Notes - Necessity of a Faithful Bible Translation

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Introduction:

The Lord Himself predicted false Christs; "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before." Matthew 24. 24-25.

Early church was assailed by heresies concerning doctrine of Christ (e.g Arian - Christ not truly God, Christ just a man).

Attack on Christ coincided with deliberate corruption of the scriptures. Paul wrote "For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ." (2 Corinthians 2. 17)

To hold fast to the purity of the doctrine of Christ, we must hold fast to the uncorrupted word of God.

Beware the perversion of God's word ! Many Christian's are very naive - they forget Satan has a keen interest in the Word.

Opposition of Satan to the word of truth. In olden days the Bible was burnt along with those who believed, read or possessed one. Now Satan's tactics are more subtle - to blur/confuse.

Severity of the Warnings against those who would corrupt God's word

Moses spoke to Israel, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it." (Deuteronomy 4. 2)

Purity of God's word - therefore we must not add to it. "... what is His name, and what is His son's name, if thou canst tell ? Every word of God is pure: He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him. Add not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." (Proverbs 30. 4-6)

"Thy word is very pure: therefore Thy servant loveth it." (Psalm 119. 140) Ministers must uphold and love the pure word above all others.

Why is it loved ? because where there is the pure water of life, that which is dead is healed and revived (Ezekiel 47. 8-9, Revelation 22. 1-2)

"The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." Psalm 19. 8

Severe warnings against any who would add to or take away from scripture. Revelation 22-18-19.

Explain why I have placed copyright on my books. - not so that I can get money, but so that anyone wishing to print or translate must get my permission. I would be very offended if someone took my book, changed the meaning in key areas, claiming that they were bring out my thoughts more clearly. How much more is God angry with those who corrupt His word.

Some say, we must use modern versions especially for children. But do we knowingly give corrupted food or poison to our children ? Children are more susceptible to poison that adults - so why give impure versions of the Bible to them ?

Church is to give glory to God and to be a witness to the Lord Jesus', perfect life, atoning sacrifice and
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resurrection. To knowingly use a corrupted Bible is not consistent with this. We must be faithful witnesses.

Summary of how we Received the Word

As the Lord inspired and gave the word - thus He also providentially preserved it to the church.

- "The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, Thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." (Psalm 12. 6-7)
- "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." (Matthew 24. 35)
- "The word of the Lord endureth for ever" (1 Peter 1. 25)

The first commandments from God to write down His words were to Moses. "Moses wrote all the words of the Lord" (Exodus 24. 4)

The original scroll was most carefully preserved. "Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee." (Deuteronomy 31. 25-26)

Likewise, Joshua and Samuel wrote the words of the Lord and laid them up before the Lord by the sanctuary. (Joshua 24. 26 and 1 Samuel 10. 25). They were later transferred to the Temple. Then rediscovered at the time of Josiah by Hilkiah the high priest; "I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord." (2 Kings 22. 8, 2 Chron 34. 14)

Placing of these writings by side of the ark indicates their particular association with God, their divine authority, their separation from all other books, and the extreme reverence with which they were to be viewed. They were under the wings of the Cherubim, indicating divine safeguarding and preservation.

Copying of the Scriptures

First copy was made of the ten commandments (Deuteronomy 10. 4) - the copy must be "according to the first writing".

Commandment for a copy of the law to be in the hands of every king. Deuteronomy 17. 18.

When Jeremiah's written message to Jehoiakim was destroyed, God commanded that he make another copy, but it must be exact. "Take thee again another roll and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll." (Jeremiah 36. 28)

Copying the scriptures was entrusted to the priests, later this was assumed by the Scribes.

When Jerusalem fell in 586 BC and the city and Temple was destroyed, the originals almost certainly perished with the ark. But faithful copies had been made, which were collected together under the direction of Ezra.

Massoretes - families of Jewish scholars - copied and in the Lord's providential guidance, meticulously copied the scriptures out until the days of printing in 1500's. Massoretes would destroy a manuscript which had even the slightest error.

New Testament manuscripts

New Testament written in Greek - original autographs not preserved, but were extensively copied. Even in apostolic days, Peter was well acquainted with Paul's writings, and speaks of them alongside "the other scriptures" (2 Peter 3. 15-16).

Polycarp (a disciple of John) writes of the Gospels and Epistles and expresses confidence that the Philippians
are "well versed in the Sacred Scriptures."

However, errors appeared in the copying of the Greek. Most were unintentional mistakes; others were deliberate so as to favour one of the many false doctrines and heresies that assailed the early church.

Many heresies in the early church on person of Christ. Also many attacks on the written word - including gross corruption. A noted centre for heresy was Alexandria.

Faithful Christian leaders took great care to ensure purity of manuscripts and lectionaries (these were approved for public use in churches). Of particular note is the church of Antioch (the church of apostle Paul). The text was preserved and continually used in Byzantine Church. Also translated into a number of ancient languages.

Byzantine or Received Text - vast majority of manuscripts (95%) are of this type and they very closely agree. Greek text came to the west following fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453. First published NT greek edition was by Erasmus in 1516, just before Reformation.

Massoretic Hebrew + Received Greek Text basis for all the Bible translations of 16-17th Century. Other variant texts were known about and rejected as tainted by heresy or carelessness (or both).

The manuscripts from Received Text are more recent in origin than other variant manuscripts. This is because they wore out through use. Many of the Alexandrian manuscripts are very ancient - preserved through the desert climate and through disuse. Modern scholars of 19th and 20th century have wrongly concluded that the oldest surviving manuscripts must be the best. Give example of well loved and used Bible that wears out and must be replaced, compared to a book which is known to be in error and is left shut up unused for centuries.

Quotations from early church fathers, ancient translations and other recent manuscript fragment discoveries disprove the claim that the Received Text is of 4th century origin.

History of English Bible

Wycliff's translation into Old English in 14th Century of Jerome's Latin Vulgate - hand written copies. Mightily used by God - Latin version was all that Wycliff had available to him. He was faithful in what was entrusted to him. Last 2 years of his life were devoted to Bible translation. Many were burnt alive for possessing this version.

Tyndale translated New Testament from Greek Received Text into English under constant fear of his life. 1st Edition of NT - 1525 - this was printed. Tyndale worked on translating the whole Bible in Europe - eventually captured and burnt alive in 1536. His work was finished by others.

Subsequent English versions (Bishop's, Geneva) based upon Tyndale's work. Then in 1604 the new King, James I, was requested and gave full support to a new and authoritative English translation, taking account of all the translating work that had preceded. Completed in 1611. Known as "Authorised (King James) Version" (AV). (See example in the Bible of Cyrus authorising the rebuilding of the Temple and Artaxerxes the rebuilding of Jerusalem)

AV came to transcend denominational differences – one Word for the true English-speaking Church.

AV Translation team and their work

47 scholars noted for their godliness, spirituality and remarkable learning. Examples -

Dr Lancelot Andrews - Cambridge lecturer, eminent preacher, Bishop. Privy Counsellor. Spent a great part of each day (5 hours in prayer). Knowledge of Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Arabic and 15 other
modern languages.

Dr Laurence Chaderton - Cambridge - Master of Emmanuel College - Latin, Hebrew, and Greek scholar - proficient in French, Spanish and Italian. Forty ministers of Church of England testified that they owed their conversion to his preaching.

Dr Miles Smith - author of Preface - Oxford University and Bishop. As conversant with Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac and Arabic as his own native English.

Dr John Layfield - Greek lecturer at Cambridge. Skilled in architecture, and advised on passages describing the Tabernacle and Temple.

Formed into 6 committees - such learning and godliness never surpassed in Britain - portion of scripture assigned to each.

Every man in each committee translated the entire portion of scripture before meeting to discuss and agree the translation. This was then sent to the other committees for their comment and agreement. A select committee then went through the whole work again. Finally two translators performed a final check. This took seven years of prayerful and painstaking work.

AV done under authority of the church (not a profit making secular publisher).

Great reverence for God's word, and they strove for accuracy and reverence. Explain that the marginal notes give alternative or more literal translation, when English is not able to fully express the words of the original. Italics - where words are added to make sense in English, but where there is no actually corresponding word in the original.

Written in a unique Biblical style of English. Quite unlike the style in the Translators Preface or the Epistle Dedicatory. Very careful to use "Thou" and "Ye" - singular and plural, just as in the original. No quotation marks - not in the original. They translated faithfully, but did not stray into interpretation, which is the calling of a preacher.

It is wrong to say that AV is written in the style of English spoken in 1611. (see booklet "Old is Better")

Several minor revisions (typos, spelling, punctuation) since 1611 - last one in 1769. AV an incalculable blessing to the English speaking churches.

Challenges to the AV

New infidel learning and theology gained ground in 19th century. Many Theologians were either heretical, Romanist or both! Increasing opposition to the deity of Christ.

Mid 1800's saw increasing apostasy amongst Church of England and in the Universities and theological colleges. New theories put forward that cast doubt upon the authenticity of the Bible. Based on principles of human wisdom

- Unbelief of God's miraculous dealing with mankind
- Unbelief of divine inspiration
- Unbelief that God's word had been faithfully preserved
- Desire to put forward novel theories
- Regard the Bible as any other literary work of human authorship
- Apply human principles to its study.

Many had interest in heretical early church writers, the Occult and/or the Church of Rome
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Prominence given to two very old (4th century) manuscripts of Alexandrian origin - Sinaiticus and Vaticanus. Text varied significantly from the vast majority of manuscripts.

After years of campaigning for a revision to the AV, in 1870 the Church of England formed a Committee of Scholars to work on the Revised Version.

No suggestion for a change came from the soundly taught ordinary Christians. "Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them. The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." (Psalm 119. 129-130)

Revision Committee

The work of the Revision Committee from 1870 to 1881 has deeply influenced almost every modern version since.

Who was on it ?
- Mainly Church of England men
- Committee could involve scholars from other denominations
- Distinguished scholars who were true Christians (but not of the same piety and not with the same reverence for the Word as AV translators)
- Scholars who were openly heretics (e.g. Dr Vance-Smith who was a Unitarian - denied divinity of Christ)
- Scholars who were promoting erroneous and heretic views from within the Church of England

Prominent members were Westcott and Hort - involvement in occult societies and had Romanist sympathies

Westcott believed in prayers for the dead, heaven was a state of mind, believed in purgatory.

Hort wrote of a heretical friend who encouraged him to take a close interest in homosexual Greek writers Plato and Aristotle. "He urged me to give the greatest attention to Plato and Aristotle, and to make them the central points of my reading."

Hort wrote to Westcott - "Have you read Darwin ? How I should like to talk with you about it ! In spite of difficulties, I am inclined to think it unanswerable. In any case it is a treat to read such a book."

Westcott and Hort pushed the theory that:
- original New Testament text survived in almost perfect condition in Sinaiticus and especially Vaticanus.

What began as supposedly a minor revision of the AV was taken over by Westcott and Hort. The Revision Committee produced a completely new text based heavily on Sinaiticus and Vaticanus. This new text has been the basis of most modern versions ever since.

Facts about Vaticanus and Sinaiticus

Vaticanus - held in the Pope's library in Rome. First known of in 1475. Available to AV translators, but rejected as unreliable. Also rejected by the Roman Catholic and reformist scholar Erasmus.
- Omits Genesis 1 to 46, Psalms 106 to 138, some of Paul's Epistles, Hebrews 9. 15 onwards, Revelation.
- In the Gospels it leaves out 237 words, 452 clauses and 748 whole sentences, which later copies agree upon.
Sinaïticus – allegedly discovered in a rubbish bin in 1859 in a monastery on Mount Sinai.

- Adds to the New Testament "Shepherd of Hermas", "Epistle of Barnabas"
- On many occasions 10, 20, 30, 40 words are dropped through carelessness. Many gross copying blunders.
- Most pages have corrections and revisions done by up to 10 different people.

Vaticanus and Sinaïticus disagree with each other over 3000 times in the Gospels alone.

Systematic tendency to remove or weaken references to the deity of Christ.

Vaticanus and Sinaïticus were corrupt manuscripts that were rejected as unfit for church use. Either they lay unused (and so preserved in good condition) for centuries, or (as evidence has been presented over the years) they are forgeries and not genuinely authentic ancient manuscripts.

In contrast Received Text is supported by:

- thousands of manuscripts that agree almost exactly.
- many ancient translations that pre-date 4th century
- recent studies on manuscript fragments and early church writers who quote scripture.

However, corrupted text based on Westcott and Hort's work has been the basis for most modern translations since. Basis for the United Bible Societies (UBS) Greek Text used by most Bible Societies. Taken up wholesale by Ecumenical and liberal theologians who predominated the 20th Century.

Text changes with voting on UBS committee - supposedly they decide what is the Word of God - little short of blasphemous.

In recent decades, big publishing houses driving new versions. Big business with strict copyright rules to control the text of the Bible for commercial profit. Bible publishers owned by godless and profane multinational media empires. Today, there is much money to be made from new Bible versions, especially in the USA. Jesus said when He purged the temple; "Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise." (John 2. 16)

Over the last few years others have attempted a version which will be acceptable to all opinions and religions. Striving for a version with no "discrimination" between male or female, does not condemn sodomy and above all denies that Jesus is God. From this have arisen the most abominable "versions" of the Bible. Yet further openings for the ungodly to revise the Bible to their own liking.

Sadly, people choosing the translation that they like is a big problem in the churches. There is a lack of obedience and reverence to God's word - many want a God of their own choosing.

Modern versions are treated as man's word, not God's. For earthly profit - money, academic advancement. Same approach as for human works of literature.

Warning about the NKJV:

This is illustrated by the "New King James Version" - supposed to use the Received Text and be precise in translation (avoid paraphrase). Not entirely successful and not recommended. However, 9 of the NKJV translators had also worked on the NIV translation which used the erroneous text (originating from Westcott and Hort) and a totally different translation method. Clearly not men of principle who defend the truth ! How can we trust such profane academic studies ?

AV: "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." (Revelation 19. 8)
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NKJV: "..... for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints."

NKJV - the preface of NKJV (stated aims to follow KJV translators, words about pronouns) “Thee, thou, thy and thine were once forms of address to express a special relationship to human as well as divine persons. These pronouns are no longer part of our language.” This statement is plain wrong – see dedication to King James, where he is called “your Majesty”. In Genesis 3.14, Satan is spoken to as “thou” by God. “Thou” and “ye” are single and plural subject; “thee” and “you” are single and plural object, following strictly the Greek and Hebrew original.

Corruption of the pronouns “thou” etc... - 19000 instances in Bible
Example of the importance in John 3.7 + Genesis 18
Footnotes casting doubt on the Received Text
Gross mistranslation and false doctrine:

AV: "For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty" (Zechariah 9.17)
NKJV: " for how great is their goodness, and how great their beauty."

Some facts about NKJV publishers: Publishing very corrupt versions, e.g. NCV; owned by News Corp

Erroneous Translation Methodologies

Apart from changing the text, error is introduced by poor or biased translation. This can further obscure the truth and introduce heresy. An early example is the Revised Standard Version at Isaiah 7.14:
AV - "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."
RSV - "Behold, a young woman shall conceive ..." Denial of virgin birth of Jesus.

Some versions replace "hell" and "blood" with something more palatable to sinful man.

Apart from bias from the translators who do not believe in orthodox doctrine, much corruption is introduced by the modern method of translation - Dynamic Equivalence.

Dynamic Equivalence translation attempts to convey the sense of the original, not necessarily the actual words. The NIV preface states "The first concern of the translators has been the accuracy of the translation and its fidelity to the thought of the biblical writers ... they have striven for more than a word-for-word translation." The translator of the "Living Bible" in an interview introduces his work as "a paraphrase - a thought for thought translation."

Dynamic equivalence compromises the fundamental principle of divine inspiration of the scripture. "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matthew 4.4) - individual words do matter and should be reproduced as closely as language allows (AV translators also used italics and marginal notes to provide further clarification). Interpretation is for preachers, not Bible translators.

Translating the "thoughts" of the writer is to deny God's inspiration of the scriptures. But to attempt to translate God's thoughts is little short of blasphemy. The Lord saith in Isaiah 55.8-9. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."

Another error of modern versions is to assume that simplification of the scriptural language will teach men spiritual truths. However, divine truth is revealed by God the Holy Spirit. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2.14)

Many modern versions use worldly slang language - statement on an edition of "Living Bible" claimed "it
makes the Bible read like today's newspaper." Most newspapers in Britain are full of filth, worldliness and adverts that encourage covetousness - many use the basest of expressions alongside pictures of naked women. Compare this with the reverence with which the Lord Jesus prayed to God the Father in Gethsemane (John 17). The Lord's prayer begins: "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name ..." (Luke 11. 2)

We see all or many of these errors in new versions (e.g. NIV). But "there is no new thing under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 1. 9) Corruption of God's word commenced in the Garden of Eden, when the Devil twisted the word's of God to tempt Eve. "Yea, hath God said..." (Genesis 3. 1) Likewise, the Devil misquoted scripture to the Lord Jesus during His temptation. (Luke 4. 9-11 and Psalm 91. 11-12) – explained in detail in TBS article.

Recent decades - an ever increasing number of different Bible revisions all vying to be regarded as God's word. But it is stated by the apostle Paul, "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." (1 Corinthians 14. 33)

Examples of the Outcome - comparison of The Word of God with corrupt versions

Some examples are given here to compare the NIV with the AV. I used NIV as a young man and was converted through reading it. The quality of text varies in the NIV. But when I was brought to a church that used the AV and I prayerfully compared NIV and AV, I had to turn from the NIV.

The ultimate test of a Bible translation - is Christ honoured and glorified ?

Deity of Christ

AV: "God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3. 16)
NIV: "He appeared in a body."

Trinity

AV: "This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." (1 John 5. 6-7)
Modern versions: underlined text is absent. Reasons for omission are not accurately stated. Whilst not in most Greek manuscripts, it is in very ancient Latin sources. Without this Greek text there is a grammatical error. The godly scholars of 16th and 17th century were well aware of the arguments and all upheld the full trinitarian text as in the AV.

Glory and sovereignty rest with God or man ?

AV: "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord ... Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established." (Proverbs 16. 1 and 3)
NIV: "To man belong the plans of the heart, but from the Lord comes the reply of the tongue ... Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed."

AV: "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." (Isaiah 26. 12)
NIV: "Lord, you establish peace for us; all that we have accomplished you have done for us."

NIV gives the pre-eminence to man, not to God.

Salvation of God or man ? The Rock Christ Jesus - the robe of righteousness wrought out for His saints.

AV: "He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the
flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was built upon a rock." (Luke 6. 48)
NIV: "He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When the flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built."

**Profane/inappropriate Words**

AV: "Hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure." (Isaiah 5. 14)
"Living Bible": "Hell is licking its chops in anticipation of this delicious morsel."

AV: “but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints" (Hosea 11. 12)
NIV: (turns the truth on its head in this and many other passages) “Judah is unruly against God, even against the faithful Holy One.”

AV: "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity." (Ecclesiastes 1. 2)
NIV: "Meaningless! Meaningless! says the Teacher. Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless."
(Meaningless = confusion = Babel !)

**Conclusion**

What is the result of the introduction of modern versions collectively?
- Confusion in many churches and individual believers as to what is the word of God and the truth. The meaning of word "Babylon or Babel" is confusion.
- The distinctiveness, power and authority of God's word is not there.
- Use of many versions - Christians can not commit passages of scripture to memory.
- Vital doctrinal distinctions blurred.
- Many Christians wielding a blunted two-edged sword.

Recommend from the heart the Authorised (King James) Version. The Old is Better. Basis for AV is an inerrant and an infallible Bible - preserved providentially. Not hidden and rediscovered by apostate scholars. Sound underlying text. Godliness of scholars. Accuracy of translation. Blessing and spiritual savour of the AV.

The Psalmist speaks of the preciousness of the scriptures; "Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it" (Psalm 119. 140). The Authorised Version (AV) of the Bible is a precious gift to the English speaking peoples. The godly translators worked prayerfully for many years to translate the Bible. They strove to retain the purity of the original Greek and Hebrew. Their translation has been blessed by God to countless Christians since it was first published in 1611.

May we each follow the Lord's exhortation in Jeremiah. "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." (Jeremiah 6. 16)

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." (Ephesians 6. 12-13)

Ministry will never exalt Christ as it should do, if an erroneous version of the Bible is used.