living Bible Perverts The Book Of Genesis.

Genesis 6:4 "In those days and even afterwards when the evil beings from the spirit world were sexually involved with human women, their children became giants of whom so many legends are told."

5. The Living Bible inserts the word Christian liberally throughout

Examples: Galatians 6:1- "Dear brothers, if a Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help him back onto the right path..."

1 John 2:4-5 "Someone may say, 'I am a Christian I am on my way to heaven; I belong to Christ.' But if he doesn't do what Christ tells him to, he is a liar. But those who do what Christ tells them will learn to love God more and more. That is the way you to know whether or not you are a Christian. Anyone who says he is a Christian should live as Christ did."

6. Here Are A Number Of Perversions and Downright Vulgar Language

John 9:34 "You illegitimate bastard, you" they shouted, "Are you trying to teach us?" And they threw him out."

Acts 4:36 Calls Barnabas, "Barney, the preacher"

Hosea 4:11 "Wine, women, and song have robbed my people of their brains."

1 Kings 20:11 "Don't count your chickens before they hatch".

Acts 23:3 "God shall slap you, you whitewashed pigpen."

GOOD NEWS FOR MODERN MAN - TODAY'S (TEV) by Robert G. Bratcher 1966 and 1967
Published by American Bible Society.

1. American Bible Society's Alteration Of Haima - Blood,

The translator, Dr. Robert G. Bratcher, has altered the Greek word Haima from the accurate and correct translation "blood" to some other expression. This has been done a total of 36 times out of a possible 101 times where blood is found in the Greek text. Sixteen of these times it is the blood of Christ which is omitted.

2. Acts 20:7 "On Saturday evening we gathered together for the fellowship meal."

3. John 3:16 "only son of God" in place of "only begotten son of God"

Monogenes - Greek for only begotten.

4. Specific examples of paraphrased, misinterpretations and perversions.

Matt. 5:17 "So not think that I have come to do away with the Law and the prophets. I have not come to do away with them, but give them real meaning."

- Matt. 28:19 "Go, then to peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them - (here he deleted the participle 'baptizing' and by shifting the grammar changes the meaning.)

, Mark 1:4 "Change your ways and be baptized" (He omits repent and puts in a phrase which does not mean it)

Mark 16:9-20 (Suggests that these verses are not really a part of the original)

Acts 2:1 "When the day of Pentecost arrived, all the believers were gathered together in one place." (Makes it appear that the antecedent to the word "they" in Acts 2: refers to the whole 120 instead of the Apostles - the eleven in Acts 1:26.)

Acts 2:38 "Turn away from your sins, and be baptized" Here he substitutes the word "repent" for what takes place after repentance.

1 Cor. 14:2 "The one who speaks with strange sounds does not speak to men but to God... (the Greek text says, "the one speaking in a tongue - meaning language)

Gal. 1:9 "if anyone preaches to you a gospel that is different from the one you accepted, may he be condemned to hell"

Col. 1:25 "And I have been made a servant of the church of God.... (the words church of God are not in the Greek text)

Heb. 6:1 "Let us go forward, then, to mature teaching and leave behind us the beginning of the Christian message..."

1 Thess. 4:4 "Each of you men should know how to take a wife in a holy and honorable way..."

The text says: "That each of you should learn to control his own body...."

Heb. 12:23 "You have come to the joyful gathering of God's oldest sons,

The Greek Text says:"To the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all men...."

Comittee composed in England by Presbyterians, Church of England, Society of Friends, Churches in Wales, the churches in Ireland, the British and Foreign Bible Societies, The National Bible Society of Scotland.

Note:- They admitted that they used an eclectic method, It is therefore an eclectic composition and not a word for word translation, at all.

Matt. 16:18 "You are Peter, the Rock, and on this rock..." (Thus the revisions did for the Pope of Rome what none of their own theologians dared to do)

Luke 1:1- "In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, with a message for a girl betrothed to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David: the girl's name was Mary.
(the Greek text says ton parthenon = virgin.)

John 6:60 "Many of his disciples on hearing it exclaimed, "This is more than we can stomach, Why listen to such talk?"

The text says,"This is a hard saying, who can accept it?"

I Tim. 5:23 "Stop drinking nothing but water; take a little wine for your indigesting".
(The Greek text says stomach)

Acts 20:7 "On Saturday night, in our assembly for the breaking of bread, Paul, who was to leave next day, addressed them...."

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION (NIV)

A completely new translation made directly from the original languages of the Bible. The New York International Bible Society agreed to sponsor it financially.

The committee was composed of scholars from Canada, England, Australia, New Zealand, as well as the United States. The translators sought to avoid the use of Americanisms on the one hand and Anglicisms on the other. Their success in avoiding the former is evident from the fact that few changes were made in the English edition. (British) The translators came from Baptist, Brethren, church of Christ, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Mennonite, Methodist, Nazarene, Presbyterian, Christian Reformed, and others.

The underlying text was an eclectic text. Most of the key passages where textual variants appear have to be examined separately. Most of the harmonizing passages that were added in Matthew and found in the KJV have been omitted (such as those found in Matt. 5:44, 17:21, 18:11; 21:36; Luke 9:54, 55, 56, 23:17; 23:18; 24:6, et al.) Obviously, late readings (found in the KJV) have also been omitted, such as the second half of Matthew 6:13; John 5:3, 4; Acts 8:37; and I John 5:7, 8.

Longer passages, such as Mark 16:9-20 and John 7:53-8:11, are also still placed in the text, according to the verse numeration, in the same print. Lines have been drawn before and after to indicate that early MSS omit these passages.

This is a translation which has taken too much liberty, even with the eclectic text they used. Far from being an English translation which enlightens it merely, it generates more heat.

We cannot recommend it for serious study.