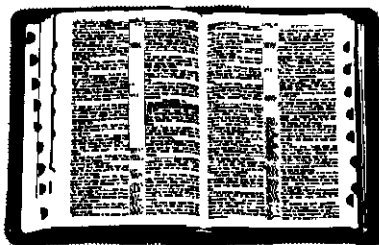


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" — John 5:39.



"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" — Acts 17:11.

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

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REVIEW OF

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION

THINK ON
THESE THINGS

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The original words used by the Holy Spirit in revealing the word of God to mankind were spoken in ancient or "Biblical" Hebrew. The universal language of man was confounded and various tongues and dialects came into being from the time of the tower of Babel, 1775 years after creation (Genesis 11:6-9). The descendants of Shem developed the Semitic language from which came the language known as "Hebrew," and it was in this language that the first revelation from God was made.

When the sons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob received that law at Sinai, it was revealed in the Hebrew language. Afterward the laws and statutes were also received in the Hebrew tongue.

After the reign of Saul, David and Solomon, the nation of Israel was divided into ten tribes to the north, under the rule of Jeroboam, and the tribes of Judah and Benjamin known as "Judah" under the rule of Rehoboam. Nineteen kings ruled for 254 years over Israel, which ended in Assyrian captivity. During this captivity the nation of Israel lost its identity as a separate people. Their language took the characteristics of the Assyrians, and later developed a mixed dialect spoken in Samaria during the time of Christ.

Nineteen kings ruled Judah in Jerusalem from Rehoboam to Zedekiah for a period of 390 years. This period ended in Babylonian captivity (606 B. C. to 536 B.C.), a period of seventy years. Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah returned with a decree from Cyrus to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and the temple worship. They returned to Jerusalem with a mixture of dialects of the Chaldeans, but the Hebrew was used in the worship.

About three centuries before Christ, Alexander the Great had conquered the known world. The Greek influence, especially the Greek language, had permeated most of the world around Palestine. Nearly two centuries before Christ, the Roman Empire began its rise to power, and the Latin language was growing because of the influence of Rome, but the Greek language was still universally spoken when Christ was born. This explains why Pilate had the sign put above the cross of Christ in three languages: **Hebrew, Greek and Latin** (John 19:20).

The Greek language of Christ's day is no longer a living language. By that I mean it does not change; it is not used by any people today as a common language. In the good providence of God His eternal word is locked into a language that will not be modified in any way by any people as time goes by. We may glean the kernels of truth from the words of a "dead" language frozen in time for all eternity.

The Basis Of A Translation

The earliest translation of any part of the Bible was the Old Testament Hebrew, from 284 B. C. to 132 B. C. when it was translated into the Greek from Hebrew. Seventy of the best Hebrew scholars were commissioned to make a translation of the Hebrew scriptures into the Greek language. This was known as the Septuagint, a Latin term for "seventy." It was also known as the Alexandrian Version because it was made near Alexandria.

Some standard text of the original language of the Bible had to be established as a basis to aid in making translations into other languages. This standard text was the product of the science we call **TEXTUAL CRITICISM**. By accumulating all the evidence from the ancient manuscripts, previous translations from the original tongue, and from quotations of early Christian writers, an accurate and complete text of the Bible can be obtained.

The formation of a standard Greek text of the New Testament began early in the 16th century. The first began in Complutum, Spain in 1514, but was not published until 1522. Several followed as new manuscripts were discovered.

B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, two professors at Cambridge University, worked 28 years on their work for a Greek text of the New Testament, and completed it May 17, 1881. Their work is one of the most accurate and accepted standard Greek texts known. Not one acceptable Greek text published since Westcott and Hort Text has materially differed from it.

Why Do We Need A Translation?

Most people know only their native tongue, and without a translation of the Greek and Hebrew into that tongue, they would not be able to read the word of God. Very few today among the common people can speak the language which the apostles and Christ spoke.

Literally the word **translation** is from two words: trans which means "across," and fere which means "to bear; carry." The word **translation** means "to carry across." In reference to the scriptures it means to take the meaning of each word in the original language and carry it across into another language **EXACTLY!**

Words are means of conveying thoughts from one mind to another. In the case of inspired writings it is the mind of God being conveyed to man. Each word spoken by the Holy Spirit is given for a purpose. That exact word must be carried across in another language or we do not have the word of God, but the word of men.

Some speak of "revision" of a certain translation. Just what is the difference between a "translation" and a "revision"? A translation is that which carries across from the original language of the Holy Spirit into another by a "word-by-word" transfer of substance. A "revision" differs in that it is a **SECOND** edition after the same pattern, but containing such changes as are necessary to correct the first. A revision is the same tongue as the translation which it revises.

That is **NOT** a revision which intends to update, change doctrine, delete material, add new substance arbitrarily, all in the interest of **CHANGES** for whatever purpose. This is equal to a **PARAPHRASE**.

Some Guidelines For A Translation

It is important to know how translations are made in order to determine whether they are accurate and reliable or not.

Some basic rules must be followed to provide an accurate translation from one language to another. There are three main rules:

1. Words by any writer have but one meaning in each

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text at the time they were written. We are not interested in what the words may mean **NOW**. When an inspired man used a single word in a given text, he had one meaning and only one. The job of the translator is to know exactly what the word meant at that time in that text.

2. Languages do not have the same form of expressions. The order of subject, predicate, and other parts of a sentence may have to be rearranged in order to make sense in the tongue into which the scriptures are being translated. Translators must bring across the word-for-word meaning while retaining the English form of sentence structure.

3. The tense of a verb, the case and person of a noun in the original must be carried over into the tongue into which the translation is being made. No changes in the person, case or tense of the word, because some of the arguments made by Christ and the apostles depended upon number, case or tense.

When should a translation be made? Many translations have been made that served no purpose at all but to enhance the bank account of the translator or stuff his ego. A translation should be made only:

1. When there is no complete translation of the word of God in that language. Such was the case when men came to America and found the Indians without the Bible in their language. They needed a translation.

2. When a translation is outdated because of the change in that language, and the people do not understand the translation they have. A living language changes in that new words are added, and other words are losing their meaning. After a few generations a living language may change so much that the old translation does not express the original in the common tongue of that day. They need a new translation or a "revision" of their old translation.

3. When a translation in some tongue is not an accurate one. It has happened that some theological system has kept a true translation from coming to a people for generations, and in such cases those people need a translation.

Who should make a translation?

Some translations have been made by individuals upon their own authority. Some have been made by the decrees of kings and emperors. Some have been made by ecclesiastical organizations. Some have been improvements over former ones, and some have been far inferior.

No translation should be made from a translation. That was the mistake of many translations before the King James Version. The Latin Vulgate served as a basis for most of those translations, and it was a translation itself. All translations should be made from the original language of the inspired men.

Why do we have a number of translations in the English language? It is confusing to many people, and some reasonable explanation must be made. At least four explanations may be given:

1. A living language undergoes continual change from generation to generation. Certain English words in my lifetime have completely lost their meaning, and others have come into existence because of inventions and new ideas. A hundred years ago the English language did not have the words to express many of the medical terms used today, the electronic devices and their functions, forms of transportation that we have and many games and forms of recreation. But the fact that a new translation is made will not automatically eliminate the old one from use. Consequently, we would have two translations in use at the same time.

2. Some words have no meaning in current usage of English. Several words in the King James Version are derived from the Latin which were used in the Latin versions. The word **Calvary** is from the Latin "Calvaria." The Greek is "the place called the skull" (Luke 23:33). Many such corrections need to be made.

3. Translations made for commercial value. Unfortunately many translations are made for capital gain. The variations and changes are unnecessary and often erroneous. The average reader has no knowledge of Greek,

or at the most, very little. These changes for commercial purposes are confusing to him. Such translations are usually copyrighted to keep others from using their terminology. Most modern versions are of this type.

4. Translations for the purpose of supporting theological and doctrinal views. Some denominations have gone to considerable trouble and expense because it seems the only way to secure their cause. These will all perish as impure and faulty attempts at translating the word of God.

The Bible is a "best seller" every year, and every new translation that can hold the market for a few years is a sure winner financially for some publisher. These are hard, cold facts with which we must reckon as we consider the examination of any translation.

BOOKS ON INSPIRATION

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Editorial

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THE NEED FOR RELIABLE TRANSLATIONS

The Bible claims to be the revelation of God's mind for the guidance of man. The Old Testament writers repeatedly stated that the "word of the Lord" came unto them. We read of "the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord" (Jer. 7:1). In the book of Exodus alone, the claim is made 161 times that "God spake these words." The whole nation of Israel was witness to the fact that God spoke to Moses in preparation for the giving of the law. That account plus what God gave to Moses on the mount was written in a book and read periodically to the entire nation. See Exo. 24: 4, 7; Deut. 31:9-12 and Deut. 17:18-20.

Not only did the prophets claim inspiration from the Lord, they also recognized the works of other prophets as inspired. Daniel consulted Jeremiah's prophecy about the duration of the captivity (Dan. 9:2). Zechariah considered what "former prophets" had written (Zech. 7:12). New Testament writers also affirmed the divine origin of the Old Testament. Peter said "holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:19-21). Peter said "the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David" spake concerning Judas (Acts 1:16).

Paul spoke of the Old Testament which Timothy had known from a child, plus the sacred writings of his day as "inspired of God" and "profitable" to completely furnish the man of God to every good work (2 Tim. 3:14-17). Peter said that what "brother Paul" wrote constituted "scripture" and warned that the unstable "wrest" what he said "as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (2 Pet. 3:16). Paul argued that the Holy Spirit chose the words he used. "Which things we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor. 2:13).

The Original Languages

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew and the New Testament in Koine Greek. There are a few sections in the Old Testament in Aramaic and some words in the New Testament are preserved in that language. The Old Testament was translated into Greek about 200 B. C. in what was called The Septuagint. This was the text used by Jesus and his apostles thus placing their approval upon it.

But readers of this paper, with very few exceptions, are not conversant with Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek. We are dependent on reliable translations into English for

our understanding of what God said.

Abundant Textual Evidence

We do not have the original documents. It is our contention that these original documents were inspired of God and that no error was contained in them. But if we do not have the original documents now, how can we know that we really have the text of what God said? It is important to understand that we have a great abundance of textual sources from which to establish this.

There are now over 5,000 Greek manuscripts ranging from small fragments to whole books, to the whole Bible. In 1902 the German scholar Von Soden catalogued 2,328 New Testament manuscripts, 40 of which contained in whole or in part all books of the New Testament. 1,716 contained certain portions of the gospels, 581 were of Acts, 628 of Paul's epistles and 219 of the book of Revelation. The earlier of them were uncials (written in capital letters without punctuation) and 100 of them were before the 4th century. The three most important uncial manuscripts are the Vaticanus and Sinaitic from the 4th century A. D. and the Alexandrian from the 5th century. The latter is the principle text on which the King James Version rested. I have personally seen all three of these manuscripts. The Vaticanus is in the Vatican Library in Rome and the Sinaitic and Alexandrian are both in the British Museum in London. Since the days of Von Soden other significant manuscripts have been found, all confirming the text on which most English versions rest.

In addition to the vast array of manuscripts, scholars also have at their disposal numerous versions (translations of the New Testament into other languages). The Syriac, for instance, is dated about 400 but is a copy of a translation made into Syriac about 150, within 50 years of the apostolic age. Tatian's Diatessaron dates to 170 and the Old Syriac Version dates from the 2nd century. We also have Coptic (Egyptian) versions which go back to about 200 A. D. There are also Latin versions, chief of which was Jerome's Vulgate in the latter part of the 4th century. By translating from these languages back into Koine Greek, the scholars can determine what was the text underlying these versions.

In addition to manuscripts and versions, we have the added evidence of the Patristic writings. These were the works of influential Christians in the first 300 years after Christ. Some of their writings were in Greek and some in Latin and consisted of letters written to churches or individuals dealing with spiritual issues of the times. As they wrote in defense of the faith and against heresies of one kind or another, they quoted freely from the New Testament to support their affirmations and contentions. With the exception of a very few verses, all of the New Testament is quoted by these men as scripture. Their works are now contained in 10 large volumes called THE ANTE-NICENE FATHERS. Several years ago I personally checked these works for quotations from the books of Philippians, Colossians, Titus and Philemon. Others in the same class I was taking were assigned the rest of the New Testament. Between all of us working on the project, we were able to find all of the New Testament quoted or cited with the

exception of a very few verses. What does that prove? It proves that they recognized the same New Testament scriptures which we have now and that they considered them authoritative in settling religious issues.

History of English Translations

The first English translation was by John Wyclif in 1382. He worked from the Latin Vulgate rather than the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts. Since this was before the invention of printing, copies were expensive and difficult to obtain, although it still reached the people of England and was opposed by the Catholic Church. The next important translation in English was in 1526 by William Tyndale. It was the first English translation to come directly from the Hebrew and Greek texts and also the first to be printed.

The most popular English translation was the King James Version of 1611, so named because it was commissioned by King James. Forty-eight Greek and Hebrew scholars were chosen and divided into six working groups. Each group was assigned selected books to translate and the work of each company was sent to and reviewed by the others. For over 350 years it has been the household Bible for the English speaking world. It is the author's opinion that the English language reached its zenith in fulness of expression, dignity and grace in the time of Shakespeare and has decayed since that time. In spite of all the criticism which some have heaped upon the King James Version, the expanding array of textual evidences make it look better all the time. It is a fact that some words and phrases are archaic now. This author still prefers it, has always preached from it and thinks the explanation of archaisms a minor problem in teaching people the word of God. The New King James Version has preserved the form and dignity of the earlier work while eliminating the obsolete language.

The American Standard Version of 1901 (and its English counterpart of 1888) was done by 101 of the finest scholars of the time, both British and American. Its language is still not out of date though it is getting difficult to find this translation. Those who have published modern versions have justified their work by insisting that both the King James and the American Standard Versions are too mechanically exact. While intended as a slur, such a charge in reality stands as a compliment to these versions. We need to know exactly what God said. In efforts to make the text flow more smoothly and to produce better "literature", some of the newer versions have omitted whole phrases which appeared in the text in the original and have often become commentators on the text instead of translators. What the text means is a matter of commentary. That is not the proper business of translators. They must give us in our language what the text says.

The New American Standard Version leaves much to be desired. While it made a serious effort to give an exact translation on verb tenses, it has been careless in many instances and those who insist on using it need to exercise caution.

Caution Needed

The market has been flooded in recent years with new versions and paraphrases. We have had the Revised Standard Version, the New English Bible, Good News For Modern Man, The Living Bible Paraphrase, the New International Version, the Reader's Digest Condensed Bible and a host of others. While there may be some value in comparing readings in these, it is dangerous to limit your Bible study to one of the newer efforts which have not followed the safer guidelines of the King James and American Standard Versions. Both of those were serious efforts to put into English just exactly what the equivalent words said in Hebrew and Greek. When it was necessary to supply a word, or several words to complete a sentence, these translators indicated such by the use of italics. Modern speech efforts have taken great liberties with the text without any indication that they have done so. The danger of this is that we are going to have a generation of Biblical illiterates who do not know the word of God at all.

In my travels over the country in the last few years, I have seen many come to Bible class and other services with all kinds of excuses for translations. I have heard some of these used for readings in the worship assembly and at the Lord's Table that were so far-fetched it was difficult to tell what passage they were actually reading. Some preachers, elders and Bible class teachers who have not done their homework, have, with all good intentions, encouraged Christians to purchase and use versions which are not reliable. We need to have the good judgment to know the difference between what is a good translation and what is simply a successful, money-making scheme to sell books!

This issue of SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES is designed to alert readers especially concerning the New International Version which is being used more and more these days and increasingly by Christians. We believe Dorris V. Rader of Tullahoma, Tennessee and his son, Donnie V. Rader of Louisville, Kentucky have done their work well and we are grateful to them. Dorris Radar has preached the gospel for at least 35 years. His work has always been true to the book and his manner of life beyond reproach. He is a careful student. Donnie Rader is a young man of great ability and sterling character who works now with the Manslick Road church in Louisville. If you appreciate their work, or even if you disagree with what they said, they would be pleased to hear from you.

* * * * *

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**THE NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION
(OR PSEUDO-VERSION)**



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Solomon said, "of making many books there is no end" (Ecc. 12:12). This was not said as a flat condemnation of making many books. New translations are appearing so rapidly that we may also observe that "of making new translations there is no end." They have been coming off the press at an average of one new version, or revision per year since 1881 (**The New Testament Student and Bible Translation**, p. 127). Neither is this said as a flat condemnation of new translations. However, even a novice must know that all the new translations cannot be the true word of God since conflicting doctrines can be "proven" depending on the particular translation one chooses for his Bible.

Imagine the confusion in a Bible class if you had about six or eight different modern versions. Suppose the teacher assigns each student to read and make a short talk on some favorite passage. One student, using the Living Bible Paraphrased, selects 2 Tim. 4:1-2 which teaches that when Christ comes it will be "to set up His kingdom." He elaborates on the establishment of the kingdom at the second coming of Christ. He clinches it from the same "Bible" by reading 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 will end." He had read it all from his "Bible." Then another student, using the Amplified Bible walks to the podium and takes his text from Eph. 5:19. His text speaks of "offering praise with voices [and instruments]." From his Bible he urges that we all fully praise our God, not just with voice but with instruments as well. When the third speaker walks to the stand he is carrying Today's English Version as his Bible. He reads from Acts 2:1-4 how that it was "all believers" who received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. He shows how all believers spoke in other languages as the Spirit enabled them. Now let us just suppose that the final speaker brings his Cotton Patch Version and reads of Paul's defence before the council in Acts 23. In his "Bible" he reads that Paul seeing that part of them were Unitarians and part were Baptists took sides with "the Baptists" and confessed that he was himself a "Baptist, the son of a Baptist." He urges that we also be imitators

of Paul who was himself a Baptist. Surely, things would be quite interesting in class that day. We'd like to see some of the defenders of these modern versions unravel the ball of yarn that day!

Has it reached the point that one can have the translation of his choice just like many believe that one can have the church of his choice? One who believes in the doctrine of grace only would find comfort in the New English Bible (Rom. 3:24). If one believes the doctrine of faith only, he would delight in Today's English Version (Good News For Modern Man) (Rom. 1:17; 3:27-28) or the Living Bible Paraphrased (Rom. 4:12). If one was in sympathy with the doctrine of Premillennialism, he would like the Living Bible Paraphrased (2 Tim 4:1). If one had rather observe the Lord's supper on Saturday than Sunday, the Good News Bible (Acts 2:0:7) or the New English Bible (Acts 20:7) would certainly give some comfort. If you like the use of instrumental music in worship, the Amplified Bible (Eph. 5:19) would "justify" it. If one liked the doctrines of John Calvin, he would certainly rejoice in the Living Bible Paraphrased (Psa. 51:5; Eph. 2:3,8; Rom. 8:3) or the Amplified Bible (Eph. 2:3). If you want to believe that Peter is the "rock" of Matt. 16:18, then you will like the New English Bible and the New Testament in Modern English (Phillips). If one would like to hold to the old law as being effective today, he would like the New English Bible which says that Jesus didn't come to abolish the law (Matt. 5:17). Our Pentecostal friends will no doubt be pleased with the Good News Bible as it would indicate that Holy Spirit Baptism is for all believers (Acts 2:1). If you wanted to doubt the fact that Jesus is Deity, then a number of translations could be found to support that thought. For example, The New World Translation (John 1:1) and the Revised Standard Version (John 3:16). It has even got to the point that if one likes cursing and gutter language you can have a Bible that uses such terms. One might be shocked to read the Good News For Modern Man (Acts 8:20) or the Living Bible Paraphrased (1 Sam. 20:30; Gen. 19:5; 2 Sam. 11:4; John 9:34).

The real problems in this area are not something which we have just imagined. We have discussed this with knowledgeable men among both "conservative"

and "liberal" brethren. Many of these pseudo-versions are a direct challenge to fundamental truths which have been held dear throughout the entire history of the Lord's church. We are witnessing a new and bold thrust at undermining the faith with denominational dogmas, as the latter gradually make their way within the lids of the Bible by way of paraphrases, deletions, insertions, mistranslations, footnotes and commentaries within the text. Denominational creeds are subtle and dangerous even when they exist under their own banner. But they are infinitely more insidious when they are slipped in under the pretext of "translations" and palmed off as being actually the word of God. The devil, you remember, operates as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14).

Aid To The Atheist

Lest some think, after reading this article, that we have overstated the case and cried "wolf" where no wolf exists, let us cite you what the American Association for Advancement of Atheism had to say in one of their annual meetings about matters of this kind. "They are saving the ship of Christianity by throwing the cargo overboard . . . the virgin birth, atonement, and the resurrection. How long will men sail the sea in an empty ship? They will go ashore and enjoy life with the Atheists. We welcome the aid of the modernists and pledge them our fullest cooperation in ridding the world of any serious acceptance of Christian theology." (As quoted by A. G. Hobbs, *Contending for the Faith*, April 1983, p. 7).

What Are We Saying?

Before someone misunderstands, let us state in simple terms what we are saying. But first it may help to state what we are not saying. We are not saying that the KJV is the only acceptable translation. We are not saying that the KJV, ASV or the NKJV are flawless. We are not saying that there is any inspired translation. We are not saying that it is wrong for the Bible to be translated into modern speech. We are not saying that there is no need for revision and new translations. Neither are we saying that it is wrong to use modern translations for comparative study.

However we are saying that the New International Version (NIV) and many other modern translations are perversions (pseudo-versions) rather than versions. We are saying that the NIV and many others are mistranslations. They are not the word of God. Hence the NIV and many others should not be used as one's main study Bible.

Principles For Choosing A Translation

One problem that we find is that many people choose a translation on the wrong basis. The problem is that they don't know how to go about determining which translations are good and which are not. Many people pull a new translation off the shelf and throw it open at any verse and read a few lines to see if it is very readable and understandable. If it is much easier to understand than the KJV or the ASV they buy it and use it. However this assumes that most translations are good and accurate and thus the one easiest understood is the

best. While we need to be concerned about simple and understandable English, we must not overlook the need for an accurate translation. What good would a translation do us if it is clear and understandable, but not accurate? What do we want with a translation that teaches error in simple terms? To illustrate the point, would you rather someone tell you a lie (in simple and understandable terms) or tell you the truth (in understandable yet not so simple terms)?

Obviously there is more to determining which translations are good and bad than just checking to see if they are clear and understandable. Let us consider some important principles that we should use in examining a translation. (1) Realize that no translation is inspired. (2) Is this the work of one man or a group of men? (3) Who were the translators? Were they qualified to do this work? (4) Have verses or parts of verses been omitted? (5) Is it a paraphrase or a commentary? (6) Has the truth been lost in the process of obtaining clear and understandable English? (7) Is it an accurate translation? (8) Check some principle verses that are so often mistranslated. Check what you find in the translation you are examining with the same verse in the ASV, KJV or the NKJV. (The translators of a number of the new versions are on record acknowledging the accuracy and reliability of these versions.) Check such verses as Psa. 51:5; Isa. 7:14; John 3:16 ("begotten" sometimes left out); Matt. 5:17 (if translated "abolish" then we have Jesus not coming to do what Paul said he did in Eph. 2:15); Luke 1:3; Mark 16:9-20 Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:1-3; Matt. 16:18; Jas. 2:24; Rom. 1:16-17; 3:27-8; etc. This is just a beginning of the list of passages that are so often mistranslated.

Questions For The Reader

1. Do you want to use a translation that has many perverted and mistranslated passages?
2. If we could show that the NIV is not an accurate translation, would you continue to use it?
3. If we could show that the NIV is a pseudo-version (a perversion) teaching doctrinal error, would you continue to use it? If so, why?
4. Do you believe that all translations are acceptable?

A Dangerous Translation

The NIV, along with several other translations, is a danger to the body of Christ. This translation is far more dangerous to members of the Lord's church than the more far out translations like the Good News, Reader's Digest and Cotton Patch Versions. Because the NIV is a little more subtle than these just mentioned, it is more dangerous. To illustrate, if a Baptist preacher teaches his doctrine of Calvinism, he will not influence as many Christians as a "gospel" preacher would who occasionally throws out some Calvinistic thoughts. We have long known and warned that a little error interwoven with a considerable amount of truth is best suited to infiltrate the hearts of men and women.

A translator need not mistranslate every passage in order to accomplish an unholy goal. A word or two here

and a passage will much better accomplish the Destroyer's goals.

Someone may say that the translation is good for the most part. It is only a small portion that is not accurate. Yes, but it is that small portion that is dangerous. It is that "small" portion that we are concerned about. Take for example the d-Con mouse-prufe. It has 99.946% inert ingredients. It is the 0.054% active ingredient that kills. You see, a small portion can be dangerous. Suppose you have a plate of food that has one drop of poison in it. Most of what you would eat would be good. It is that small portion that is dangerous.

One of the greatest dangers with the NIV and several other translations is the fact that some members of the church are buying these translations for their children. Some adults may say that they know the difference when there is a mistranslation (which is not a justification for using a pseudo-version), but do the children? Are the parents going to be able to show them all of the verses that have been mistranslated? Can you imagine giving your children a Bible and then pointing out several verses to them which they are not to believe?

The Need For A Study Of The NIV

We have noticed within the last year or two that more and more members of the church are picking up the NIV and using it for their Bible. In nearly every congregation where we have been in the last year or so there has been someone (in some cases several) who was using the NIV. This version seems to be selling well. In response to our inquiry, Baker House informed us in February 1984, that the NIV is "currently the best seller" with them. In fact, one of the men who helped produce the NIV said, "The response of the public to the NIV is overwhelming; about ten million copies have already been sold" (J. C. Wenger in a letter to Donnie Rader on January 14, 1984). Thus it behooves the people of God to examine this version to see if it is accurate and acceptable.

"But, A Member Of The Church Of Christ Helped In Translating It"

___ Church of Christ ___ "This was to help safeguard the translation from "sectarian bias." This has caused some members of the church to assume that it is good translation on the basis that some member of the church was connected with it.

Frankly, it doesn't matter who was connected with producing the NIV—it is still a bad translation. It really doesn't matter if there were a hundred members of the church on the translation committee. If it is a pseudo-version, a mistranslation, it remains a pseudo-version or mistranslation no matter who had part in it!

Some, however are impressed with this fact. They think it just has to be a good translation since some brother had part in it. Yet, what influence do you think one member of the church would have on a committee of 115?

The member of the Church of Christ was Jack P. Lewis, professor at Harding Graduate School of Religion in Memphis, TN. Our purpose here is not to get the low-down on Jack Lewis, but suffice it to say that his

association with the NIV doesn't impress us one bit with him or the translation. We are not surprised at his participation in producing the NIV and wouldn't be surprised at his participation in any similar project. Actually, he is the same Jack P. Lewis who tried to defend the RSV a few years ago. (cf. Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Contending for the Faith*, April 1983, p. 2).

As far as we have been able to learn, Lewis had nothing to do with the actual translating. He only served in an advisory capacity. And then, his work was only in the Old Testament.

However, Lewis has received a considerable amount of rebuke from brethren for his association with the NIV. Would that he had done as H. Leo Boles did when he was invited to have part in the work on the RSV. After going to one meeting, Boles washed his hands of the ordeal.

A Conglomerate Of Error In The NIV

1. **Original Sin**—The NIV teaches that little babies are sinful from the time they are conceived. "Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me" (Psa. 51:5). This is Calvinism to the core! It originated first in the mind of Augustine. Denominational preachers have taught that little babies are born totally depraved, wholly inclined to evil, and could not think a good thought or do a good deed. Out of this teaching grew numerous other false doctrines: direct operation of the Holy Spirit to convict and convert helpless sinners, a denial that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, and predestination. And now the NIV says that the foundation of all these other false doctrines is right. It teaches David was sinful from his conception. The word of God teaches no such doctrine! The KJV, ASV and the NKJV have David saying, "in sin did my mother conceive me." There is a big difference in being conceived in sin and in being conceived with sin in him. Today, there have been instances in which medical doctors have allowed mothers to give birth to their babies in the water. But this is a lot different from giving birth to a baby with water in the baby! The NIV is clearly in error. This is a case of denominational creeds creeping into the text. It is inexcusable that it should happen. It is even so that brethren who ought to know better should try to look the other way and say nothing. If this were the only case of error we could point to, it would be enough to reject it as a reliable translation. But there is much more.

2. **Luke Not Inspired**—The NIV, to say the least, makes inferences against and cast doubts upon the inspiration of Luke who wrote approximately one-fifth of the New Testament. It has his writings being produced as a result of his **investigations** rather than his inspiration. The NIV says, "Since, I myself have carefully investigated everything . . ." (Lk. 1:3). The KJV and NKJV read that he had "perfect understanding of all things..."

3. **Church Built On Peter**—The NIV teaches by means of the footnotes that the church was built upon Peter. "And I tell you that you are Peter." and on this

rock I will build my church . . ." (Matt. 16:18). Then when you look at the footnote (b) it says, "Peter means rock." Now read the text supplying "rock" for Peter. Truly an ecumenical Bible! The Catholics will like that. The word rendered "Peter" and word rendered "rock" are not the same in the original language and it is a perversion and distortion to leave the implication that they are and that Peter is the foundation of the church. Paul taught that there is but one foundation on which the church can be built and that is Christ (1 Cor. 3:11).

4. **Peter Had Two Fathers**—According to the NIV, Peter had one more father than the rest of us. He had two fathers. In Matt. 16:17 Peter is correctly referred to as "Simon, son of Jonah" as does the KJV, ASV and NKJV. But the NIV has Jesus addressing him at least four times as "Simon, the son of John" in the following passages: John 1:42; 21:15,16,17. Did he have two fathers, or is the NIV just not reliable?

5. **Confused On The Prophets**—The first of Mark in the NIV begins like this: "The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (emphasis ours). So, it is simply the gospel about Jesus Christ! Then the NIV says in verse 2, "it is written in Isaiah the prophet." but then instead of quoting Isaiah it quotes Malachi 3:1. The text says that it is a quotation from Isaiah while the footnote indicates Malachi. Confusion!

6. **To Abolish Or Not To Abolish?**—In Matt. 5:17 the NIV has Jesus saying, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law ..." But then in Eph. 2:15 they have Paul declaring that Christ did this very thing. Hear Paul, "For he himself is our peace who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations" (emphasis ours). Why this confusion when the KJV, ASV and the NKJV rendered the two different Greek verbs with two different English words, "destroy" and "abolish." In fact these three translations never translate the Greek term *kata-luo* as abolish. The 267 scholars behind these three translations testify that it does not mean abolish in Matt. 5:17. To say the least, the NIV has unnecessarily involved the scriptures in a conflict.

7. **Jesus Needed Purifying**—In Luke 2:22, the KJV, ASV and the NKJV in reference to Mary, speak of "the days of her purification" in accordance with the law of Moses. The NIV reads, "when the time of their purification according to the law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem ____" (emphasis ours). Did Jesus need purifying? The NIV teaches that he did. If so, how did he come to need purification? Was he born a sinner? We have always been under the impression that Jesus was always sinless. This being true, He never at any time needed purifying. Did the translators just slip up here or did they not regard Him as the sinless Son of God? We may well wonder about this in view of the way they have carelessly and recklessly handled some key passages dealing with Jesus as the "only begotten son of God." In John 1:14 they omit the word "begotten" and render it "one and only" Son. They do the same with John 3:16, omitting again the word "begotten." This is surely without scholarly justi-

fication since the Greek term "monogenes" clearly means "only begotten." Mono means one or only. The other part of the word, genes means begotten. They chose to give a double translation to the first syllable of the word, "one and only" and then to just skip over the latter syllable in the word altogether. Someone says, "Well what difference, it still conveys the idea that he was the only Son." It is difference in reverencing divine truth and in gradually cutting away at the vitals of things most fundamental and basic. It is doctrinally in error on that very point. And it doesn't take a scholar to see it.

8. **Christ Alone Has Immortality**—In 1 Tim. 6:16, the NIV declares that Christ "alone is immortal." This would mean that there is no other who is immortal. Is not our Heavenly Father immortal? Is he not a Spirit being (John 4:24)? Did not Peter affirm that man has what he called the "hidden man of the heart... which is incorruptible (1 Pet. 3:4—emphasis ours)? The KJV and the ASV translates the passage as follows: "who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man hath seen, nor can see..." This simply affirms that He has nothing mortal about Him—only immortality. This is quite different from saying He alone has immortality. And it is in harmony with the truth taught in context and elsewhere that he is reigning in Heaven, having been raised from the dead to die no more. He has, there-fore, only immortality. Materialists will like the NIV very much. In the Nichols—Bradley Debate, conducted in Rule, TX in 1906, Bradley affirmed that man is wholly mortal. Citing the Twentieth Century New Testament on this point, Bradley said, "This passage plainly says that man is wholly mortal by saying that God alone has immortality. Certainly we now have the proof of my proposition. Job says that man is mortal, and Paul says that God alone has immortality. If this is true of God, man does not have immortality" (pp. 210- 211). The NIV gives aid to the materialist.

More of the materialism in the NIV can be easily seen in reference to Acts 2: 27,31. Their rendering has both the "body" and the "Spirit" of Christ entering the **grave**. When we compare the KJV, ASV and the NKJV we learn that the body went to the grave (Matt. 27:60) while the Spirit was in hades (Luke 23:43).

9. **Sinful Nature**—Attention has already been called to the NIV's rendering of Psa. 51:5, which teaches inherited sin. Naturally, Calvinists have a different vocabulary from the Bible. They speak of man's "Adamic nature", or his "sinful nature." They speak of "inherited sin", or "inherited total depravity." Of course, we know that a thing need not be taught in the Bible for Calvin-ists to teach it. But now, with the NIV rendering of Rom. 8:3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 13 as "sinful nature" instead of "flesh", they have a "Bible" from which to teach their doctrine. It suggests that "flesh" (*sarx*) is synonymous with "sinful nature."

Now, do we really have a sinful nature? If yes, did we inherit it from Adam? If we did inherit it from Adam, from whom did Adam inherit it?

The truth is that we are the offspring of God, and there is nothing sinful in and of itself about human

flesh. If there were something sinful in the flesh itself, Jesus was sinful, for he was man (1 Tim. 2:5). When God created Adam and Eve, they surely had all that belonged to human nature, and that before sin entered as a foreign element. "When Adam and Eve were first created they had all that belonged to human nature. Sin came into their lives as a foreign element. Sin is no more a part of our nature than dust in your eyes is a part of the nature of your eye. Because the desires, appetites, and passions of the flesh often lead to sin, flesh is called sinful." (R. L. Whiteside, **A New Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Saints At Rome**, p. 170.) Fleshly desires lead to sin only when gratified in an unlawful manner.

At least the following two scholars connected with the NIV are in agreement with us on the point of the correct rendering of sarx. "The word for **flesh** in the Greek is sarx. In the NIV the word **sarx** is translated flesh only thirty times out of 138 Greek uses. The next most frequent translation of the word is **sinful nature** (twenty five times). But this rendering is more of an interpretation than a translation The safest thing to do is to leave the word with its primary meaning (flesh) and relegate the discussion to the commentary rather than write sinful nature into the text. This is carrying free translation too far." (Lewis Foster, **Selecting a Translation of the Bible**, p. 70, 1978 edition). "The Greek term sarx, usually translated flesh" (Raymond Dillard, **The New Testament Student and Bible Translation**, p. 99).

Additional passages in which the same error is made in the NIV are: Rom. 7:5, 18, 25; Eph. 2:3; 1 Cor. 5:5; Gal. 5:13, 16, 17, 19, 24; 6:8; Col. 2:11, 13; 2 Pet. 2:10, 18.

10. **Premillennialism**—The doctrine of Premillennialism is that Christ will establish his kingdom at his second coming. Nearly every denomination advocates this in some form. The church was plagued with a division over Premillennialism in the 1930's. The Kingdom of Christ was in existence and people were being translated into it in Paul's day (Col. 1:13). It came with power during the lifetime of some of those who walked personally with the Lord on earth (Mark 9:1). It did come with the power and Spirit on Pentecost of Acts 2, in 33 A.D. Christ is now reigning as king and priest upon his throne (Zech. 6:12-13; Heb. 7:17-21). At his second coming, Christ will deliver up the kingdom to God the Father (1 Cor. 15:25-26). He will not come to set up his kingdom! There are several passages in which the NIV alters and slants a reading in such a way as to accommodate the theory of Premillennialism. In Acts 3, we have recorded Peter's second sermon preached in Jerusalem. In it, as he did in the first sermon recording in Acts 2, Peter makes known the blessings which are for us in this age. He called upon the people to "repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out,..." (Acts 3:19). He then spoke of Christ, "whom the heavens must receive until the restitution of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). He went on to show that "all the prophets from Samuel and those that followed after, as many as have spoken have likewise foretold of these

days" (v. 24). "These days" identify the "times" and "times" of vs. 18 and 21 with the blessing of this, the gospel dispensation. The whole context bears out this meaning. However, the NIV so renders the passage as to project the fulfillment of "these things" yet into the future. It says that Christ must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets." The expression, "the time comes" implies a future time, not the present dispensation. The "times of restitution of all things" are clearly shown in context to be now in process. Christ will remain in heaven until the completion of these times, or until the completion of "these days." But the NIV implies that he will remain in heaven until such begins. Again in Eph. 1:10 the NIV projects into the future the blessings with God purposed in Christ. Accordingly, the NIV says they are "to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ." We know, of course from various passages that we are now in the fulness of time. It was "in the fulness of time" that God sent His Son into the world (Gal. 4:4).

11. **Still In Miraculous Age**—In Eph. 4:11-13 Paul teaches that there would be certain miraculously endowed men in the church "till we all come in the unity of the faith, . . ." There would no longer be a need for miraculously endowed men when the faith existed as a unit. However, the NIV says that they would last "until we all reach unity in the faith . . ." If you think the brotherhood has been plagued with the charismatic movement, just wait until more NIVs are accepted by brethren!

12. **Perverts The Truth of Acts 26:28**—When Paul spoke before Agrippa in Acts 26, the context shows that Agrippa believed the prophets (v. 27). Jesus said that to believe the prophets was to believe Christ (John 5:46). Agrippa's reply to Paul as shown in the KJV, ASV and the NKJV has Agrippa almost persuaded to be a Christian. However, the NIV has Agrippa ridiculing the idea that in such a short time Paul would think to make him a Christian. "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?"

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Numerous Deletions

We have already pointed out examples of false doctrine taught by the NIV. We did not exhaust the list. This version, even according to Lewis Foster (quoted above) sometimes got into the business of interpreting rather than translating. But, it is also guilty of gross deletions from the text. This is due, in part at least to their use of a faulty Greek text (to be discussed later in this article). Dr. Everett W. Fowler in his book, **Evaluating Versions of the New Testament**, points out that there are 17 complete verses left out of the NIV and 180 portions of other verses omitted. It is also pointed out that it omits "Jesus" 38 times, "Christ" 43 times and "Lord" 35 times.

Space does not permit a complete listing of all the omissions made by the NIV. However, we need to remember the serious consequences of tampering with the word of God (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:5-6; Rev. 22:18-19).

We list here just a few of the expressions omitted by the NIV.

1. John 17:21 omits "one" in Jesus' prayer for unity. This destroys the very thought of the prayer. He was praying for **unity**, not just for men to be "in us."

2. Acts 9:6 omits the question of Saul, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

3. Mark 13:11 omits "Neither do ye premeditate" which shows the divine guidance of the chosen witnesses of the Lord.

4. Matt. 19:9 omits "and shall marry her which is put away doth commit adultery."

5. Matt. 5:44 omits "bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you."

6. Mark 10:24 omits "them that trust in riches." Riches are not wrong per se. It is the "trusting" in them that is condemned.

7. John 17:17 omits the expression "through thy truth." The expression shows the means of sanctification, which the NIV omits and says, "truly sanctified." That is a significant difference.

Doubts Planted In Footnotes

One of the most notable examples of doubt and deception concerns the last twelve verses of Mark 16. The NIV, while placing these verses at the end of Mark, raises misgivings about them by drawing a line after v. 8 and inserting the comment—"The two most reliable early manuscripts do not have Mark 16:9-20." The two manuscripts referred to are the Vatican and Sinaitic. There is, to put it mildly, considerable dispute concerning the NIV's appraisal that these are the two most reliable manuscripts. We simply point out that these two manuscripts also differ from each other 3,036 times in the gospels alone, and more than 7,000 times throughout the New Testament. When witnesses are in such disagreement, it would indicate something other than being "the most reliable" witnesses, (cf. Herman Koskier, **Codex B and Its Allies**, Vol. II, p. 1).

It is significant that the Vatican manuscript contains the New Testament as far as Heb. 9:14. It does not contain the remainder of Hebrews, the pastoral epistles, Revelation as well as Philemon. Looking for some foot-

note in the NIV concerning these missing books from "one of the oldest and most reliable manuscripts", we find nothing. Why the casting of doubts about the ending of Mark? Especially in view of the fact that the scribe evidently knew of the existence of these verses and left a blank space which would indicate that he was uncertain as to whether they should be inserted there or not. The only question about these verses really is where they are to be placed. Should they be ascribed to Mark, or some other inspired writer? For an excellent treatment of the subject involving these last twelve verses we suggest the book by John W. Burgon, **The Last Twelve Verses Of Mark**.

There can be no denying the fact that such footnoting and commenting does serve to plant doubts concerning what is and is not the word of God. It has been our experience in trying to reason with some who have accepted the NIV, that they are very skeptical about portions of the scriptures being inspired, where they find these footnotes. One young man, quite zealous, but deficient in knowledge and judgement stated frankly that "yes, I would certainly hold doubts about the inspiration of passages when I learn that they are not found in some of the older manuscripts." This is the very point we are making. The NIV plants doubts by repeatedly placing in the footnotes "not found in some manuscripts." In the case of the passage in Mark 16:9-20, the verses are found in several hundred manuscripts and copies. "With the exception of the two uncial MSS. which have just been named (Codex B and Aleph—DVR) there is not one Codex in existence, uncial or cursive,—(and we are acquainted with, at least eighteen other uncials, and about six hundred cursive Copies of this Gospel),—which leaves out the last twelve verses of S. Mark." (John W. Burgon, **ibid**, p. 149).

Another glaring example of sowing distrust and doubt about the word of God is their deletion of Matt. 18:11, with the footnote that there is not enough evidence to include it in the text. The truth is that the verse is "attested to by every known cursive **except three**." (John W. Burgon, **The Revision Revised**, p. 92). But this is not all. A. G. Hobbs cites Robert W. Flanigan as saying that "eight major and fifteen minor manuscripts include this important verse." (Contending for the Faith, March 1983, p. 6). It can be seen that the NIV does not hesitate to relegate to a mere footnote passages which have overwhelming testimony in their favor.

Again in Matt. 18:15 the key words, "against thee" while being retained in the text of the NIV, are footnoted to say "some manuscripts do not have, **against you**." Again this would cast doubts as to whether this instruction involves a sin against one personally or just sin period. Does the verse then teach that any sin one commits, requires the steps outlined there? The NIV leaves one in doubt, if he puts any stock in their so-called translation. J. W. McGarvey suggests that it should be rendered, "if thy brother sin against thee." He further points out that "this rule of procedure is given only for cases of personal offense, where one individual has sinned against another." (**Commentary on Matthew**

and Mark, pp. 158-159).

We mention only one more out of a great number of such omissions and footnoting. Luke 22:43-44, "And there appeared an angel unto him, strengthening him. And being in agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." The NIV has a footnote saying, "Some early manuscripts do not have verses 43 and 44." Well, this makes one wonder if they should be accepted or not.

"Our Lord's agony and bloody sweat; first mentioned by Justin Martyr (A.D. 150), is found **set down in every manuscript in the world except four**. It is duly exhibited by every known Version. It is recognized by upwards of forty famous Fathers writing without concert in remote parts of ancient Christendom. Whether therefore antiquity,—Variety of testimony,—respectability of witnesses,—or Number,—is considered, the evidence in favor of S. Luke xxii. 43, 44 is simply overwhelming." (John W. Burgon, *ibid*, (p. 340).

Surely enough evidence has been presented for the thoughtful reader to be convinced that the NIV is not a trustworthy and accurate translation of the word of God. If you want to strengthen one's faith and confidence in the word of God, do not recommend to him the NIV.

Type of Translation

The type of translating that the scholars behind the NIV did shows that they had a different concept than the men who produced the KJV, ASV and the NKJV. All three of these were intended to be precise and literal translations. These men had a better concept of the job of the translators.

Let us consider what the job of the translator is. (1) Philip Schaff, Chairman of the Committee for the ASV, said, "In one word, the revision is to give, in idiomatic English, the nearest possible equivalent for the original Word of God as it came from the inspired organs of the Holy Spirit" (**Bible Revision**, p. 16). (2) R. C. Trench, scholar and author, stated, "Clearly the office of the translator is to put the reader of the translation on the same vantage-ground of the reader of the original. . . . Inspiration is not limited to the Hebrew and Greek words first communicated to men . . . it lives in whatever words are a faithful representation of these words. . . the translation must be a perfectly reproduced adequate counterpart of the original and the copy. When words fall short of this adequacy . . . when divergence exist between the copy and the original, the copy is less inspired, and to the extent of the divergence it is not inspired at all" (Trench on Bible Revision as quoted by Foy E. Wallace, Jr. in **A Review of the New Versions**, pp. 44-45). (3) Francis R. Steele, one of the scholars associated with the NIV, said, "A translation should convey as much of the original text in as few words as possible, yet preserve the original atmosphere and emphasis. The translator should strive for the nearest approximation in words, concepts, and cadence. He should scrupulously avoid adding words or ideas not demanded by the text. His job is not to expand or to explain, but to translate and preserve the spirit and force of the original—even, if need be, at the expense of

modern colloquialisms—so long as the resultant translation is intelligible" (**The New Testament Student and Bible Translation**, Vol. 4, p. 69).

The NIV is not that kind of translation and doesn't even claim to be. In the Preface of the NIV we read, "At the same time, they have striven for more than a word-for-word translation" (p. viii). The New York International Bible Society, which financially sponsored the translation project, has published a booklet entitled **The Story of The New International Version**. In this booklet we find them describing the different methods of translation. There is "**the concordant** one, which ranges from literalism to the comparative freedom of the King James Version. . . . the **paraphrastic** one, in which the translator restates the gist of the text in his own words; and the method of **equivalence**, in which the translator seeks to understand as fully as possible what the biblical writers had to say . . . and then tries to find its closest equivalent in contemporary usage. In its more advanced form this is spoken of as **dynamic equivalence**, in which the translator seeks to express the meaning as the biblical writers would if they were writing in English today" (p. 13—emphasis ours). Then they tell us what the NIV translators did. "As for the NIV, its method is an eclectic one with the emphasis for the most part on a flexible use of concordance and equivalence, but with a minimum of literalism, paraphrase, or outright dynamic equivalence. In other words, the NIV stands on middle ground—by no means the easiest position to occupy" (p. 13).

Raymond Dillard, one of the scholars behind the NIV, has stated his concept of translation, "It must be recognized, however, that every Bible translation, from the very first word, is interpretation; the mere selection of equivalents in the most literal of all translations is still interpretation" (**The New Testament Student and Bible Translation**, Vol. 4, p. 97). "Yet it is impossible to escape interpretation in translation work" (p. 114). "Interpretation on the part of the preacher and the translator in any event is inescapable" (p. 114). Dillard defends idiomatic (as opposed to literal) translation.

We wrote to the translators and scholars who produced the NIV and asked them some questions about verbal inspiration. In their responses they said some things that reveal a little about their concept of translation. (1) Richard B. Gaffin, Jr. said, "Of course, the fact the Scriptures are verbally inspired does not mean that a 'literal,' word-for-word translation is demanded." (2) Roger Nicole wrote, "When a translation is made, a word for word rendering often does not make a clear sense in the new language, and the translators therefore have an obligation to seek to convey in the new language the precise message expressed in the original. They desire to do this without adding to or detracting from the original contents. Some people feel that the best way of doing this is to attempt to have a text which remains as close to the original wording as is at all manageable, even though this may mean that the translation will be awkward or sometimes obscure. The translators of the NIV wanted whenever possible to reproduce the language of the original Scripture but

desired also in all cases to produce a text that would read fluently in modern American English, such as would be readily understandable by an average high school graduate. Some people feel that in doing so they have moved too far in the direction of paraphrasing rather than translating the Scriptures. Personally I seldom feel that they have fallen into this defect." (3) Mark Hillmer stated, "Every translation is only an approximation. Or, as it is said, 'To read any document in translation is like kissing through a veil.' ___ But every translation tries to—and most do—reproduce the original sense." (4) Thomas E. McComiskey said, "He must decide whether he will adapt the philosophy of dynamic equivalency or whether he will attempt to reflect each word in Hebrew with an equivalent word in English. Either way, the verbal inspiration of the original is not affected."

Let us consider some of the observations that others who have written about the NIV have made about their approach to translation.

1. Jack P. Lewis—"The NIV has attempted to steer a middle course between the excessive literalness of the NASB on the one hand and the excessive paraphrase of Phillips, the NEB and Taylor on the other. Loyalty to the text has been defined in terms of a compromise between the Dynamic Equivalence principle and literalness, rather than in terms of Lightfoot's translation rule which stated, 'the same English words to represent the same Greek words' and 'as far as possible in the same order'" (**The English Bible/From KJV to NIV**, p. 320).

2. Sakae Kubo and Walter Specht—"But must the translator preserve the form of the original to convey the meaning? Those who answer in the affirmative produce what is known as a 'formal' translator. On the contrary, those who maintain that what a translator should do is to grasp the meaning of the original and express that meaning in the natural form of the receptor language produce what is known as a dynamic translation ... The NIV is a middle-of-the-road version in which a high degree of 'formal correspondence' is combined with renderings that are 'dynamically equivalent'" (*So Many Versions?*, p. 259).

3. Iain Murray—"And while the New International Version is distinguished from the RSV and the NEB by the thoroughness of the evangelical commitment of its translators, regretfully it still appears to be the case that the NIV has been influenced by the principle of a 'freer translation' with a consequent lessening of absolute accuracy. G. Duncan Lowe writes: 'The NIV does tend to expand beyond a simple translation into the realm of interpretation, when that is not at all really necessary . . . Although this habit may be innocent and plausible enough as practised in the NIV, the serious student of the English Bible may feel that his mind is being made up for him instead of his being presented with the most faithful mirror of the original text (consonant with good English usage) so that he may draw his own conclusions'" (**The New Testament Student and Bible Translation**, pp. 132-133).

The NIV's approach to translation is that of para-

phrase or commentary. It is not a translation. It doesn't even claim to be!

Based On A Faulty Greek Text

Some of the errors and omissions we have noted can be accounted for on the basis of a faulty Greek text used. While we do not claim to be scholars or experts in the field of textual criticism, we do believe that we can point out some errors in the kind of text that the translators used. To say the least, we can give some quotes from men who are scholars in that field. We realize that reading quotations about the difference in Greek texts is not the most interesting reading. However, we ask the reader to bear with this section of material, for we believe that it contains some things that need to be said. One of the basic differences between translations is the kind of Greek text that the translators used. Much of the discussion that we hear and read today over translations is a textual discussion.

"The Greek text used in translating the New Testament was an eclectic one" (Preface of NIV, p. ix). This is the kind of text that the RSV, NEB and most other modern translations are based upon. "By 'eclectic' they mean in fact free choice among readings" (Wilbur N. Pickering, **The Identity of the New Testament Text**, p. 24). This means that the Greek text they used wasn't based upon the majority of the manuscripts as was the text used for the KJV and the NKJV. Rather, the eclectic text is based in a number of places upon the reading of very few manuscripts. Pickering stated, "It ignores the over 5,000 Greek MSS now extant, Therefore the choice between the variants ultimately depends upon guesswork" (*Ibid*, p. 25).

The Greek text used was a Westcott—Hort (non-byzantine) type of text. "Basically, the Westcott—Hort text represented a wholesale rejection of mass authorities and an acknowledged dependence on the Sinaitic and Vatican Manuscripts, particularly the Vatican" (Neil R. Lightfoot, **How We Got The Bible**, p. 63). These two manuscripts are supposed to be the oldest of the extant manuscripts. It is assumed that oldest means they are the best, but "oldest and best do not necessarily go hand in hand" (David Otis Fuller, **Which Bible?**, p. 2). Speaking of these two MSS, John W. Burgon said, As for the origin of these two curiosities, it can perforce only be divined from their contents. That they exhibit fabricated Texts is demonstrable. No amount of honest **copying**,—persevered in for any number of centuries,— could by possibility have resulted in two such documents. Separated from one another in actual date by 50, perhaps by 100 years, they must needs have branched off from a common ancestor, and straightway become exposed continuously to fresh depraving influences" (**Revision Revised**, p. 318). Edward F. Hills, who wrote the introduction to Dean Burgon's **The Last Twelve Verses of Mark**, said, "Thus the fact that **B** and **Aleph** (the Vatican and Sinaitic manuscripts—DVR) are so old is a point against them, not something in their favor. It shows that the Church rejected them and did not read them" (p. 23). A number of witnesses could be given that suggest

that the Westcott—Hort type of text is not an accurate test. (1) The Trinitarian Bible Society, 217 Kingston Road, London SW19 3NN, England (an organization of conservative Bible scholars whose efforts go back to the early 1800's with the stated purpose of giving the widest possible circulation of the inspired word of God) said of the NIV, "The text underlying the NIV is not the best documented text, for in many passages, it has the support of only a small minority of manuscripts." (2) The 119 scholars and editors of the NKJV stated that one reason that they chose the Textus Receptus is that "The tendency of recent revisers has been to remove words and phrases from the text of the scripture, based on critical studies of the most recently discovered extant manuscripts" (History of the King James Bible—found in back of the NKJV). (3) Dr. Frank Logsdon (who wrote the preface of the NASV—which was based on the same type of text) saw the errors of this type of Greek text and repented saying, "The NIV is not now the true word of God, and it will never be regardless of the revisions it undergoes as long as it is based on faulty and inaccurate manuscripts" (as quoted by A. G. Hobbs, **Contending for the Faith**, Oct. 1982, p. 4).

The differences between the Westcott—Hort type of text and the Majority text (Textus Receptus) are not minor and insignificant. They are serious. The differences in many passages concern statements that have to do with the Deity of Christ. One prime example of this is 1 Tim. 3:16 where "God" was changed to "He." More than just minor omissions will be found in the Westcott—Hort type of text. Nestles text omits 31 whole verses and 191 portions of verses. The Bible Society text omits 17 entire verses and 185 parts of verses.

"This is not to blindly endorse the Received Text in the event that it does contain error. But I do suggest that the Westcott and Hort Text contains far more erroneous renderings than does the Textus Receptus" (Luther W. Martin, **Truth Magazine**, Vol. XXIV, p. 293).

"All Versions Have Weaknesses"

Defenders of the modern versions are heard to say, "no version is without flaws or weaknesses. There is no inspired translation." This is readily granted. The question however, is whether the shortcomings and weaknesses are of the same kind in all the versions. We believe that fairness and honesty in addressing this question, will reveal that there are vast differences in the type of weaknesses found in the KJV and ASV with those found in the NIV, RSV, LBP, NEB, and other modern speech translations. Now, bear in mind that it is not the "modern speech" that is objected to. It is the false doctrine which is often taught by the modern speech versions.

We believe that the advice given in the Open Forum at Florida College, Feb., 1984, by brethren Clinton Hamilton and Melvin Curry is good concerning modern versions. Bro. Hamilton advised, "Always read either the King James or American Standard so you know what was in the original text. Pick up these others for any elaboration or understanding you may get. But don't use them as the basic text from which you under-

stand the will of God." Bro. Curry's advice was "don't mess with" the modern translators that "jimmy with the text and don't tell you what they are doing."

Below you will find outlined in chart some of the basic differences between the KJV, ASV and the NIV. We simply ask that you consider them and honestly ask yourself the question, "are these shortcomings all of the same type?"

An Appeal

1. **To all Christians**—We appeal to all Christians to study the matters of translations. Be careful in choosing a translation. Don't use the NIV or any other pseudo-version as your main study Bible. Use either the KJV (1611), the ASV (1901) or the NKJV (1982).

2. **To preachers**—We appeal to every man who claims to be a gospel preacher to carefully study the translation issues. Warn brethren about the dangers of using such perversions. Take this material, outline it and preach it. Brethren, we have a responsibility to refute the error taught in the translations just as we do to refute error taught in the creeds of men.

3. **To elders**—We appeal to elders to take note of the translations the members of the church are using. Elders need to watch what the flock is consuming. "What one does privately is his own business, but what is done in the services of the church is the responsibility of its elders, and God will not hold us guiltless who permit and tolerate the pseudo-versions as a source of incipient error" (Foy E. Wallace, Jr., **A Review of The New Versions**, p. 222).

We would that all elders would see the New International Version for what it really is—a real threat to the church of our Lord!

4. **To bookstore dealers**—We appeal to those who operate bookstores among brethren to be very careful about what Bibles and translations they recommend to their customers. We would grant that any bookstore has the right to sell the NIV and any other version available just like they have a right to sell the Book of Mormon and the Philadelphia Confession of Faith. However it is another matter when brethren who sell these translations recommend the NIV to other brethren or for churches to put them in their pews. These brethren likewise have a right to sell the Reader's Digest Condensed Bible, but quite frankly we would become mighty concerned if these brethren began to recommend it for individuals and churches to use.

Is It Nothing To You?

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by" (Lam. 1:12)? Brethren, does all of this mean nothing to you? Are you not bothered to see the word of God mutilated—perverted and mistranslated. Does that not upset you a little bit? Not only are we bothered by this, but we are bothered no little when we see brethren who are not bothered at such perversion.

Let us all continue to be set for the defense of the gospel (Phil. 1:17).

"All Versions Have Shortcomings"

(SAY DEFENDERS OF MODERN VERSIONS)

QUESTION: ARE THE "SHORTCOMINGS" ALL OF THE SAME TYPE ?

KJV - ASV



Modern Sp. Ver.

"TOO MECHANICALLY EXACT"

"LITERAL WORD FOR WORD TRANSLATION"

"FOLLOWS THE ORDER OF GREEK WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE"

SOME ARCHAIC WORDS

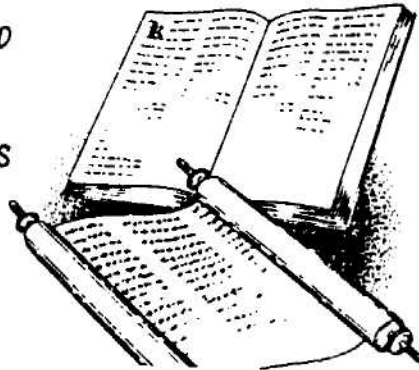
SPELLING

SYNTAX

VERB TENSE - (Which often is readily determined in context.)

"BORN OF GOD" WHERE "BEGOTTEN" IS MORE TECHNICALLY CORRECT.

"EASTER" FOR "PASSOVER"



RANK FALSE DOCTRINE

"SINFUL NATURE IN MAN"

TOTAL DEPRAVITY

BABIES ARE SINNERS

"FAITH ONLY" SALVATION

PREMILLENNIALISM

DENIAL OF DEITY

ERROR ON BAPTISM

DENIAL OF VIRGIN BIRTH

LORD'S SUPPER - SATURDAY

CHURCH BUILT ON PETER

JESUS NEEDED PURIFYING

CHRIST DID NOT COME TO ABOLISH THE LAW

IMAGINE TRYING TO DEBATE A SECTARIAN WHILE YOU USE SOME OF THESE MODERN SPEECH "TRANSLATIONS", CHARACTERIZED BY THINGS ON THE RIGHT SIDE !

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE KJV, ASV AND THE MODERN SPEECH VERSIONS ARE NOT MINOR AND INSIGNIFICANT! THEY ARE FUNDAMENTAL AND VITAL TO TRUTH. WHO CAN DENY IT ??

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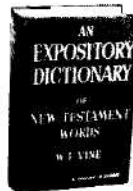
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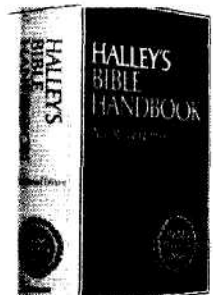
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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

"... They rehearsed all that God had done with them..."—Acts 14:27

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THAYER STREET LECTURES

ELDERS, Church of Christ, 640 Thayer Street, Akron, Ohio 44310—We have set Sept. 17-20 for our fall lecture program. We invite you to arrange your schedule so as to be present with us during this period. Subjects and speakers follow: Difficult Passages—discussed by Lewis Willis, Aubrey Belue and Bill Feist; Religions of the World—Islam—Hiram Hutto; Situations Christians Face—Dale Smelser; Mountains of the Bible—J. B. Patton, Rick Hubart, John Gibson. Morris Norman will speak each night (Mon., Tues. and Thurs.) on Worldliness. Congregational singing nightly led by Wayne Walker.

CHECK IT OUT!

P. J. CASEBOLT, 2803 4th St., Moundsville, WV 26041—A more complete report of my 1984 trip to the Philippines will appear under another heading, but many (like myself), sometimes read the News Column first. There are still many Filipino preachers worthy of support, and needing support, but a word of caution is in order. Just because you receive a letter from some Filipino preacher stating that he has attended a certain meeting conducted by an American preacher, or has had his picture taken with an American preacher, don't jump to the conclusion that the American preacher automati-

cally endorses that brother for support. *Check it out* before you act. Also, as I have emphasized before, be cautious about sending large lump sums at one time, and register your letter. I would advise folding your check in the letter, or stapling the check to the letter. A separate letter may even be wise in some cases, giving the number and amount of the check, and asking for a confirmation of its receipt. A little extra expense or inconvenience may be worth it, when protecting a larger investment.

JAMES H. DEASON, 1200 Nashville Hwy., Columbia, TN 38401— In the last three years the Jackson Heights church has seen 52 bap-tized into Christ and 41 have repented of sins and been restored to their first love. Considering those who have moved away, passed away and fallen away, this still reflects an attendance increase of about 40. We presently average around 270 on Sunday mornings. Three good men serve as elders. They are: Rufus Clifford, Jr., Reedy Nicholson and Myron Thomas. We are also served by eight deacons. The work of these men has produced the fruit of an active, thriving congregation living at peace as we work to spread the gospel. In this time I have engaged in two debates and moderated for two more. I am to meet Jerry Hayes, a Oneness Pentecostal, in Nashville (July 16-20) on the subject of Godhead. These debates have accomplished good in the community and among brethren. The church here conducts a daily call-in radio program, an active program of home Bible studies, a gospel meeting and a vacation Bible school each year, as well as a planned program of Bible study for our members. We mail a monthly eight-page bulletin called SEARCH to all who want it. All of this keeps us busy. If you are in our area, come by and visit with us. Our building is easily and conveniently located off I-65 about 40 miles south of Nashville.

NEW CONGREGATION

TOLEDO BEND, LOUISIANA—A new congregation began here three years ago with one family. Now we have an average attendance of 20 on Lord's day. Since this is a vacation resort area, our attendance is larger during vacation times. We have moved our meeting place out on the highway and growth potential looks promising. We are 200 yards south of the intersection of Highway 6 West and Highway 191 South, 12 miles west of Many, Louisiana. If you know someone in this area we may contact please let us know. Contact Andrew A. Addison, 2743 Nolan Trace, Leesville, LA 71446. Phone (318) 239-3005.

ROGER HILLIS, R.R. 4, Olney, Illinois 62450—Several months ago the Olney church began a weekly newspaper column in the Olney Daily Mail. The response has been extremely good. Two couples from the Olney church, at their own expense, decided to print the articles in the nearby Sumner, IL weekly newspaper. The response there was even greater. The articles were in question and answer format and dealt with such questions as: Is it right for women to be preachers? Are the 10 Commandments still binding today? What about tithing? What about calling preachers "Reverend"? Why do the wicked pros-

per?

Due to the public response in Sumner, the elders of the church in Olney decided to rent the local Rotarian club building, announcements were put in the newspaper and over 100 personal letters were written to area residents. Then the Saturday before the meeting, members from Olney went door to door handing out printed announcements. I did the preaching and the meeting ran for three days. Sermon topics were: What is our Religious Standard?, Two Great Covenants, and The Bible Basis for Unity. In addition to members who came from Olney, we had 24 visitors, all of whom have been contacted since the meeting. Some were not interested in home Bible studies but others have shown greater interest and we are still working with them. We continue to pray that the seed sown will produce fruit.

FROM OTHER LANDS

RODY C. GUMPAD, Tanza, Tuguegarao, Cagayan 1101. Philippines—I am happy to inform you of our meeting May 23-27 in which Diosdado P. Menor of Calapan, Mindoro preached. Though he is an elderly man, his work was effective among us. 23 precious souls obeyed the gospel. We hope to have him here with us again in August. Brother Gady Castres led singing. He knows well the rules of music and taught us in the mornings how to sing better. We learned much from him. Two of the 23 baptized were preachers, one from a Pentecostal Church and one from a Christian Church. Some of these baptized are from different municipalities and they are inviting us to come to their places to preach the gospel.

RAY VOTAW, Box 801, Springs 1560, Republic of South Africa— Among the Pedi people one custom is to consider all young people as not accountable until marriage. This works havoc in teaching young people the truth that they might early in life become Christians. During April I began a series of lessons among them on the "states of man" in time and eternity. As I expected, questions came thick and fast in talking about the transition from innocence to accountability. After many rather heated sessions the "penny finally dropped." Since that time there have been about 20 baptisms of older teenagers among these people. They are relishing this new found truth and the young people have achieved very needed elevated status—real people.

A recent sortie into northern Lebowa resulted in 18 baptisms. Since that has been a liberal stronghold, the news spread on the bush telegraph that the "Chief of Anti-Christ's" was coming. This dubious notoriety brought good crowds from several villages which had been dominated by the liberals — Five family men from the local township of Natalspuit were baptized. Brethren Cass and Lovell of Natal and Leslie Maydell of Pretoria aided in this effort.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	278
RESTORATIONS	91

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor;