
What's Wrong with the New King James Version

1. INTRODUCTION. The New King James Bible is put out by the Thomas Nelson Co. of Nashville, Tenn. The fact that these people are not really interested in the truth, but in making money, is clearly seen by the fact that they also put out the Amplified Version, the New American Standard Version, King James Version, and I don't know how many others. Anyone interested in truth of God could not sell all these versions which are quite different one from the other. This version is both dangerous and deceptive because of its name. It has the name of the true Word of God with the word "new" attached to it. Many people assume it is basically a King James Bible with only minor changes. As with any other version, the names on the translation committee will tell you a great deal about it. While there are some professed fundamentalists on the committee, many are about as far removed from real Bible believers as you could be. There were a number of men representing different Baptist groups. There was at least one Episcopalian, a Lutheran, and more than one Pentecostal. The 65 member over-view committee included such names as Lloyd Ogilvie, pastor of the First Presbyterian church of Hollywood; Dr. Jerry Falwell; Dr. Harold Lindsell, former editor of Christianity Today (a man who promoted almost every modern version while in that position); Dr. George Sweeting, former president of Moody Bible Institute; Truman Dollar and A. V. Henderson of the Bible Baptist Fellowship; and the new-evangelical founder Harold Ockenga, formerly of Gordon College and Gordon-Conwell Seminary. It is hard to find a true Bible scholar and even harder to find a real fundamentalist among them. As would be expected from such a committee, the product is along the lines of all of the other modern versions.

2. THE PREFACE OF THE NKJV TELLS A GREAT DEAL. In the first place, this Bible is copyrighted, which means you cannot quote from it or use it in a written form without their permission. God would never copyright His Word. In the preface there is a statement that all of the scholars signed a document that they believe in the "plenary and verbal inspiration of the original autographs of the Bible." Of course, there are no original copies of the Bible and in reality, these people do not believe that there is an inspired Word of God on the face of the earth today. In describing their sources of information to do the translation work, one of the references was the Latin Vulgate. This version is still the official version of the Roman Catholic Church and all modern versions really follow it. And then there is this lie: "Bible readers may be assured that the most important differences in the English New Testament of today are due, not to manuscript diversion, but to the way in which the translators view the task of translation." In reality, the great difference between the King James Version and all modern versions is that the KJV comes from the manuscripts commonly referred to as the Textus Receptus whereas, all

modern versions rely on two corrupt manuscripts, the Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, both of which were found in Roman Catholic institutions. One of the impressions that the authors give is that by-and-large, this is a King James Version with some archaic words updated. One issue of the Trinitarian Bible Society paper says that about 1,500 word changes are noted in the first eleven chapters of Matthew, which would suggest a total of about 30-35,000 in the whole New testament or, on average, one word in every five or six.

3. KEY TEXTS FOLLOW OTHER MODERN VERSIONS. One does not have to read the entire Bible to realize that it is not true to God's Word. One of the first passages I look at in any version is Daniel 3:25. In the King James Version, concerning the fourth man in the fiery furnace with the three Hebrew children, it says, "the fourth is like the Son of God." The NASV and the NIV change that to "like a son of the gods." The NKJV carries the same translation as the King James Version, but there is a footnote which says, "or like a son of the gods," so that you know the thinking is really the same. In Matthew 20:20 in the KJV it says, "Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him..." In the NKJV it says, "Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from him." We have said many times over that every modern version waters down the deity of Christ and this one is no different. Another example of modern thinking behind this version is that the word "hell" is changed to "hades". Everyone knows what hell is, but no one understands hades for it is a Greek word and not a translation.

4. FOOTNOTES CAST DOUBT ON MANY PASSAGES. It is true that the New King James Version, in the text itself, in many places follows closely along with the King James Version. However, in such important passages as Mark 16:9-20, John 7:53-8:11, Acts 8:37, and elsewhere, a footnote will give you the very same translation or information that you will find in most modern translations, especially the NIV and the NASV. The reason for this is that most, if not all, of the translators follow the same thinking that is behind the NIV and NASV; that is, that the so-called Alexandrian manuscripts are the best. So, the translators, in the text, have followed the King James, simply because this professes to be a King James Bible, only a new one. But in order to counteract that, they put the same old mistranslations in the margin or the footnotes that everybody else does. No other modern version has so completely eliminated the words thee, thine, thou, ye, etc. as the NKJV. Now we are not arguing for merely maintaining a quaint old way of saying things. The translators of the KJV used these words to distinguish between second person pronouns, whether they were singular or plural. For example, "you" in modern English is both singular and plural. The Greek language clearly differentiates these and in order to show

What's Wrong with the New King James Version

- 2 -

what the true translation should be, the KJV translators used word that begin with “T” for the singular and “Y” for the plural.

5. THE NKJV TEACHES ERROR. I know that this is a strong statement but it can be very easily proven. I have no doubt that God would never put out a Bible that had error in it. Turn in your Bible to Hebrews 3:16. The KJV clearly says that not all who came out of Egypt with Moses provoked God. But here is what the NKJV says, “For who having heard rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt led by Moses?” That modern version says exactly the opposite of the Word of God. In Matthew 7:14 the KJV says, “narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life.” But the NKJV says, “difficult is the way which leads to life.” It is not difficult to get saved, but this modern version tells you it is. In Hebrews 10:14, the true Word of god speaks of those who “are sanctified.” But this modern version speaks of those who “are being sanctified.” That passage is very clear, for it is speaking of our position before God, which is already a settled, finished matter. But not so, according to the NKJV. These people have taken other great liberties with the Word of God. In Matthew 4:24, the Word of God speaks about one who was “a lunatic.” This modern version changes it to “epileptic.” I think it is very dangerous to make a diagnosis relative to something in the Word of God 2,000 years after the fact. In the one place, the problem is mental, but they have made it one that is merely physical. In the New Testament, the NKJV changes the masculine word “man” to a neuter word over 300 times. Instead of man, they translate one, anyone, everyone, someone, etc. Maybe the modernists who were updating the Revised Standard Version were not the first ones to try and put out a sexless Bible. Such work is certainly not good scholarship, to say the least.

6. FINALLY AND IN CONCLUSION. Most of these Bible perverters of modern times want the average person to think that if you do not know Greek, you can't really figure it all out, you should just take their word for it. This is the position of Dr. Stewart Custer of Bob Jones University. He has said that we should all let the Bible version issue and translation work up to the scholars. We ought to just take their word for it. Well very frankly, I have no time for the scholars and I certainly am not going to put my trust in them, for they have done everything to water down the Word of God and the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. While there are many things even the average person may know today if he would take the time to read, there is only one thing at issue here – How many Bibles did God give? Like the blind man in John 9 who received his sight, I say “One thing I know...” I know God only gave one Bible, that is plain common sense that anybody can understand. The only other issue is – Do

we have a true copy today? I doubt if you can find anyone who has worked on any modern version, along with the thousands of professed fundamentalists who use them, who believes that you can actually hold the Word of God in your hand today. If only the originals can be inspired, we have no real Word of God in our day. If we do have the true Word of God today, which one is it? As we have shown time and time again, the differences between the KJV and all modern versions are tremendous. While many people seem to want it both ways, or all ways, it simply cannot be done. If there is a truth of God in a book today, you must select one version. Anyone who is willing to spend an hour or two looking into the facts can easily see the King James Version is God's inspired, infallible, inerrant, preserved Word. We urge you to read it, believe it, and order your life according to it. God bless you!

THE CRUX OF THE MATTER. I have given a few of the problems with the New King James Version. There are thousands of other changes, some of them relatively unimportant, some serious. However, the fundamental problem behind it is that the same modernistic philosophy which is behind all modern versions is prevalent in the NKJV. While the NKJV basically follows the King James text, all of the changes and the many footnotes follow the thinking of Wescott and Hort. The changes or suggested readings are taken from the Nestle's text, which is just like the Wescott and Hort and comes from the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus – the two corrupt Alexandrian manuscripts. Any comparison with the NASV and the NIV will reveal that this is true. There is little wonder about this since many who served on the NKJV committee have long used or promoted one or both of those other modern versions. The Bible Version issue is really a simple one to resolve if you want to know the truth. How many Bibles did God give? Obviously, only one! All right, which one is it? All versions differ from each other, therefore, all cannot be right. Only one can be a copy of God's Word. Furthermore, God did promise to preserve His Word forever (Psalm 12:6-7, Isaiah 40:8, Luke 21:33, etc.). All modern versions come from manuscripts that were lost to mankind for 1500 years. Only the KJV in the English language came from a text preserved until the present day. Did God keep His Word? If He did, the only possible conclusion is it must be the King James Version. It is just human nature to long for something new. Unfortunately, even many Christians think new must be better. Of course, the NKJV is very deceptive because it does carry the name of the true Word of God. There is an old adage which says if it is true, it is not new, and if it is new, it is not true. The New King James Bible is not the pure Word of God. There is only one – the KING JAMES VERSION.

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CORNERSTONE BAPTIST CHURCH

P.O. Box 438, Belmont, MA 02478

Rolland C. Starr, Pastor