

"3" Keys to Understanding Bible Versions

Bible Versions - Key 1

Know Biblical Source & Accuracy

An error has never been found in the Bible making it the only book of its kind to have ever been written. It is a collection of 66 books, spanning some 1500 years. These books vary in subject matter and the times in which they are written. The Bible has many different writers. Yet, there is one thing constant, they all agree. They agree because these books are in fact "God breathed" or you may say that God directed the writings. Paul tells us that all scripture is given by inspiration of God.

FACTS

- God - the Source of the Bible
- Inspired Writers - men guided by God to write His Word
- Original Manuscripts - written or dictated by inspired men
- Ancient Manuscripts - copied from original manuscripts or copies (in Hebrew & Greek)
- Ancient Versions - translations from original manuscripts to other languages
- Bede, King Alfred and Wycliffe - translations from the Latin alone
- Tyndale, Coverdale and Geneva Bible - translations from Hebrew, Greek, Latin and earlier English versions
- King James Version - translation from Hebrew and Greek, Latin and English and other versions
- English Revised Version, American Standard Version - used the King James Version, ancient manuscripts and all its sources
- Twentieth Century English Versions - used English translations and all available manuscripts

"For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." KJV
Hebrews 4:12

Bible Versions - Key 2

Know the origin of the versions in production:

We know you will agree that your Bible study and lesson preparation should be from the *most accurate* Bible version.

There are a number of versions in publication today. Some of the versions are the New King James, the New International Version, the New American Standard Version, the Revised Standard Version and many more.

Based on much study, we highly recommend the King James Thompson Chain-Reference Bible.

Why the King James?



Origin of the King James

The King James Bible was translated from the original Greek and Hebrew texts by 54 scholars. These scholars did compare the original to the translations of that time (1604-1611). They used the Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, Septuagint, and several Latin versions.

It is important to note that the King James is the work of many scholars working collectively for one purpose, to translate the Greek into an accurate English Language text of the scripture. The King James is a translation and not a version. Most of the Bibles produced today are merely versions, with the exception of the King James Bible, because they are not translated from the original Greek text.

Using the most accurate version is important because it is God's Word and God's Plan. No human is authorized to change what God has said.

Revelation 21:18-19 gives us this warning "...

If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part of the book of life, and out of the holy city and from the things which are written in this book."

This warning from God to John is equally applied to all scripture.

Bible Versions - Key 3

Understand the underlying reasons for the production of other versions



Unfortunately, the Bible, has been changed by some over the years. An excellent example of this is the text of Westcott and Hort. This Greek text is a corruption of the original Greek (Textus Receptus/Greek New Testament still in use today by Orthodox Greeks). According to the Westcott and Hort writers, their text was made up from more reliable manuscripts. However, the majority of the Westcott and Hort text is taken from Vaticanus B (a text kept at the Vatican and taken from Origen's work who is deemed a heretic) of which 90% is word for word.

The King James Bible was translated from the Greek text called the **Stephens Text of 1550** or Authorized Version. This is very important to know. The Authorized Version is the "KEY". With so many versions of the Holy Bible available today, most people, Christians and those seeking to know the Lord, are faced with a decision. These people are told that the newer translations are easier to understand and are based on "older manuscripts". These newer translations include- The American Standard, Revised, New International (NIV), among others. Without any other information, a person would select a newer translation, one that uses modern English. However, a question should come to mind, are these newer translations *really* based on older more reliable manuscripts of the Bible? If we select a translation other than the King James, we are selecting a translation taken from a different Greek New Testament and not the Stephens Text.

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

That is not what the committee did. The men composing the revision committee went against the directive which the Anglican church had given them. Without authorization and in total direct insubordination, rather

than merely improve the English they produced a radically different Greek text upon which the King James was based. Cast aside as been founded, yet these very mss (Greek minuscule -manuscripts in lower case letters) were the basis for the many other English bibles which had preceded the King James (Great Bible, Bishops', Matthew's, Geneva etc). The committee thus produced an entirely different "Bible". This is one of the least known facts and greatest guarded secrets within the confines of Christendom. Few people, laymen or pastors, are aware of these happenings.

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

In order to better understand where the "other" text, used by Westcott and Hort came from we must look back in church history. Origen Adamantius compiled an Old Testament called the Hexapla (c.245 A.D.)It was, in eddict, a parallel Bible which had six columns. The first column was the Hebrew Old Testament. Three other columns portrayed Greek translations by men who were Ebionites. They believed in the ethical teachings of Jesus but did not believe in Paul's doctrines of grace. Indeed, they called Paul an apostate and wholly rejected all his epistles. Origen held to many pagan beliefs such as purgatory, non-baptized infants would go to hell, that the soul sleeps in the grave and does not go to paradise and many other distinctly Catholic beliefs.

In about 288 A.D. Constantine became emperor of Rome and eventually became a Christian. He ordered 50 very expensive bibles to be translated and given to the churches. The person charged with this task was a man by the name of Eusebius an Arian. Arians believed that Jesus was not God come in the flesh - that he was only a created being, and not God. So what did Eusebius use to prepare the 50 bibles? He collected 800 of Origen's letters and used his Hexapla. He also used Origen's edited New Testament.

From these 50 bibles come the Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus Aleph manuscripts. Also Jerome's Latin Vulgate is a version derived from Origen's fifth column and his edited New Testament. What was the Greek

Text used by Westcott and Hort? It was taken directly from Origen as 90% is word for word from Vaticanus B and, of the remaining 10% about 7% is Sinaiticus Aleph. In other words, Westcott and Hort come to the 1881 Revision Committee, having worked in secret for over twenty years on a Greek text which was derived from manuscripts having been produced from Origen's work! Westcott and Hort succeeded in getting the committee to accept almost word for word this Greek text, replacing Erasmus' Greek Text of the Reformation.

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

So, how did the Textus Receptus come into being? At this time I will quote from "**Which Bible**" by David Otis Fuller. First, it should be pointed out that a large number of Greek manuscripts of the New Testament survive today. A recent list gives **US** these figures:

Papyrus manuscripts, 8 majuscules (manuscripts written in capital letters), 267 minuscule (manuscripts written in smaller script) 2,764. Of course, many of these are fragmentary and most of them do not contain the entire New Testament. It is also well known among students of textual criticism that a large majority of this huge mass of manuscripts - between 80 and 90% contain a Greek text which in most respects closely resembles the kind of text which was the basis of our King James Version.

Who were the men who were responsible for the translation of the King James Bible. The most learned men in the land were chosen for this work, and the complete list shows a high proportion of men with a profound knowledge of the languages in which the Bible was written. Of the fifty-four who were chosen, a few died or withdrew before the translation was started and the final list numbered forty-seven men. They were divided into six companies, and a portion was assigned to each group. Everyone in each company translated the whole portion before they met to compare their results and agree upon the final form. They then transmitted their draft to each of the other companies for their comment and consent. A

select committee then went carefully through the whole work again, and at last two of their number were responsible for the final checking.

The Authorized Version was translated in 1611, just before the Puritans departed from England, so that they carried it with them across stormy seas to lay the foundation of one of the greatest governments the world has ever known. The Authorized Version of God's Holy Word had much to do with the laying of the foundation of our great country.