

The War on the Word

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Written by
Len Smith
at
TheSwordbearer.org
2025

CHAPTER 1 (12 pages)

MOSES, THE ALPHABET, THE PENTATEUCH, AND THE “ORIGINAL SACRED LANGUAGES”

GOD HATH MADE FOOLISH THE WISDOM OF THIS WORLD

Moses is important: God used him to write the five foundational books of the Bible, and Moses' writings in the Bible use three times more pages than those of the Apostle Paul. Indeed, Moses wrote so much of the Old Testament (OT) that the OT is sometimes referred to as “Moses and the prophets” rather than the “law and the prophets” (Lk 16:16,31). That's why theologians and scholars over the centuries have unrelentingly attacked the credibility of Moses and the Pentateuch – especially Genesis.

Two of the most popular “facts” theologians have used to convince people to reject the word of God as it is literally written are the nonexistence of Adam and Eve (which they use to “disprove” the literal Creation) and the belief among liberal scholars that Moses could not have written anything in the Bible *because he couldn't even write*. These two theories became such common knowledge among scholars over the centuries that in the 1800s AD they were emboldened enough to *invent* fictitious men who did write the books of the Pentateuch. It started in the 1600s when a Catholic priest-scholar, **Richard Simon** (1638-1712), and a famous Enlightened Dutch philosopher and Jewish theologian, **Benedict Spinoza** (1632-1677), began speculating – since no evidence existed to prove their speculations were wrong – that Moses didn't write the Pentateuch. By the mid-1700s these never-proven speculations began to take root when more and more scholars used Reason to “critically evaluate” the Bible. Then in the 1800s, even though archeological expeditions to the Holy Land had been digging up evidence that supported many of the historical places and events in the Bible, scholars said there was zero evidence that Adam and Eve existed, and some evidence that Moses could not have written the Pentateuch. Because of that, in the late 1800s scholars actually invented four men (four is the most-accepted number) – called ‘J’, ‘E’, ‘P’, and ‘D’ – who “may have” written the Pentateuch. Who were these “true authors” of the Pentateuch? Here's a summary of what many scholars have generally-accepted...and you'll see why these theorized “authors” are hotly contested by many scholars with intellectual integrity:

“How can we best explain the *theory* that Moses did not write the first five Books of the Bible in the 15th century BC? One possible explanation is the ‘Documentary *Hypothesis*’ in which there *may be from four to as many as nine* written sources that are *probably* derived from earlier oral sources [‘oral’ is a code word among scholars for ‘doubtful’] dating *perhaps* to the time of David, or *possibly* later. Or *perhaps* from the time of Ezra. The *generally-accepted* four sources are:

- **J**, who *may* have been from the southern kingdom of Judah, dating *perhaps* to the time of David or Solomon around the 10th century BC.
- **E** is *thought* to have been from the northern kingdom of Israel in the 8th century BC – or *possibly* later.
- **P** *may* have been a 7th-century priest during King Hezekiah's reign.
- **D** *may* have written his part during the time of King Josiah around the 7th century, or *maybe* Ezra or *somebody else* wrote it during the time of the return from the Babylonian Captivity about 450 BC.”

Let's look at the Adam and Eve argument first, and then look at King Hezekiah and some miscellaneous topics before we get to Moses' “inability to write.”

ADAM AND EVE

Moses and the Hebrews left Egypt and crossed the Red Sea in roughly 1500 BC, and then God had Moses pen the Pentateuch in the wilderness in order to preserve the histories of Creation and Adam and Eve. But there was no evidence showing that Adam and Eve were real, historical people. To scholars, therefore, Moses and Adam and Eve were fictitious characters invented by Hebrew sheep herders squatting around a fire during King David's reign (about 1000 BC), or maybe by J, E, P, or D at about the same time...or maybe later. This faithless blasphemy was what young Christian men who went to schools to become preachers were taught *for about 800 years* (until the 1900s AD).

Tepe Gawra

Then in the 1930s AD, Tepe Gawra was discovered and excavated. Tepe Gawra means “Great Mound.” It is the site of an ancient city near the Tigris River in northern Iraq not far from Nineveh. The mound is made of a succession of city layers that were built on top of each other over many centuries. Tepe Gawra is thought to have been occupied from 5000 BC until 1500 BC. At the bottom of the mound (which is the oldest part – about 5000 BC – which is 3,500 years before Moses and 4,000 years before King David) a small stone seal was found. The seal has an engraved image that depicts a naked man and woman walking bent over in shame...with a serpent standing behind them. Because it appears to depict the Fall of Adam and Eve, it has been named the **Adam and Eve Seal**, and it now resides in the museum at the University of Pennsylvania.

Tell Halaf

At about that same time (the early 1930s), Tell Halaf was discovered. Tell Halaf means “Old City Mound.” It is an ancient archeological site about 100 miles west of Tepe Gawra. A small ancient engraved stone cylinder that was worn around the neck and used as a seal was unearthed. It is believed to date back to at least 2200 BC (700 years before Moses). It depicts a man and woman sitting on either side of a tree. They each have a hand extended as if they are picking fruit from the tree. Behind

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each of them stands a serpent. Even though the seal has been named “The Adam and Eve Temptation Seal,” some scholars protest that the fruit “might not” have anything to do with temptation; it “might” be an ancient symbol of “fertility” ...and scholars *ignore* the serpent. The seal today resides in the British Museum. The Tepe Gawra and Tell Halaf seals (along with other archeological finds) have shown that generations of unbelieving scholars were wrong when they confidently proclaimed that the Adam and Eve “story” was invented (along with the rest of the Pentateuch) by J, E, P, or D sometime between 1000 and 500 BC (from King David to Ezra) in order to be the foundation of the false religion they were making up. The fact that the Adam and Eve seals are *thousands of years older than 1000 BC* has forced scholars to admit these “scholarly proclamations” were really only *biased guesses*. Sadly, that loss of credibility hasn’t stopped these unbelievers from coming up with “new improved” guesswork, such as: The “tale” of Adam and Eve “might be” nothing but a widely-believed myth that “could” go all the way back to knuckle-dragging, grunting cavemen who were creative enough to dream up the tale when they lived way back then at Tepe Gawra or Tell Halaf.

Gobekli Tepe

It means “Potbelly Mound.” It is about 100 miles northwest of Nineveh, which puts these three ancient cities in a roughly 100-mile equilateral triangle. It was only recently excavated (2000 AD), and so far, it has received little publicity because it embarrassingly reveals that highly-respected scholars have been *hugely* wrong about almost everything about human society, such as their teaching us about “knuckle-dragging cavemen,” about shepherds huddled in their tents inventing the Bible...and now we know they’ve always been very, very wrong about the historical development of human societies. They should have believed the Bible. (Yes, their dating system has been shown to have major flaws and inconsistencies – keep that in mind.)

Gobekli Tepe is very, very old; scholars think it goes back to 11000 BC. Once they determined it to be that ancient, they “knew” what they’d find as they continued unearthing it: All communities that old were way back in “prehistory” when “evolving” mankind was just beginning to walk more upright. “Prehistory man,” scholars said, had few skills, fewer tools, and very primitive weapons. He was mostly a roaming hunter who killed game and gathered any available food because he knew nothing about agriculture. He lived in very small groups because he was an unintelligent, aggressive, animalistic man whose life consisted of little more than eating, reproducing, fighting for survival, (and – between grunts – inventing intricate stories about God, Satan, and the Fall of Adam and Eve).

To put 11000 BC into perspective (according to scholars), let’s look at some things we “knew”: Back then man had not yet invented writing, was only barely familiar with the wheel, was still using a few crude stone tools and weapons (no metal), and had not yet learned to grow crops or herd livestock – which things would, when invented *much* later, give mankind the modern ability to build and live in large towns and cities. Therefore, when the excavation of Gobekli Tepe began, scholars and historians confidently agreed they would find it to be a tiny, primitive encampment with a few scattered stone implements.

The first thing that went wrong (from the perspective of scholars) was Gobekli Tepe turned out to be *massive* – way too huge for “prehistory man.” The second mind-boggling discovery in Gobekli Tepe was a vast building complex that included huge stone columns – columns ten feet wide and twenty feet tall *that weighed 20 tons each!* One particularly large stone column weighs 50 tons. Compare those weights with the fact that the stone blocks that make up Egypt’s largest pyramid only weigh 2.5 tons each. And the pyramids were built relatively recently (compared with Gobekli Tepe) in about 2500 BC when humans had long quit grunting and dragging their knuckles. The massive stone columns of Gobekli Tepe had been transported from a quarry a quarter of a mile away and then stood upright, and then had their bases inserted into precisely-fitting custom “sockets” carved in bedrock for stability.

This astonishing info *all by itself* makes Gobekli Tepe vastly important because it shows that scholars, the timetable of mankind’s development, and basically everything we’ve always “known” about human development *were very, very wrong!* Prehistory man way back in the beginning was *not* the ape-man that evolutionists said he was. Gobekli Tepe has details so sophisticated for that ancient era of prehistory it’s almost as if an advanced race from outer space landed and set up a colony. In fact, we now have enough *proof* that we don’t have a clue what we’re talking about that people are now daring to speak out about other amazing archeological finds in other places around the world that, like Gobekli Tepe, are *proving* scholars and scientists have either been completely inept or they’ve lied in efforts to discredit the Bible – or both.

One of the undeniable things about Gobekli Tepe is it required a huge prehistory population in order to supply the thousands of workers needed; it required a permanent, settled population (not wandering hunter-gatherers) because of the many years required to build it; and it had to have a stable social hierarchy that included rulers, people with a good knowledge of agricultural and animal husbandry, and men with advanced educations who could envision, plan, and supervise astonishing feats of construction on massive scales over long periods of time. Today we have some *theories* about how “primitive” Egyptians moved the 2.5-ton blocks for their pyramids back in 2500 BC, but we have no clue how men thousands of years before the pyramids could possibly move stone columns that were ten times larger and heavier.

A very minor mystery about the community at Gobekli Tepe is the fact that after being there for 2,000 years the buildings were *all deliberately buried under hundreds of tons of earth, gravel, and debris that was somehow transported from other locations*...and all of it was done (according to scholars) at least 8,800 years before mankind had even invented the simple wheelbarrow. Based on the layout of buildings and walls, it is believed Gobekli Tepe is so huge that only 5% of it has been excavated...and if we continue to dig for another 100 years, we still won’t uncover the remaining 95% of this astonishingly-huge complex. Gobekli Tepe is a good representation of the state of mankind’s ~~knowledge~~ *ignorance* – as in *how little we know*.

If Gobekli Tepe had been discovered 200 years ago instead of 20 years ago would scholars still have claimed Jerusalem during the reigns of kings David and Solomon was merely a tiny collection of tent-dwelling shepherds and goatherds who were so insignificant they were largely ignored by the mighty kingdoms around them? Would scholars have proclaimed that these Hebrew men, such as J, E, P, and D, huddled in their tents dreaming up Adam and Eve and the Hebrews’ fictitious-but-extremely-detailed religion...and who then recorded it in a book that turned out to be uniquely and miraculously inerrant? How were these humble Hebrew tent-dwelling “religion inventors” able to come up with so many detailed and “obviously-wrong” specifics *that have consistently embarrassed scholars by being, over time, found to be correct?* Why have educated Bible-

rejecting scholars been so wrong about so much for so long? How did “squatting, grunting, uneducated men” turn out to be intellectual, knowledgeable men of character compared with the modern “scholarly” insignificant losers who talked down about them? We don’t know, but we do know scholars tend to ignore their old mistakes because they’re so busy making new mistakes. And we also know that the smarter a man is, and the more knowledge he acquires, the more likely pride is going to make him hate the very idea of humbly worshipping God Almighty and admitting His Bible has proven to be *the only inerrant religious book in history*.

The excavation of Gobekli Tepe in 2000 AD is an important, very revealing, and very embarrassing find. But another – and more recent – find in Israel in 2015 *finally* ended scholars’ doubts about some amazing events involving King Hezekiah.

KING HEZEKIAH AND THE POOL OF SILOAM

The Bible says after Assyria took away the northern ten tribes of Samaria it began to focus on conquering the Kingdom of Judah. King Hezekiah realized Jerusalem could not survive a lengthy siege without a huge water supply. Jerusalem at that time sat on Mount Moriah. The east side of Moriah was a cliff overlooking the Kidron Valley to the Mount of Olives, and Jerusalem’s main water supply (the Gihon Spring, which is where Solomon had been anointed king over 200 years before – 1 Ki 1:33,34) was on the side of the cliff outside of the city’s east wall where it could be captured by Assyria. Hezekiah needed a reliable source of water inside Jerusalem’s walls, but the Gihon Spring was outside Jerusalem’s walls. He also needed a large storage tank to hold the water. 2 Ch 32:2-4,30 and 2 Ki 20:20 say Hezekiah made a “conduit” from Gihon outside the east side of the city, and “brought water into the city” to a “pool” on the west side of the city.”

Theologians scoffed at the Biblical account for several reasons:

- 1) The Gihon Spring is over 100 feet *down* the side of the Moriah cliff.
- 2) Gravity wouldn’t allow water to flow *uphill* through any pipe or channel.
- 3) There was not enough space available in the crowded city of Jerusalem for a storage pool large enough to hold enough water to outlast a siege.
- 4) Even if a water tunnel was somehow constructed, the storage pool had to be close enough to the Gihon Spring to permit the making of a very short tunnel using the hand tools available in 700 BC through the *solid rock* of Mt. Moriah.
- 5) Scholars were as sure as the force of gravity that no evidence could be found proving this giant pool ever existed (which the Bible calls the pool of Siloam...a pool that was later “supposedly” connected with Christ’s miraculously giving a blind man sight in Jn 9:1-11) ...therefore theologians laughed that no “miracle” ever happened *at a pool that never existed*.

For many seemingly rock-solid reasons, therefore, the Biblical account, when viewed with carnal Reason, was increasingly thought to be impossible and was therefore “known” to be the pure fiction of *squatting, grunting knuckle-draggers*. (Why do they always theorize the Bible was written by knuckle-draggers? Because it is by far the oldest detailed, verifiable history book, and the oldest religious book in the history of this God-created planet. For example, Hinduism dates back to 800 BC (it evolved from older non-religious poems written in Sanscrit); Buddhism was invented in 500 BC; a theory of evolution goes back to 500 BC; Mormonism was invented in 1830; and the Jehovah’s Witness religion was invented in 1879. You could credibly say the early attacks on Christianity – such as the end of feudalism, education (that produced squatting, grunting atheistic scholars and theologians), the printing press, Greek philosophy and the Age of Reason, democracy and its freedom of religion all came together during the 1800s to produce the widespread (even among Christian denominations) rejection of God’s guessed-to-be-incorrect but always proven-to-be-correct word.

History did know that in about 450 AD well-intentioned Christians had remodeled an existing *small* pool on the southwestern slope of Moriah in a location that would have been inside the old city walls, and the remodeled pool was used to commemorate the Biblical account. But everybody knew this little commemorative pool, for several reasons, didn’t fit the description of the Biblical pool of Siloam – not the least of which was the fact that it was much too far from the Gihon Spring (almost 600 yards) on the *opposite side* of Mt. Moriah from Gihon. (Geographically, Jerusalem was shaped like a loaf of bread situated north-south. Gihon Spring is 100 feet down the east side of the loaf, and the little commemorative pool is even further down the southwest side of the loaf...which means the spring would have to defy gravity and flow a hundred feet uphill on the east side of Jerusalem.) Scholars, therefore, scoffed at Hezekiah’s water-carrying conduit, they laughed at the nonexistent pool of Siloam, and they declared that Christ’s miracle never happened.

Then in 1838 and again in 1865 an underground water tunnel (that had been quietly written about – and largely ignored – back in 1625) was discovered...but only partially explored under Jerusalem. Even though this water tunnel did lead to the small pool on the southwest side, it was considered impossible for it to be connected with Hezekiah...until 1884 when an ancient inscription was discovered inside on the wall of the tunnel *commemorating the spot where two Hebrew excavation crews, working from opposite directions, met*. Therefore, some claimed it *had* to be Hezekiah’s tunnel, and that the pool that had been reworked in 450 AD *had* to be the pool of Siloam. This small pool, however, for reasons listed above (way too small), was *not* the Biblical pool...and had been neglected and fallen into disrepair...and very few people seriously thought the tunnel was Hezekiah’s. Indeed, many scholars were boldly declaring that the King Hezekiah described in the Bible never existed, as “proven” by the fact that nothing in history or archeology had ever been found that mentioned him.

Then in 2004, when bulldozers were uncovering and renovating Jerusalem’s drainage and sewer system, another pool was discovered that *had* to have been dug and constructed by Hezekiah in preparation for the coming siege. This pool was *huge* (the size of two football fields) and at least 15 feet deep with steps leading down into it. And it was found to be connected by a channel to the smaller pool, which is where the water from Hezekiah’s tunnel first empties. In other words, the smaller pool at the end of Hezekiah’s tunnel conveniently took advantage of an available, smaller storage space...and then that smaller pool overflowed into the huge pool of Siloam, which was the main storage pool.

Hezekiah’s tunnel is amazing. To this day it has knee-deep water flowing through its 1,750 foot length. It is about as wide as a man’s shoulders, is cut through solid rock, has a precise 0.6% downhill slope from Gihon Spring, is an average of 131 feet underground, and is now considered one of the greatest feats of water engineering of ancient times. The tunnel, instead of being straight, does some meandering, and is therefore 40% longer than a straight-line tunnel would be. The two construction crews did the best they could that far below the surface to hear – and be guided by – the earth-pounding noises made by men

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on the surface above. Eventually the two crews could hear each other's excavating work, homed in on each other, and rejoiced with a commemorative inscription on the wall where their tunnels met.

Several findings have historically confirmed what the Bible says about events having to do with King Hezekiah, but nothing directly confirmed Hezekiah himself...until 2015. An impression of a royal seal was found. In ancient Hebrew it says, "Belonging to Hezekiah, son of Ahaz king of Judah."

MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS BRIEFLY ADDRESSED

The universal wave-force and intelligent energy of the living word of God: There is increasing evidence that the entire universe is not only made up of a sound-wave-like energy, but that this "energy" has characteristics that make it seem like a *living intelligence*...for example, if "something" happens way over on one side of the universe, there are indications that that "something" is *instantaneously* known on the other side of the universe...and this *instantaneous* transfer of knowledge or awareness across the vast universe cannot be said to be "rapid," neither can it be equated with an incredibly-fast *speed* – such as multiple times the speed of light – because it is *instantaneous* – which makes *distance irrelevant*! This wave-like energy appears to be an *intelligence* that everything in the universe consists of. For example, we've never understood what and why *gravity* is, but it now looks like it is – like everything else in the universe – a product of this *force of living intelligence*. But that's not all! Science taught us that the physical universe is made up of atoms, and atoms are supposed to be the simple building blocks of *everything*. For example, our physical brains are made of atoms, and those atoms *somehow* produce consciousness, thoughts, and memory – but we have no clue how lifeless atoms can do that. But modern experiments have caused us to *conclude*, to *deduce*, to *guess* that consciousness is not a *result* of atoms; consciousness is the *foundation* of atoms in a way that goes way beyond just thoughts in our physical brains. In other words, there are indirect – but consistent – indications that the behaviors of all atoms in the universe (in brains, in rocks, in everything) have a consciousness underlying their behaviors...because some form of consciousness or intelligence is a fundamental property or reality of the universe. Science thought atoms were the foundation of the universe, but it now looks like this *consciousness* is the foundation of the universe.

Heb 11:3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

This stuff is so far removed from anything we've ever believed about reality, that experts have said it's "spooky." Others are saying it appears that the spiritual realm, which is where true life exists, is a foundational part of – everything everywhere. If you substitute "God" for *consciousness* and its synonyms above, you'd end up saying God is the underlying foundation of atoms and the entire universe.

Col 1:15-17 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

This all gives broader, deeper, richer meaning to our calling the Bible "the living word of the living God." And it makes it look very foolish to think God's word – as He defines it – no longer exists...and therefore exalt layman's aids over God and what He has said.

Pride and our universal ignorance/stupidity: The Digital Age is allowing us to develop things like artificial intelligence (AI) that we hope will guide us into a brighter future. But the word *artificial* means *not real, false, fake* – and that doesn't bode well for us if AI becomes our intelligence guru. It is said that at least 99% of all electricity generated on Earth will be required to power AI, and civilization will live on the remaining 1%. Does AI have anything to do with the rule of the Antichrist? When we look up at the power poles that carry electricity all over the world, they look like electrical wires hanging on crosses. Does that have anything to do with "the prince of the power of the air" mentioned in the Bible?

Eph 2:2,3 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath...

Already there are reports of AI convincing today's messed-up adults and children to commit suicide because AI knows everything psychiatrists and marketing agents know about how to use *everything* to manipulate and control people – just like Satan (and this is really scary) convinced Adam and Eve to do the opposite of God's kindergarten-level thou-shalt-not commandment...and Adam and Eve weren't messed up like so many people are today! Perhaps especially because most people are carnal, AI may quickly transform societal values and create a dystopian nightmare. Here's an example of how messed up modern American Christians are: They believe they can impress God by using the Satanic methods, values, and principles of Greek philosophy embodied in the Declaration of Independence and Constitution to revive Christianity and social order! I have a church-going, openly-"Christian" neighbor whose church *deliberately* shuns Biblical doctrine and teaches only the Golden Rule. They say Christ in the gospels taught "*love everybody*" ...and after He went up to heaven His disciples got way off course in their epistles by inventing doctrines that seemed right and good to them! No AI "intelligence guru" was needed by that church; the carnal mind was all it took! And Tepe Gawra, Tell Halaf, Gobekli Tepe, Hezekiah's tunnel, and gravity have shown that we "modern," "sophisticated" pagans *and Christians* have been and are living in Satan's *Yea, hath God said* world of ignorance, deception, and lies about everything...and therefore we need to wake up and accept the repeatedly-demonstrated, repeatedly-proven fact that the only truth we can be sure of is God's Holy Bible. *On Christ the solid Rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand!*

Entropy and the universe: This physical kingdom of Heaven we live in is the Devil's kingdom. As you know, God represents authority and order; Satan represents equality (the opposite of authority) and chaos/disorder (the opposite of order). Because this universe is the Devil's, it is not surprising that *entropy* exists. Entropy is the natural process by which everything breaks down from a state of order to a state of disorder *in which everything becomes equal*! Because of that fact,

can entropy be used as an example that equality is the evil in Isaiah 45:7? Living things (humans, animals, plants) are subject to entropy – it's called aging, and then death, and then decay. Mountains also suffer from the curse of entropy; over time they wear down. Scientists used to think gravity would hold the universe together, but it isn't. Things like gravity and energy-carrying photons reveal that all the galaxies are flying apart at an increasing rate...order is slowly turning into chaotic randomness. Indeed, the only thing that seems to control the rate of decay is the universe's "intelligent force" ...as if He that letteth is slowly letting go. The more we learn about *every facet of life and matter*, the more we scare ourselves because we increasingly realize we haven't just been *appallingly ignorant*, *we've also been appallingly wrong* about so very much that every now and then we get a glimpse at the horrifying abyss of our lack of knowledge and understanding. The universe, too, suffers from entropy: stars burn out, gravity slowly loses its power to hold things in the universe in place, and order slowly deteriorates into randomness. An interesting fact about entropy in the universe is: the current state/amount of entropy is an exact measure of time that has passed, and of the amount of time remaining. When the Devil and his bad angels won the initial war against God's good angels, God's KOH became the Devil's kingdom...and the seven-thousand-year war began. God recreated the destroyed planet of Eden for Satan, and then He removed His authority/order from the universe and Earth – thus allowing entropy and decay to begin. You and I can tell time by the great sidereal movement (sun, moon, stars) by which we humans measure time. Good and bad angels, on the other hand, look at the amount of entropy that has occurred since the beginning of the 7-day war. When they do so, they can see how much time has passed since the war began, and they can see how much time remains before the war ends (**Rev 12:12**). In effect, this KOH/universe is a giant hourglass that shows the angels how much sand has drained, and how much sand remains. When the last grain of sand is dropping, God will be leading us through the Deep (type of Red Sea) into His kingdom of authority, order, peace, and eternity (no entropy, no time). As we are passing through the Deep, the Devil and the rest of the damned will be trapped in the fiery chaos of this universe/kingdom...and that fire will never die because there will be no more entropy because God is back in charge.

Biological decay and death: The cells in our bodies, including all of their parts (such as DNA) and the tasks performed by those parts, are incredibly complex and worthy of discussion in their own right. But we're going to stick with the interesting and revealing topic of entropy. Our bodies age because of entropy, that is, all systems in our bodies experience something called "**genetic entropy**." Genetic entropy is the **natural aging process when all bodily systems mutate toward decay and disrepair**, which is caused by genetic loss of the information that regulates bodily functions, and by genetic corruption of regulatory information. These tiny mutations happen all the time and inexorably lead to death. Nature attempts to stave off death by eating life-giving beings – but genetic entropy gradually overcomes all of life's attempts at self-preservation. This genetic entropy means humanity as a whole is very slowly going further and further downhill from generation to generation. And this genetic entropy is right out of the Bible: Think of genetic entropy as leaven; it can't be stopped; it will continue to spread until the whole lump is leavened. Our physical bodies are full of unstoppable corruption that leads to death. Our only hope is to rule over our dying bodies from our inner sanctums by walking in strict accordance with *Thus saith the Lord*. The entropy of our aging is a clock; we can look in the mirror and see how long ago we were born, and we can also see that we're getting closer to our deaths. Why did people like Noah and Methuselah live for almost a thousand years? Perhaps it's because they lived closer to the beginning of the war when, yes, God had already imposed entropy onto the universe, but it hadn't "gotten completely up to speed" yet (see the underlined sentence above). During the Millennial Reign on this planet in these carnal bodies it looks like when time ends in **Rev 10:6**, that may end entropy and therefore aging. Genetic entropy is increasingly being used to prove mankind has not been evolving on Earth gradually getting better and better for millions of years. We humans are in fact biologically "evolving" *backwards* towards death and extinction because *we inherit from our ancestors the mutations they accumulated, add to them throughout our lives, and then we pass them on to our children*. That strongly suggests we've only been on this planet for a relatively brief time. Because of genetic entropy we now know evolutionists got "natural selection" *backwards*; over time things tend to roll *down* the hill, not *up* the hill; time is not our friend. Another point: In God's creation, things are supposed to be different from each other because they have different jobs to do. Hot air and cold air, for example, react with each other to produce good things like wind and rain. But if the air temperature becomes lukewarm and is neither hot nor cold, that's *bad* because all of the air being the same temperature doesn't do any work (**Rev 3:15,16**). Doth not even nature show *equality* is bad? Minor point: there is evidence that this revealing info about cells, DNA, and entropy may be causing more people to abandon their pro-evolution stances than any of the other evolution-refuting topics.

MOSES' VOCABULARY, TELL MARDIKH, AND THE EBLA TABLETS

Many of the vocabulary words, places, and names used by Moses in the Pentateuch in 1500 BC were found in no other known writings older than several centuries before the Babylonian Captivity (c.590 BC when people such as Isaiah, King Hezekiah, Jeremiah, and King Josiah lived). Therefore – concluded "respectable Christian scholars" – the first five books of the Bible are fraudulent because they were not written by Moses in about 1500 BC, they were written sometime between 1000 to 500 BC by – you guessed it – the inventive liars, **J, E, P, and D**, who "probably" returned to Jerusalem from the Babylonian Captivity. The theory *had* to be true, said scholars, because Moses couldn't have written words and names *that didn't even exist until many centuries after his death*.

Tell Mardikh and the Ebla Tablets

In the 1970s – after hundreds of years (!) of *Christian scholars and theologians* subverting the validity of the Pentateuch – Tell Mardikh, which was an ancient mound that covered an ancient Syrian city called **Ebla**, was found, and quietly excavated. Nobody had high expectations for this newly-found mound because historians confidently "knew" nothing of importance had ever been in that location; it was probably some minor, rural village of nomadic tent-dwellers. So, imagine their surprise when they uncovered close to 20,000 clay tablets, called the **Ebla Tablets**, written in cuneiform that dated back to about 2300 BC, *which was 800 years before Moses lived*. The number of tablets alone was startling because that meant it was a *major* treasure trove of records from a *royal library* that required a kingdom *large* enough to have *at least* a quarter of

a million people, and *important* enough and *educated* enough to not only have so much to write about, but the *wealth* to record and store so many historical records. The tablets revealed that Ebla was a bustling major commercial transportation hub between Turkey and Cyprus to the west, and Mesopotamia, India, and China to the east...*and scholars had had no idea this major city and kingdom ever existed...therefore it “didn’t exist” – just like Moses didn’t exist!* (Oh! How many young Christians over the centuries have had their faith in God’s word *destroyed* by Bible-rejecting scholars!) Ebla, it was learned, even produced its own beer, called “Ebla Beer,” that was popular with the thousands of merchants who routinely stopped there. The ancient tablets cover events from 3300 to 1600 BC, which not only show Ebla had been a major city for over a thousand years, but also reveal that vocabulary words used by J, E, P, and D were, indeed, in use long before and during Moses’ lifetime. Alas and alack! the Pentateuch’s vocabulary could no longer be used as proofs that J, E, P, and D wrote the Pentateuch 500 to 1,000 years *after* Moses died. The tablets contain names of people, places, customs, and gods mentioned in the Bible – and the tablets prove words in the Bible had been widely used for *at least 800 years before* Moses was born.

Before the Ebla tablets were found, scholars also said the Bible is wrong about when Abraham lived; they said he actually lived centuries later – about the time the Bible says Moses lived. But the Ebla tablets have forced scholars to put Abraham back where the Bible says he lived. In an effort to save face, however, scholars have resorted to saying vague things like, “Well, there still doesn’t seem to be a *connection* between the Ebla tablets and the Bible.” *Of course there was no “connection;” Moses was a Christian and Ebla was pagan!* For that reason, the Ebla tablets don’t record “The History of the Hebrews;” they quite understandably record mostly local matters of trade, diplomacy, royal letters, and economic matters. Even though the Ebla tablet discovery caused scholars to grudgingly concede that Moses’ vocabulary words were valid, many of them still claimed the Pentateuch itself is a fraud – for other reasons we’ll now investigate.

SCHOLARS: “MOSES WAS NEVER IN EGYPT...AND HE COULDN’T WRITE”

In about 3200 BC, cuneiform symbols were invented in the Mesopotamian region of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers (containing the areas we think of as Assyria, Babylon, and Persia), and at the same time hieroglyphic symbols were invented in Egypt. They both used a lot of picture-like symbols to represent objects, and they were accompanied by a few crude shapes to represent certain sounds or words. Since each picture-symbol represented a single word or object, these crude cuneiform and hieroglyphic writings required *thousands* of symbols, which meant only dedicated scribes who memorized the symbols could read and write anything. Also, because words and ideas that did not have specific symbols to represent them could not be recorded, both cuneiform and hieroglyphic writings were *simplistic* and relatively *short* – usually written on small clay tablets or stone monuments. Scholars pointed out that the crudeness of cuneiform and hieroglyphics meant the sophisticated, intricately-detailed, and lengthy things written in the Pentateuch could *not* have been recorded by *anyone* back then – even by hieroglyphics experts. Why was that? Because the five books of the Pentateuch *required* an actual alphabet in order to record sophisticated words and detailed descriptions that were not possible with crude, simplistic cuneiform or hieroglyphics. That correct-and-undeniable fact *did* seem to support (from the kind of humanistic viewpoint that proper Christian scholars and Bible believers should *never* have) the claim that the early books of the Bible were not written by Moses...and were invented by those rascals J, E, P, and D many centuries later, *after* the alphabet had replaced hieroglyphics.

During the 1100s BC, scholars say the world’s first alphabet was probably invented by Phoenicians (also called Canaanites). That was four centuries after Moses and Joshua were dead, which – according to scholars – is “proof” that verses like

Ex 24:4 And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD...

Josh 23:6 Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses...

are errors because those two men of God couldn’t have used a sophisticated alphabet to write their sophisticated books *because the necessary alphabet didn’t exist until hundreds of years later*. As “proof” that the alphabet was invented by Phoenicians, scholars point to Middle Eastern alphabetic inscriptions as old as 1000 BC (long after Moses died) that were written in an unknown early form of the Semitic language – which could have belonged to *any* of the Semitic races in the Middle East such as the Phoenicians, Hebrews, Midianites, Moabites, Aramaics, or Ammonites.

Why then, when scholars assigned the original alphabet to the Phoenicians, did they ignore three problems? First, those early archeological inscriptions using the Semitic alphabet were found in areas of *Egypt* – they were *not* found in Phoenicia. Second, there was some confusion about the so-called “Phoenician” inscriptions because certain supposedly “Phoenician” words from these inscriptions couldn’t be matched with any known Phoenician words, which caused some daring people to suggest *the inscriptions might not be Phoenician at all*. Third, there were unknown letters and words in the inscriptions that did not match *any* of the other “probable” Semitic alphabets, whether it was the Phoenician, Aramaic, Midianite, Moabite, or Ammonite languages. (Note the conspicuous, weird, and highly unscholarly absence of *Hebrew* in that list of Semitic languages.)

Over the years when people asked why scholars hadn’t tried to compare the troublesome Semitic inscriptions with *Hebrew* – because Hebrew is also a Semitic language, scholars responded by shrugging their shoulders and saying, “Well, there’s no sense comparing the inscriptions found in Egypt with Hebrew *because historians have always said the Bible is wrong when it says the Hebrews were in Egypt*.” And that’s the way all human beings – including scholars – tend to be...*we’re all a bit insecure and don’t want to embarrass ourselves by being wrong in the opinion of the majority*.

Confounding Historians with New Finds

In 1905 AD those anti-Bible theories that scholars had stubbornly clung to *for centuries* began to unravel. In an area of the Sinai near some ancient Egyptian turquoise mines that had been worked by hired crews and slaves of the Egyptians back in the long ago, more stone inscriptions were found that appeared to use an ancient Semitic alphabet. And the letters of that Semitic alphabet had similarities that made them appear to have been *derived from Egyptian hieroglyphics*. The inscriptions were dated and found to have been *much older* than the “scholarly” 1000 BC origin of the “Phoenician” alphabet. In fact, the new alphabetic inscriptions found in Egypt were made about 1450 BC *when the Hebrews were there according to the Bible*. But at first everybody was afraid to question “accepted history,” so the finding was ignored. Then in the 1920s AD a scholar in Germany dared to say the alphabet appeared to be an ancient form of Hebrew...but he was laughed to scorn by the rest of

academia because *everybody knew history said the Hebrews were never in Egypt!* In the 1920s there was a rapidly-rising tide of anti-Bible activism in Western civilization that attacked Creationism (via the Scopes Monkey Trial) and the validity of the King James Bible (via the commercially-unsuccessful publication of highly-touted modern mere Bible versions) ...which was all it took to weaken the faith of many timid Christians. Scholarly derision also caused the matter of the mysterious alphabet inscriptions to go dormant again.

Then, in 1999 AD (about 25 years after the Moses-affirming, confidence-inspiring Ebla tablets were discovered) *more* of these ancient Semitic inscriptions were discovered in Egypt, and these new inscriptions were *even older* – about 1850 BC – which was still within the 400-year period when the Hebrews were in Egypt. And, like the inscriptions found almost a century earlier in 1905 AD, this 1999 set of inscriptions used an early form of Semitic alphabet that had obviously been derived from Egyptian hieroglyphics. Emboldened by the growing amount of evidence, Christian scholars renewed the debate about the historical claim that the Bible was “wrong” about Hebrews in Egypt. In 2012 one of these intrepid scholars from Canada decided to go ahead and compare the Semitic alphabetic inscriptions with Hebrew because it sure did look like anti-Bible prejudice had been causing most scholars over the centuries to do everything they could to ignore and suppress even the *possibility* that the Hebrews *actually were* in Egypt like the Bible says. If it was even a remote possibility that Hebrews really did live in Egypt during that time it would mean centuries of erroneous textbooks teaching that the Bible is not historically accurate about God’s people being in Egypt, and that say the first five foundational books of the Bible were hoaxes that could *not* have been written by Moses, and that the hucksters J, E, P, and D “probably” invented the Bible between 1000 BC and 500 BC...*would all have to be rewritten and corrected!* Unbelieving scholars *long* to find errors in the Bible because the Bible’s text is boldly, uniquely, and confidently *full* of names of people and places, detailed descriptions of events, and minor-but-specific details that can be verified or disproven by history, archeology, and scientific and biological investigation. No other sacred books of other world religions, and no books claimed by Christian denominations to have equal or greater authority than the Bible have the amazing number of checkable details like the Bible does. It is well known that liars, hoping they won’t be caught, try to say as little as possible with as few details as possible...but the Bible, emboldened by the fact that it has nothing to hide because it is nothing but truth, has so many details it seems to *invite* verification. God’s Bible is unique in so many quietly-impressive ways that – the more you learn from and about it – the more amazed by it you become.

When the Canadian scholar compared the Semitic inscriptions engraved on 18 stone slabs with the Hebrew alphabet, he found that the ancient engraved letters and words were *Hebrew* words, not Phoenician. Among those words he found the names Joseph (who served under Pharaoh), Asenath (Joseph’s Egyptian wife – Ge 46:20), Bethel (Joseph’s home town), Ephraim and Manasseh (Joseph’s sons), and Moses! Some of these ancient, now-deciphered, etched-in-stone inscriptions from Moses’ time in Egypt are inspiring because they appear to have been written about some of the dramatic events with which we are so familiar in the book of Exodus. For example, when you read the following ancient Hebrew-language inscription, remember that Pharaoh had taken drastic measures to reduce the rapidly-growing population of the Hebrews:

“HE SOUGHT OCCASION TO CUT AWAY TO BARRENNESS OUR GREAT NUMBER, OUR SWELLING WITHOUT MEASURE.”

And then God performed a series of amazing miracles to show He was serious about freeing the Hebrew slaves:

“OUR BOND SERVITUDE HAD LINGERED. MOSES THEN PROVOKED ASTONISHMENT. IT IS A YEAR OF ASTONISHMENT.”

The dictionary says an archaic meaning of astonishment is *dread*; and the Bible sometimes uses it to mean *trembling* and *carefulness* (Ezek 12:18,19), and *trouble* (2 Chr 29:8). That “year of astonishment” must have filled God’s people with a combination of awe and fear. Just thinking about what our brethren in Egypt witnessed and lived through humbles me. Our Shepherd is truly great (He 13:20).

Based on all the new evidence, here’s the latest theory about the origin of the alphabet and the beginning of writing:

The invention of the alphabet is often ascribed to Joseph and his two sons when they were in Egypt, because – as adopted “Egyptian” royalty (Gen 41:37-46) – they were well-educated, knew both Hebrew and the Egyptian language, knew hieroglyphics, and lived in Egypt during the early part of the 400-year exile. Therefore, during the early part of the Hebrews’ 400 years in Egypt, it looks like God’s people invented an alphabet for their Hebrew language by forming letters similar in shape to selected Egyptian hieroglyphic symbols that were commonly used and recognized by most people and that began with certain widely-known phonetic sounds. This new phonetic alphabet – the first alphabet in the history of the world – contained only consonants, not vowels. Having only consonants made reading not as easy as it is when words have both consonants and vowels, but it was still comparatively easy – *much* easier than deciphering hieroglyphics. For example, if you and I are both English speakers and I sent you the following note using only consonants...

MST PPL CN WLK

...being an English speaker, you’d quickly figure out – by making the *sounds* represented by the existing *letters* – what the missing vowels are and correctly read it as *most people can walk*. Of course, having no spaces or markings between words and sentences – as in old Hebrew Bible manuscripts – such as MSTPPLCNWLK made it more difficult, which is why the Levitical priests were tasked with knowing what Scripture manuscripts (MSTPPLCNWLK) said...and then preaching the word to everybody.

The historical relationship of the modern world’s alphabets to this ancient Hebrew alphabet is interesting...and it shows that the world’s alphabets *derived* from the newly-invented Hebrew alphabet – *not* from the long-existing Egyptian hieroglyphics. When the Hebrews’ new alphabet was later adopted by Greece, the Greeks cleverly added vowels to the Hebrew consonant-only alphabet, thus making letter-based words easier to read and sound out.

Then from Greece, the Hebrew-based, Greek-modified alphabet spread and became the Latin alphabet widely used throughout Europe – as well as the Cyrillic alphabet widely used across Europe and Asia (such as the modern Russian alphabet). That’s how the world’s alphabets were patterned after the ancient Hebrew alphabet.

Even though there is much more info than I've presented here about the world's first alphabet engraved in Hebrew in stone in Egypt 800 years before scholars thought the "Phoenician alphabet" became the first alphabet, many scholars *still* reject the Hebrew-supporting facts discovered in Egypt and are doing the best they can to stick with the old version of history because it's "official," and it's in all of the old textbooks. Despite that scholarly reluctance, books, film documentaries, and TV news outlets have been and are reporting about this very-interesting and written-in-stone evidence that is today convincing more and more scholars that the world's alphabets do, in fact, go *way* back to the Hebrews while they were in Egypt – just like the Bible has been saying for 3,700 years.

But why are no scholars who admit the Phoenicians did not invent the alphabet, trying to stubbornly suggest that the Egyptians originated the alphabet? *Because for over a thousand years after the Red Sea parted for the alphabet-using Hebrews, the Egyptians refused to have anything to do with the alphabet invented by the hated Hebrews – until forced by their Greek conquerors (Alexander the Great) at sword point to do so.* Also, the only language for which all of the sounds represented by the hieroglyphs, and all of the sounds represented by letters, is *Hebrew*. Again: the letter sounds of the world's various alphabets when they are matched with the hieroglyphs do not always agree...with a single exception – *Hebrew*. That's one of the reasons when scholars forced the use of the Phoenician alphabet, it produced unknown, undecipherable words; Phoenician was not a perfect match...because the key was *Hebrew*; no other language worked.

400 years after God's people (perhaps Joseph) invented the consonant-only Hebrew alphabet, Moses used it to record the Pentateuch, which was over 400 years *before* Bible-rejecting "scholars" thought alphabetic writing was invented by Phoenicians in 1000 BC. Indeed, by the time the Hebrews crossed the Jordan River, there were plenty of God's people who could read and write – see Dt 27:2,3,8. Variations of that consonant-only alphabet lasted until about 800 AD when unsaved, Christ-rejecting Hebrew Masoretic scholar-scribes added vowel markings to simplify reading Hebrew manuscripts.

There are some interesting aspects about God's people producing the very first alphabet...which then spread around the Mediterranean via trade to Greece, then to Italy...and then the world:

- For many centuries before Moses, the Lord used His spoken words to communicate with His people so we could get to know Him, and by which we could pass that knowledge on to others. Spoken communications are the most *personal*, they are the most *intimate*; they are also "alive" or "living," and therefore they have a greater, more-immediate sense of authority behind them.
- God knew His people would lose faith in His **spoken word** as preached by His prophets and priests (such as 2 Ki 22:5-13 when King Josiah, when the temporarily-lost Bible was recovered, found out *from the written word of God* that the priests had not been speaking/teaching the truth; and such as when Hananiah rebelliously rejected Jeremiah's oral word of God in Je 14:13-16; 28:10-17). God knew that apostasy was going to happen, and He knew He was going to distance Himself from His carnal people. But, as a good Shepherd, He prepared for that by helping His people develop the alphabet so we could eventually transition to the **written word**. In other words, He was reluctantly and sadly getting ready to partially withdraw/distance Himself from the church by "de-personalizing" Himself. Today, we are thankful for His written word in general, and for what the KJV in particular has accomplished (which we'll get into) ...but the fact that God is no longer using in-person communications by speaking to us either face-to-face or through prophets should be sobering.
- When we believers read His words, we are going from letter to letter to reproduce the sounds that become not just words – *but the words God gave us*. "But in what *language* are His inspired, inerrant words?" I hear some people asking. We'll get to that.
- The fact that the alphabet God had His people invent became the foundation for all other alphabets around the world foreshadowed a similar fact: When His New Testament (NT) made the Gospel available to Gentiles, God's word also spread all over the world. That meant God's born-again believers, no matter where they lived, could quietly read His word (via alphabets derived from the original alphabet invented by His people in Egypt) and by faith witness the miraculous inner desire to die to the old man and walk in newness of life – a spiritual reality no less real than the miracles witnessed by our brethren while toiling in servitude back in Moses' day. The fact that the written word has largely replaced the spoken word has no impact on faithful believers...because when we read His words, God discerns the thoughts and intents of our hearts, and the Comforter gives those words a living, life-affecting power and authority.
- The "original alphabet" God gave His slaves in Egypt quickly multiplied into the myriad alphabets around the world by which we all feed on His word. "But in what *language* is the written word of God?" Let's cover that now.

THE "ORIGINAL" "SACRED" LANGUAGES

Nobody has any idea what languages were spoken by Adam, Job, Abraham, or Moses. And no written Scriptures are known to have existed during this 2,500-year period between Adam and when God had Moses write the Pentateuch.

Having gone over the origin of the written alphabet, I'm now going to briefly cover what we know about the *language* God's people spoke when they were learning from Him and recording His word. I think this will make it clear that there is no such thing as a "sacred" language, and that the word "original" (even though we all occasionally use the word) when applied to Hebrew (or any other language) has no relevance. But if the Hebrew language (or Greek, Latin, or English) isn't important, what is important? **Words!** God communicates with us via *words* so we can know Him and His truths. Our relationships with the Word of God Himself are all guided by words – not this language or that language. For example, back in Ge 11:7, *God* created the many different languages of the world (about which we know nothing) ...and He is the one who opened the New Testament to the whole different-language-speaking world. We'll now review the "original" languages *God's people* have used to record *His word* in "original-autograph manuscripts" throughout history. (I have invented my own informal names for the following versions of the Hebrews' language, hoping my more-informative names will make it more obvious which time period

I'm referring to when I make later references to them.) Before getting to the written Scriptures, a quick glance at the oral transmission of God's word:

Unknown Oral Languages from Adam to Moses (4000 to 1500 BC)

Nobody knows what language was spoken back in Adam's day when everybody spoke the same language. Nobody knows what languages *anybody* spoke after God confounded human languages in Ge 11. Nobody thinks the Ge 11 languages God created were "inferior" to Adam's "sacred original language." Nobody knows what language the twelve tribes spoke before they moved to Egypt. By the time Moses was born in Egypt (about 1500 BC) God's people had been living in Egypt for several centuries. That means over those centuries they probably lost whatever language they spoke, and adopted whatever language their pagan masters spoke. We say that because when the Jews later spent only 70 years (!) as captives in pagan Babylon, they lost *so much* of their own language in that relatively short time that *several portions of the Bible were actually written in the pagan Babylonian/Chaldean form of Aramaic...and during that short captivity the Jews completely abandoned their own alphabet and permanently adopted that of their pagan masters!* To emphasize how quickly the Jews' language and alphabet changed in Babylon, think about the fact that when the Jews were carried off to Babylon, they had a long-established alphabet with which to *record, phonetically stabilize, and preserve* the language they spoke when they moved to Babylon...and they *still* began speaking Aramaic and switched to the Aramaic alphabet used by the pagan Babylonians and Persians!

#1: Egyptian Hebrew (1500 to 1400 BC): When Moses was taken from the floating basket and adopted by Egyptian royalty, he was an infant who spoke zero languages. He grew up speaking the pagan language of the Egyptians and worshipping their pagan gods. Moses' Hebrew brethren, who were all non-royal slaves, had been in Egypt for 350 years by the time Moses was born. When the Hebrews invented the world's first alphabetic writing system based on Egyptian hieroglyphic symbols, it looks like they – like the Jews in Babylon after only 70 years – had begun speaking a modified version of whatever language the Egyptians were speaking, which I'll call "**Egyptian Hebrew**." Whatever this "Egyptian Hebrew" was, it was probably what Moses used when he recorded the very first "original autograph" Bible manuscript. The Hebrews' new alphabet spread to Greece sometime before 900 BC, but Egypt continued to resist the hated Hebrew's alphabet until Alexander the Great conquered Egypt and made it part of his empire 600 years later. **Summary: Egyptian Hebrew was used by God's people when He had them publish His inerrant written word in the language of His Egyptian-Hebrew speaking people.**

#2: Judges to King David (1400 to 1000 BC): When the "Egyptian-Hebrew"-speaking Hebrews crossed the Jordan River, they began interacting with the local language of that region, which is presumed to have been a Phoenician/Canaanite form of Aramaic. (The entire middle-eastern region back then spoke various local dialects of an old Aramaic.) It is reasonable to think the Hebrews' language *slowly* morphed into a blend of their "Egyptian Hebrew" and the local Canaanite Aramaic. ("Slowly" because unlike when the Hebrews had been prisoners and slaves in Babylon and Egypt, they were now independent conquerors in Israel with less pressure to adapt to a different language.) I'll call this evolving transitional language "**pre-Davidic Hebrew**." We know nothing about this language or its alphabet. A few archeological finds have caused scholars to think the Hebrew language – during the period from crossing the Jordan River to the Babylonian Captivity – underwent at least four identifiable transformations, as did their new alphabet. No Bible manuscripts exist from this period. This "pre-Davidic Hebrew" stage spanned 400 years. **Summary: Pre-Davidic Hebrew was used by God's people when He had them publish His inerrant written word in the language of His Pre-Davidic-speaking people.**

#3: King David to Babylonian Captivity (1000 to 600 BC): From the time of King David until the beginning of the Babylonian Captivity the "pre-Davidic Hebrew" language went through a normal process of change and became "**Davidic Hebrew**" as a result of continued interaction and trade with a number of nations. We know very little about this "Davidic Hebrew" language other than to say it had a consonant-only alphabet; was spoken by famous Hebrews such as David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel; and is believed to have been used by King Hezekiah's scribes (three centuries after David and Solomon died) when they made new "Davidic Hebrew"-language copies of old fragile Bible manuscripts (including translations of Moses' "autographs" written in "Egyptian Hebrew"??) that had aged over the centuries (see **Pv 25:1**). We have no Bible manuscripts from this "Davidic Hebrew" period. Presumably they were destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonians when they conquered Judah. This "Davidic Hebrew" stage lasted 400 years...until the Babylonian Captivity erased the Hebrew's language, their alphabet, and their temple. **Summary: Davidic Hebrew was used by God's people when He had them publish His inerrant written word in the language of His Davidic-Hebrew-speaking people.**

#4 and #5: Babylonian Captivity to the Septuagint Greek (600 to 150 BC): The alphabet used in Nebuchadnezzar's pagan Babylon was originally derived (like all other alphabets) from the alphabet (or a derivative of it) invented by Hebrews in Egypt. A characteristic of this Babylonian alphabet was its heavy, bold, blocky letters. When the Jews were carried into captivity by the Babylonians, they quickly began losing their "Davidic Hebrew," which morphed into what I'll call "**Babylonian OT Hebrew**," which was a blend of the Babylonian and Hebrew languages. In Babylon many of the captive Jews didn't bother speaking the Babylonian/Hebrew combo language; a large portion took the easier route by adopting only the non-Hebrew language of their pagan captors, which was a **Babylonian-Chaldean dialect of Aramaic**. In fact, this is one reason **Daniel**, under the inspiration of God, wrote at least half of his book in this "original Aramaic." **Ezra**, too, used this "pagan" Aramaic to record almost half of his "original-autograph" book. And small portions of the books of **Jeremiah** and **Nehemiah** were also written in this "100% pagan" Babylonian-Chaldean dialect of Aramaic. Modern Christians who pompously refer to "the original sacred Hebrew" ignore the fact that God had large portions of several "original autograph" books of His holy Scripture written in the "original pagan Aramaic language" of Babylon. The Jews *so quickly adopted* the Babylonian-Chaldean Aramaic language of their pagan masters that they even *ditched their Davidic Hebrew alphabet and began using the pagan Aramaic block-letter alphabet* for both the local Aramaic language

and for their own evolving “Babylonian OT Hebrew” language. Most of God’s people didn’t care about “speaking Hebrew” – they cared about communicating. As the Greek language began its inexorable spread, more and more people throughout the region – including Hebrews – began reading and writing what is called “Septuagint Greek.” Therefore, Hebrew Old Testaments were beginning to be translated into widely-varying forms of Septuagint Greek by unknown “translators” of dubious ability. More about the Septuagint Greek later. **Summary: Babylonian OT Hebrew and a Babylonian-Chaldean dialect of Aramaic were both used by God’s people when He had them publish His inerrant written word in the new languages (plural) of His people using their newly-adopted pagan alphabet. That’s right: God presided over several of His famous big-name prophets when they used a “pagan” alphabet to record freshly-inspired “original-autograph” books of the Bible that also incorporated a “pagan” language...which made the resulting Bible manuscripts (that contained two languages and an alphabet that Moses, David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Isaiah, and Ezekiel couldn’t read or speak) official “original-language” and “original autograph” Bible manuscripts. To be clear: These sacred “original autograph” God-inspired books of the Bible are very important because *we know exactly and specifically what languages and alphabets God had His prophets use to write them!* And the fact that our Lord, whose name is The Word of God, used a mixture of 1) an outright “pagan” language, 2) a form of “Hebrew” that was different from the “Davidic Hebrew” used for centuries – and that was itself far removed and modified from the language and alphabet God had Moses use when recording the first books of the Bible in history – and 3) since the Bible teaches us that a little leaven leavens the whole lump, we submit to God’s perfection by accepting the obvious fact that the books of Daniel, Ezra, Jeremiah, and Nehemiah show that there is nothing “sacred” about this particular language, or “pagan” about that other language or alphabet.**

#6: First part of New Testament Era (30 to 1611 AD): God had His infallible, inerrant NT written in Koine Greek, which was the universal language of the world at that time. **Summary: Greek was used by God’s Hebrew people when He had them publish His inerrant written word in the universal language of the world in order to reach His Great Commission people.**

#7: Last part of New Testament Era (1611 to present): God had His infallible, inerrant Bible (OT and NT) written in English in the Authorized 1611 King James Bible. **Summary: English was used by God’s people when He had them publish His inerrant written word in the universal language of the world in order to reach His Great Commission people.**

Note about the Masoretes’ OT text: The Masoretes were Christ-rejectors who rejected the validity of the quickly-spreading NT, and who tried to claim the error-containing OT books they published (called the “Masoretic Text”) represented God’s entire Bible. And, even though they lived in the NT era, they chose not to publish their work in the well-known universal language of Greek, and chose instead to publish it in an outdated OT dead language that – because nobody (including the Masoretes) was comfortable with it – they decided to add much-disputed little markings to make it more intelligible to other Christ-rejectors. It would have made more sense (sort of) for the pagan Masoretes to have published their OT in the dead-language Babylonian-Chaldean dialect of Aramaic (see #5 above), because *at least God actually used it* when He had His saints produce His inerrant word. But *none* of God’s saints, who used a number of different “versions” of Hebrew from 1500 BC to 400 BC, *ever* used the version of “Masoretic Hebrew” the Masoretes invented. (More about this in chapter 5.) Why didn’t the Masoretes learn from God’s word as recorded in the books of Daniel, Ezra, Jeremiah, and Nehemiah that languages and alphabets are merely tools of communication and as such are neither sacred nor pagan? Why did they instead attempt to resurrect a dead language even they didn’t speak it and had to invent an alphabet for it? And why do modern scholars and scholar wannabes try to assign some kind of contradictory “sacred authority” to this form of dead-language Greek and to that form of dead-language Hebrew by turning a blind/carnal eye to the lessons God taught us with the books of Daniel, Ezra, Jeremiah, and Nehemiah? Because they are casualties of Satan’s very effective war on the word; because his leaven will continue to spread; and because we live in dark times (when having faith in God, having faith in His word as He defines it, and having the faith to take His written word literally and apply it to everything in the world and in us) when Reason-based unbelief is causing us to be our own worst enemies who – like Adam and Eve – are stupidly trying to do what we think is right and good.

Note about the Greek-language Septuagint manuscripts: These Greek translations of the Hebrew OT and (sometimes) copies of the Greek NT were often error-filled, inconsistent, self-contradictory copies that were not made by God’s people; nobody knows who made them...but for a while they were inexpensive to get and fairly popular. Interestingly, it is not unusual for Septuagint Greek OTs to have accurate readings in places the Masoretic Hebrew OTs have errors.

Note about the Latin-language Vulgate of Jerome: This was a fine version written in Latin, and Latin, although widely and commonly spoken, never became the NT’s era’s universal language. Latin was used for two reasons: 1) in a successful attempt (as we’ll see in chapters 2 and 4) to end the confusing “manuscript mess” among the so-called “Old Latin” Bible manuscripts that predated the Latin Vulgate, and 2) centuries later to solidify the dominion of the Roman church when it was competing with the Greek-speaking church in Constantinople. However, the interesting fact that Latin – together with Greek and Hebrew – was used on the cross of Christ, may signify that God used the Vulgate’s thousand-year reign to alleviate the “manuscript mess” (that we’ll address in the next chapter) so His people could get down to the serious business of believing the Bible...just like God would use the KJV to end the “Bible version mess” so we could get down to the serious business of believing the Bible. (In chapter 8 we’ll get into why the KJV’s *inerrancy* is both important and necessary as a deterrent in this spiritual war on the word of God.)

Let’s review some facts about languages spoken by God’s people throughout history:

- **Genesis 11:** When God created the multiple languages of the world in Genesis 11, *He had not yet divided the human race into saints and pagans*. Therefore, every single one of those different languages became “the language of God’s people.” In other words, what *specific language* somebody speaks is *irrelevant*.
- **Egypt:** When God’s Hebrews in Egypt began speaking the language of their *pagan* Egyptian masters, God never voiced concern or anger.
- **First alphabet:** When God’s people in Egypt (probably) developed the world’s first alphabet *by borrowing* “pagan” hieroglyphic symbols that Egyptians considered “sacred” to their god, the Lord never got angry or complained that the Hebrews’ new “semi-pagan” alphabet would be used to write the Pentateuch...and then this alphabet would become the “semi-pagan” template for the alphabets of the multiple languages around the world that had developed since Genesis 11.
- **Babylonian Aramaic:** When God’s Hebrew-speaking people began speaking the “pagan” Babylonian Aramaic language of their Babylonian captors, God not only didn’t complain, He inspired some of His faithful followers to write parts of several books of the Bible in that “pagan” language rather than in Hebrew.
- **Temple signs:** When Alexander the Great conquered the world, the language of the pagan Greeks became the universal language of the world (as did Latin to a lesser extent when Rome conquered the world). Greek (and Latin to a lesser extent) became so widely spoken by Jews *who lived in different parts of the globe* that when those Jews traveled to Jerusalem for religious feasts (Jerusalem was *overflowing* with people during feasts) *many of those visiting Jewish tourists had no idea how to speak or read Hebrew*. When they wandered around the temple with their wives, friends, and servants – some of whom were Gentiles – those Hebrew visitors couldn’t read the posted signs that warned in large Hebrew letters things like “**COURT OF GENTILES ENDS HERE – RESTRICTED AREA AHEAD;**” and “**COURT OF WOMEN ENDS HERE – RESTRICTED AREA AHEAD.**” It was such a big problem that Aaronic priests realized they had to also post those Hebrew-language notices in “pagan” Greek and “pagan” Latin so visiting Hebrews who didn’t speak Hebrew would be able to read them. The Lord Jesus Christ is famous for angrily casting money changers and livestock sellers out of the restricted part of the temple into the unrestricted Court of the Gentiles (where those activities were permitted) ...but He never went around angrily ripping down all the warning signs and notices written in “pagan” (falsely so-called) languages.
- **Cross superscription:** When Christ was crucified, He was perfectly content to share His cross with a superscription written in “sacred” Hebrew and in “pagan” Latin and in “pagan” Greek...and to record that fact *in Greek* in His Book so it could go all around the world and be translated into the languages He created in Genesis 11 so all of His people could read words that conveyed His truth. The superscription on the cross indicates that no one language was considered sufficient to get the message across to passersby...whether they were saints or not.
- **Talitha cumi:** Christ is recorded as saying in **Mk 5:41**, “Talitha cumi,” which is the local Syriac dialect of the Aramaic language spoken across the region, and *which may have been the only language the young Jewish girl and her family were fluent in* (see bold print in the next bullet point). Aramaic is one of the Semitic languages and has a number of similar and shared words with Hebrew. For example, *abba*, which means “father” is used in both Hebrew and Aramaic. Therefore, it looks like the “pagan” Aramaic language that was used when writing several “original autograph” OT books was also spoken by Christ.
- **Amen and Bethesda:** Christ also spoke Hebrew. For example, He used the Hebrew word, **amen**, several times. (It means “truth,” and has been adopted by several modern languages.) Today an argument rages over whether or not Christ read in Hebrew or in Aramaic (and a few claim He might have read in Greek) in **Lk 4:16-21**. Some say it *had* to be “sacred Hebrew” because He called it “scripture;” others say He was probably reading Aramaic **because we now know by the time of Christ the Hebrew OT had been translated into both Aramaic and Greek Bible manuscripts because so many Jews no longer spoke Hebrew**. Another example of how little modern scholars know about old languages and how little they believe the word of God has ever existed: In **Jn 5:2** all Bible versions for all of history said the name “Bethesda” was “in the Hebrew tongue.” That verse in Greek NT manuscripts has the Greek words, *Hebraidi dialekto*, which has always been translated as “Hebrew dialect,” “Hebrew tongue,” and “Hebrew language.” But in recent years some militant scholars have claimed – based on nothing – that since we *think* Aramaic was the most-spoken language (but not the *only* language spoken) among the Jews of Christ’s time, “Bethesda” was *probably* an Aramaic name. As a result, about 15 or 20 years ago half of the popular modern Bible versions changed the word *Hebrew* to *Aramaic* in **Jn 5:2**. The other half decided to actually look into the matter...and realized there wasn’t sufficient evidence to support the claim/guess that *Hebraidi dialekto* “probably” means Aramaic dialect...so they continued to use the word “Hebrew” just as all Christians have for almost 2,000 years...but many of those Bible version committees, in an attempt to appear “scholarly,” wimped out by adding a footnote that says the correct word could be “Aramaic” – so the debate itself (even though it’s a stupid one) would undermine our confidence in God and in the authoritative truth of His *literal* word. And some of the modern Bible versions that wrongly changed it to “Aramaic,” admit in a footnote that “Hebrew” might be correct – *but they changed the verse anyway because it makes it look like all of our Bibles throughout history have been wrong, and (they think) it makes it look like they’re smarter than all previous Bible scholars*.

Guesswork-based arguments like these used by scholars have impacted other verses that claim Hebrew was spoken (such as Ac 26:14) in modern versions in the same way. The following three methods – all having to do with insecurity – are used by scholars who attack the KJV to get other scholars to go along with their guesswork:

- 1) They know how insecure scholars are because they are fully aware of how very little we really *know* about, well, *everything*. For example, we saw with relatively *major* discoveries like Gobekli Tepe, as well as a few other topics covered above, that our ignorance has been broad and far-reaching; and we saw with relatively *minor* discoveries (such as what we learned in the Ebla tablets concerning Moses' "centuries-too-early" vocabulary words) that no matter how safe scholars thought it was to contradict the Bible...*they have always ended up being wrong*. Sadly, however, if these ever-losing "scholars" contradict the Bible with *confident, strident voices*, that *will be enough* to convince faithless wimps to surrender and become casualties.
 - 2) Scholars know being a "scholar" fills people with false pride that makes them horrified at the very thought of being exposed as ignorant and wrong...because *scholars* aren't supposed to be wrong – so they go with the sludge.
 - 3) Scholars come up with questions about ancient vocabulary for which – because we know so very little – *we have no answers*. For example: "Since many or most Jews spoke *Aramaic* most of the time, why, they ask, would they give a gate like Bethesda a *Hebrew* name that they'd have trouble remembering or pronouncing because they didn't speak Hebrew?" Then scholars quickly hit their listeners with a condescending follow-up question like, "You do know most of them spoke Aramaic, don't you?" – as if it's such an established fact that only idiots wouldn't know it. Many scholars wimp out and go along with this kind of "unanswered-question-based 'scholarship'" by parroting the party line about things like *Moses actually didn't write the Pentateuch*, and *Bethesda was actually an Aramaic name*. Only a few scholars have the intellect and intestinal fortitude to remain calm in the face of bullying peer-pressure questions like these. If they did have intestinal fortitude, they'd respond by asking a few questions of their own, such as: "For the sake of argument, let's *presume* that an indeterminate number of people in Israel 2,000 years ago didn't speak Hebrew, and therefore Bethesda *might* be an *Aramaic* word so the Aramaic-speaking Hebrews could remember it and pronounce it correctly. Now let's compare that presumption with the fact that today we *know* for certain most people in the United States don't speak Spanish. 2,000 years from now will careless scholars look back at us and – based on "scientific-knowledge-falsely-so-called" decide that the city name "Los Angeles" wasn't a Spanish name after all because we English-speaking Americans would have *too much trouble remembering it and pronouncing it correctly*?" And then our intrepid brother might follow that question with ones like these: "If Israelites during the time of Christ really knew as little Hebrew as some scholars claim, why is it that the Apostle Paul thought it a good idea to address the large angry mob of Jews in Jerusalem *in the very language he thought most wouldn't be able to understand*? And why did the crowd, once it heard him speaking in *Hebrew* (Ac 22:2), treat him with more respect?" The "scholar" is trapped; he can't claim Acts 22:2 should be changed to say "Aramaic" – because it would be contrary to the context: Paul's impressive use of *Greek* rather than common Aramaic had just gotten him the respect of the Roman chief captain in Ac 21:37. Therefore, if Paul addressed the crowd of angry Jews in the language of *commoners*, Aramaic, it would not have caused them to respond with respectful silence. But when he impressed them by speaking *Hebrew*, the Jews in the crowd wondered if they were wrong in thinking Paul was merely a lightweight apostate; his use of Hebrew might indicate *that he really was one of them*, that he really was serious about their Hebrew religion. When Paul saw how surprised the crowd was that he was a Hebrew-speaker like them, and when he saw how respectful they became, his pride made him decide to continue impressing them with some of his other dubious credentials: he was not only educated in the law (unlike most of them), but was also (unlike most of them) in with the "big boys" such as Gamaliel, and the high priest, and "all the estate of the elders" (Ac 22:3-5). Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: We know the word "Hebrew" in Jn 5:2 – and *everything else in the KJV* – is correct because God's Book gets its unique authority from the miraculous fact that it stands alone in its inerrancy. All other Bible versions and manuscripts in history that we know about have provable errors and contradictions in them.
- **Pentecost:** My last example showing no language is sacred above others is the fact that on Pentecost when the Holy Ghost filled the saints and "*gave them utterance*" in "*other tongues*" (that were *all "pagan" languages*) "of every nation under heaven," He disappointed modern Christians who think the Holy Spirit erred by not making them speak "sacred Hebrew."

This chapter is intended to be an exhortive, abbreviated introduction to the fact that God knows what He's doing. Let's keep that in mind as we begin delving into some of the specifics of the "manuscript mess."

CHAPTER 2 (12 pages)

WAR, THE GREAT COMMISSION, AND THE MANUSCRIPT MESS

THE DEMISE OF OLD TESTAMENT JUDAISM

The first temple in Jerusalem (the one built by King Solomon 400 years before) was destroyed by the Babylonian armies when they carried the Jews away during the Babylonian Captivity. In captivity the Jews, without the oral teachings of the temple-based Levitical priesthood in Jerusalem, found themselves scattered throughout Babylon with no way to attend authoritative, unified, structured religious classes taught by Levitical priests. Therefore, they invented local centers of religious learning called *synagogues* that were led by non-priests (non-Levites) called *rabbis*.

Without a temple and without the historical priesthood of the Levites, the captive Jews (who lived in scattered locations in Babylon) began paying less attention to their 12-tribe heritage, and, in their widely-scattered synagogues the only way they had of learning about their religious heritage was via their new, largely-ignorant rabbis who were tasked with being experts about all things Biblical and religious. Ordinarily, they'd study the Bible, but most of these new rabbis didn't have access to a Bible because Bibles were too large, unwieldy, and expensive back then. For example, if you *only had the Pentateuch* – Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy – on a scroll (those five books were usually called the *Torah*), that handwritten manuscript on sheepskin was a little over 150 feet long (requiring an average of 60 sheep). That's one reason, especially during the early decades of the Babylonian Captivity, Bible manuscripts were almost too challenging to acquire.

The unlearned rabbis – who were now suddenly no longer laymen, and had no easy access to any part of the Bible – needed some other way to become halfway proficient on the Scriptures and traditional religious practices. So, they got together and made a “cheat sheet” book by writing down *everything* – as best and as accurately – these non-priest laymen could remember about how God's people originally lived, worshipped, and interpreted the Bible during the good old days back in Judah. This collection of “instructional memories” was called the *Talmud*, and – mostly because for years it was the *only* learning reference most rabbis could lay their hands on – it gradually went from being a general guideline to being the “authoritative” religious source...which contributed to the apostasy our Lord encountered in Israel during His First Coming. Consider the following, some of which is repetitious:

- **Oral authority:** In the beginning, such as when God walked with Adam in the Garden, He spoke directly with His people.
- **Oral and written mix:** God spoke directly with Moses, but He also handed him the written Ten Commandments and had Moses write the first 5 books of the Bible. God's prophets' word – both oral and written – was to be taken as God's word. This continued through Malachi in about 400 BC.
- **Written word more authoritative than spoken word:** About 900 years after Moses, in the 18th year of King Josiah's reign (about 600 BC) the long-lost Bible was accidentally found (2 Ki 22:3,8). Remember, this handwritten-on-sheepskins Bible (which was so huge and bulky it was very hard to “misplace,” even in a temple needing repairs) was not the “original autographs;” it was a *translation* of the earlier differing language versions Hebrew had gone through over the previous nine centuries. When King Josiah found out the written word differed from their long-standing practices and beliefs based on the oral teachings of the “Bible-expert” Levitical priests, he did something interesting: he was so horrified and so afraid that they hadn't been living by the written word that he *immediately* ripped his clothes...before he sent somebody to the Lord to find out how much trouble they were in and what the Lord might do to them (2 Ki 22:11-13). That suggests that, even while the Old Testament (OT) was still in the process of being written by the various prophets over the next two centuries, and even though God required His people to treat His verbal word as retold by His prophets as authoritative, *the written word – even after it had been lost for decades – appears to have had instant and unquestioned authority*. King Josiah unhesitatingly knew the written “Thus saith the Lord” had authority even over the traditional teachings of the Levitical priests. And that faith-based humble reaction to the literal words in the Bible saved King Josiah's life (2 Ki 22:17-20). Let those that have ears to hear, hear.
- **The Talmud competes with the Bible:** In Babylon, the well-intentioned “cheat sheet” of the “as-memory-serves” Talmud gradually and subtly made *tradition* and *human books of theology* have more impact on God's people than the written word of God.
- **The Talmud and the rabbis who wrote it subverted authority:** Even as God's people went along with their well-intentioned new religious practices as implemented by their novice rabbis, everybody knew their new religion was merely a humanly-flawed collection of memories and good intentions. Therefore, *authority was demoted...*and every man doing that which was right in his own eyes was promoted.
- **The Jews' allegiance to their heritage as God's chosen people was weakened:** When the Jews were permitted to return to their God-given Promised Land, *a huge portion decided to remain in Babylon*.
- **The fragmentation of Judaism:** Over the next 600 years many Jews lost their love and allegiance for their homeland and, to a lesser extent, their religion. Millions of them – mostly voluntarily – moved and got settled in many areas away from Israel. In fact, long before the destruction of the temple in 70 AD, *the majority of Jewish people were already living outside of Judea!* It is wrongly believed by many people that it was the three Jewish wars from 66 to 135 AD that caused the Romans to move the bulk of Jews out of their Promised Land. The large number of Jews exported by the Roman army

pales when compared with the number that had already left. In fact, after the three Jewish wars, the main collection of Jewish religious scholars was no longer in Judea, it was in pagan Babylon.

The top six places the majority of Jews preferred to live in were:

1. **Alexandria**, Egypt was the capital of the Greek Ptolemaic Empire. It welcomed all Jews (Mt 2:13), and the Jewish community there grew to more than a million people. Another plus for Alexandria was its famous complex of libraries, which attracted many Hellenized Jewish scholars such as Philo (AOR p.H5-5).
2. **Antioch**, Syria was the capital of the Greek Seleucid Empire. It had the second-highest population of Jews (Ac 11:19,20). It was an attractive area, had a huge Enlightened library, and – since it sat on important trade routes for international commerce – was favored by many wealthier Jews.
3. **Tarsus**, Turkey was 150 miles west of Antioch. Tarsus was another popular home for Jews who didn't want to live in Judea. Tarsus, a city of the Roman Empire, is where the Apostle Paul grew up (Ac 21:39; 22:3) as a freeborn *Roman citizen*.
4. The island of **Cyprus**, off the southern coast of Turkey, was home to a huge number of "Cypriot Jews" (Ac 11:19,20).
5. **Cyrene** in north Africa (today's Libya) was a major city of the Greek Ptolemaic Empire. It had a famous school of Greek philosophy and a large population of Jews (Mt 27:32).
6. **Babylon** became popular during the Captivity, and became the permanent home of many Jews who didn't want to return to Israel. Babylon was part of the Jew-friendly Greek Seleucid Empire, which made it an easy place for Jews to transfer to and live in – which made it rival Alexandria's large Jewish population. Like Alexandria, it became an important center of Enlightened Jewish scholars.

These were the most popular places, but numerous Jews lived in many other locations; large numbers of them lived as far away as India and China.

When the Jews were released from the Babylonian Captivity and returned to Jerusalem, they built the Second Temple (which would be enlarged by Herod the Great in 20 BC) and attempted to put their lives back in order. However, over the next several centuries several divisive religious and political factions formed:

- **Levites and Hasmoneans/Maccabees.** The office of the high priest was usually occupied by people from these two groups, and, because the office of the high priest was in Jerusalem, these men became very political. Also, the fact that non-Levites were accepted as high priests was an indication that the Biblical tribal distinctions and God-assigned roles (such as, the Levites were the only ones who could be priests) were being replaced by the new "unifying" idea that they were all "Jews," and were therefore equal in every respect. Greek philosophy's equality was subverting the word of God.
- **Rabbis.** Having gotten used to rabbis and local-community synagogues in Babylon, this "rabbinic system" was installed in areas outside of Jerusalem after the return to Israel.
- **Pharisees.** This religious denomination formed to support and defend the legitimacy of human-invented rabbis, synagogues, and the "as-best-as-I-can-remember" Talmud. Some of their Talmudic traditions (such as the Biblically-correct resurrection of the dead) were conservative; but their non-Biblical traditions put them at odds with Christ and with Sadducees. Pharisees, to "compensate" for their extra-Biblical-but-well-intentioned beliefs tended to make public displays of how "religiously-pious" they were. Because of the Pharisees' support for the outlying synagogues, for rabbis, and for the accompanying "cheat sheet" Talmud, most of the Jews who supported the Pharisees were middle-to-lower-class conservatives who lived outside of Jerusalem in rural areas. These people helped the Pharisees become a political as well as a religious group. When Roman General Titus in 70 AD killed over a million Jews, destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, and carried many surviving Jews away into captivity, the surviving Pharisees and rabbis built on their doctrinal commonalities (i.e., synagogues and the Talmud), and gradually merged to form today's mainstream liberal "Rabbinic Judaism." During the Women's Liberation Movement of the 1920s, this theology/Talmud-based rabbinic Judaism began to "rethink" the ancient prohibition of female priests and rabbis, and the Talmud helped them decide they should begin ordaining female rabbis in 1935. Today even so-called "orthodox" forms of Judaism are ordaining women rabbis.
- **Sadducees.** This religious denomination formed to support and defend the literal written word of God, which made them opposed to extra-Biblical inventions such as rabbis, synagogues, and the Talmud. That tended to make the Sadducees conservative supporters of the original temple-based religion. However, while giving lip-service to the authority and sufficiency of Scripture, in practice they were liberal because they were overly impressed with *scholarship* (like today's theologians), were highly Enlightened by Greek philosophy's Reason, and therefore rationalized and rejected everything supernatural in the Bible such as the spirit realm and the resurrection. Because the Sadducees were sophisticatedly-Hellenized, and because they were Jerusalem/temple-centered, most of the Jews who supported them lived in or near Jerusalem, were wealthy, and had social and political connections. These "important" people helped the Sadducees become a political as well as a religious group. When General Titus in 70 AD destroyed the temple, burned and outlawed Bibles, and exterminated Jerusalem's social and political scene, the surviving Sadducees, having lost all of their power base, vanished from history, never to be seen again.
- **Herodians.** As their name implies, Herodians tended to be loyal supporters of the Herod family's political dynasty. The politically-minded Herodians were highly Enlightened and very unenthusiastic about religion. As a result, many of them moved to places that were "less religious" – such as the six destinations above.

- **Essenes.** With the above religious and political factions vying for power and influence, it is not surprising that a group like the Essenes formed. Their objective was to “come out from among them and be ye separate” to preserve their religious purity, so they lived scattered around Israel in quiet, private-living little groups that seem to have striven for a degree of self-sufficiency. Little is known about them, but because they were responsible for the **Dead Sea Scrolls**, we’ll encounter them again in chapter 5.

By about 150 BC (which was about 400 years after the Babylonian Captivity) in Israel – and almost everywhere else that Jews lived – many of them, having lived under Greek rule for 150 years, began having an easier time speaking Greek (which was rapidly becoming the universal language of the world) than speaking their dying Hebrew language. As a result, many Jews, especially those who lived away from Israel, began having their “Babylonian OT Hebrew” Bibles translated into Greek (called “Septuagint Bibles” by scholars) so they could read them more easily.

As more and more Jews decided to switch to Greek-language Bibles, it opened the “Bible translation business” to – well – *anybody* who spoke passable Greek and Hebrew. Not all of these “bilingual translators” (we know from examining some of the low-quality readings in the Septuagint manuscripts) were “scholarly.” And many of the later “bilingual translators” had had their religious views “broadened” by the humanistic Reason of the pagan Greek philosophers, which explains why some liberal Greek-language OTs added the Apocrypha to OT manuscripts such as the Vaticanus, the Sinaiticus, and the Alexandrinus, which date back as far as 325 AD. Contrast that with other Greek-language OTs that were created centuries before the Alexandrian manuscripts...and that had no Apocrypha. These earlier manuscripts include the Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus manuscripts, which date back to 126 AD.

THE FIRST JEWISH WAR: THE GREAT REVOLT (66-73 AD)

Judea was a relatively poor province on the eastern frontier of the Roman Empire, and for that reason a governorship in Judea was considered to be a dead-end job for career diplomats such as Pilate, Felix, Festus, and the Herod family. Many of the men (and their families) assigned to posts in Judea despised the area and couldn’t wait to get back to more civilized regions.

The early years of the New Testament (NT) era in and around Israel were marked by religious and political turmoil, civil unrest, and brutal warfare. The Jews caused much of this unrest because they had been leavened by Greek philosophical ideas like Equality, Freedom, Individualism, and Rebellion. Their unpredictable civil volatility made Jewish religious leaders, Pontius Pilate, and the Roman soldiers stationed in Jerusalem *afraid* of the mob’s potential for authority-disdaining, violent rebellion – which shows how unscriptural and Enlightened God’s people had become. That’s why, in about 56 AD, it took a *large* number of Roman soldiers (because the contingent of soldiers included two or more “centurions”) to protect Paul from being killed by the Jewish mob (see Ac 21:27,31-36).

When Paul was arrested, and while the other apostles were off preaching the NT all around the world, he spent several years in Israel – beginning in about 56 AD – proclaiming his innocence before **Herod Agrippa II** (a corrupt and wanton man famous for saying, “Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian” in Ac 26:28) and **Bernice** (Herod Agrippa II’s sister and lover who’d had three husbands before she moved in with him); **Felix** (a crooked procurator of Judea) and **Drusilla** (the ambitious and beautiful divorcee who became Felix’s second wife, and who was the younger sister of Herod Agrippa II and Bernice); and **Festus** (who replaced Felix as procurator) (Ac 24&25). Paul declared that he wanted to be judged by **Caesar Augustus**, who was the young, despicable **Nero**. So, Paul was taken to Rome to be judged by the callous emperor who allegedly “played the fiddle” (fiddles didn’t exist then) in 64 AD while a large fire destroyed part of Rome – which he blamed on Jews, whom he hated and executed as scapegoats. He also executed Christians, not because they were any kind of threat, but because, as the famous Roman historian Tacitus said, Christians had “anti-social tendencies” because they kept quietly to themselves, didn’t participate in popular pagan religious ceremonies, and – like the Jews – considered pagans to be mere dogs. (Nero may not have known he had Christians in his employ – **Philip 4:22**.) It is believed the murderous Nero executed people using sadistically-gruesome means, some of them in gladiatorial arenas. (But not in the famous Coliseum in Rome because it hadn’t been built yet). He probably executed the Apostle Paul, who appeared before him at least two times:

2 Tim 4 postscript: The second *epistle* unto Timotheus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians, was written from Rome, when Paul was brought before Nero the second time.

Meanwhile, the festering unrest in Israel (that had already influenced so many Jews to emigrate to other countries) erupted in 66 AD. The Jews rose up against Gentiles in general and against Roman rule in particular. Aided by surprise, Jewish militias quickly overwhelmed and massacred the Roman soldiers garrisoned in places like Jerusalem and Nazareth. Then the Jews captured and massacred the small Roman force stationed at the fortress on the high cliffs of Masada overlooking the Dead Sea. (The Masada fortress had been built a century earlier by King Herod the Great as a just-in-case last-ditch refuge for himself.) Rome’s Emperor Nero responded by ordering the Roman military unit garrisoned in Antioch, Syria, to quell the Jewish rebellion.

Surprisingly, the Jewish forces *crushed* the military unit from Antioch, and the revolt escalated into bitter, desperate warfare. This time, Emperor Nero sent four army legions under the command of **General Vespasian** (9-79 AD) to regain control of Judea. Vespasian made his son, **General Titus** (39-81 AD), second-in-command. The four legions were joined by forces under King Herod Agrippa II, who, accompanied by his seductress sister, Bernice, had been forced to flee Jerusalem by Jewish rebels who captured and heavily fortified the city. Generals Vespasian and Titus, assisted by Herod Agrippa’s forces, began a campaign to wipe out Jewish rebels and civilians in the regions of Judea outside of Jerusalem. During this war, the bed-hopping Bernice seduced second-in-command General Titus, who was 11 years younger than she...and she remained his mistress, off and on, for over a decade.

Meanwhile back in Rome, Emperor Nero, embroiled in political and civil turmoil, committed suicide in 68 AD at the age of 30, and General Vespasian was recalled to Rome to become the next emperor. Before he sailed from Judea’s Mediterranean coast, Vespasian promoted his son Titus to commander-in-chief and left him to end the Jews’ Great Revolt. Titus besieged Jerusalem, which was teeming with residents and refugees...who were bitterly divided over their situation.

4 Chapter 2: Ms MESS

The War on the Word

Sadducees and Hasmoneans, who lived in Jerusalem, were trapped within its walls with many Pharisees from the surrounding countryside who were in Jerusalem seeking safety. These groups, who had trouble getting along with each other in the best of times, under the fear and stress of war cowardly stooped to betraying each other – thus helping Titus more quickly conquer Jerusalem in 70 AD. Over a million Jews were killed and almost 100,000 more were sold into slavery. Titus then ordered his army to besiege the high fortress at Masada, to which the remaining Jews had fled...and he then sailed to Rome (leaving Bernice behind) to serve under his now-Roman-emperor dad. At Masada the besieged Jewish rebels and their families (almost 1,000 people) avoided defeat and slavery by choosing to commit mass suicide jumping from the high cliffs, or by agreeing to kill each other in order to avoid suicide.

Several years after the Great Revolt, Herod Agrippa and Bernice – now that they had friends in high places (Bernice's lover, Titus, was now in Rome) – were transferred to Rome where Herod Agrippa was given a government post...and Bernice resumed her affair with the young Titus.

The Jew's Great Revolt was a disaster. The city of Jerusalem was destroyed. The 550-year-old temple Ezra had built after the Babylonian Captivity, which had been enlarged by Herod the Great, and from which merchants and moneychangers were driven by Christ, was destroyed. The Levitical priesthood, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees disappeared forever...and the few rabbis who survived – and who didn't flee from Judea – struggled to keep the Jewish religion and local population from the same kind of extinction suffered by the northern kingdom's 'Lost Ten Tribes.'

With the temple and the priesthood gone, and because much of Judea had been reduced to rubble and many of its people killed or carried away, many of the Pharisees and rabbis fled to Babylon. There they joined the rabbis that had remained in Babylon after the Babylonian Captivity ended, and they all began adding to the Talmud, which became even more important. Thousands of people would contribute to the Talmud over the next couple of hundred years and it would grow to well over 6,000 pages.

History doesn't know much about many of the people who participated in events in the Bible. But we do have a few details about what happened to some of those who messed with God and His people:

- **Herod the Great**, who had the babies of Bethlehem killed, is believed by historians to have died a horribly painful death from kidney disease and gangrene of his genitals.
- **Herod Agrippa I**, who persecuted the church, also died an excruciating and gruesome death (Ac 12:1-3,23).
- **Emperor Nero's** short, sadistic, volatile life suggests he may have had a few bats in his belfry. Knowing he was despised and targeted for execution, he fled Rome to hide in the countryside. When he learned a Roman cavalry unit sent to find and arrest him was approaching, he had a servant help him fatally stab himself in the throat because he couldn't bring himself to do it alone.
- **General Vespasian** became emperor of the Roman Empire. He began the construction of the famous Roman Coliseum in the year 72. In June of 79 he escaped the summer heat of Rome by going to a family country retreat. He caught an awful ailment accompanied by severe diarrhea, and died smelling his own mortality.
- **General Titus** succeeded his dad as Emperor in June of 79, and one of his first politically-driven actions was to terminate his scandalous affair with Bernice, who was extremely unpopular in Roman high society. He also resumed construction on the Coliseum...but less than two months later had to suspend construction in order to send emergency rescue-and-relief crews to the city of Pompeii when Mount Vesuvius erupted in August of 79 AD. The rescue crews couldn't find Pompeii; it was buried. Titus then completed the Coliseum in 80 AD. And in 81 AD after only two years in office he died suddenly of an ailment under mysterious circumstances while vacationing at the same retreat where his father died two years before. The next year, appreciative Romans built the famous, "Arch of Titus," which is still standing today, to commemorate his military victory over Jerusalem in 70 AD, and they built the arch near the Coliseum that he and his father built, which is also still standing today.
- **Herod Agrippa II**, after the Jew's Great Revolt, was recalled to Rome and given an official position. However, he was a pariah because of his sexual relationship with his unpopular sluttish sister. He was Herod the Great's great grandson, died childless, and thus ended the Herodian Dynasty.
- **Bernice** became Titus' mistress again when she returned to Rome with her brother. But when Emperor Titus broke off his affair with her, she and her brother became unpopular, were excluded from the social scene, and vanished.
- The beautiful, ambitious **Drusilla**, the younger sister of both Bernice and Herod Agrippa II, moved from Judea to Rome with her second husband, the corrupt Felix. (He disappears from history, and may have died of a respiratory ailment.) In the summer of 79, Drusilla, to escape the heat and humidity of Rome, went to visit her adult son and his wife in the luxurious coastal resort city of Pompeii (population 11,000) on the shores of the Bay of Naples. She died screaming with her expensively-coiffed hair on fire: In the early afternoon of 24 August, this Jewess who had discoursed with the Apostle Paul, heard *and felt* the volcanic mountain, Vesuvius, which was only 5 miles from Pompeii and towered 4,200 feet above it, undergo a catastrophic, explosive, earthquake-causing eruption that showered Pompeii with ash and fiery rock from 1 to 5 inches in diameter. That hellish shower set combustible-roofed buildings on fire, caused injuries and deaths to people who ventured outside, and drove everyone else into the shelter of buildings that had nonflammable clay-tiled roofs – the tiles of which were heated by the fiery shower to 265 degrees Fahrenheit. This bombardment went on for over 18 hours, during which high-pressure magma-heated volcanic steam blew a frighteningly-massive column of thickly-viscous noxious volcanic gas, flames, ash, magma, cinders, pumice, and chunks of newly-formed glass 20 miles straight up into the sky. Early the next morning the upward eruption ended...and gravity then caused the huge towering inferno to collapse straight down onto the slopes of Vesuvius where, like a 400- to 572-degree-Fahrenheit tidal wave (paper bursts into flame at 451 degrees Fahrenheit) roaring downhill at over 300 miles per hour, it slammed into Pompeii, quickly roasting everyone and burying the city. Pompeii remained buried and lost until it was discovered more than 1,500 years later.

THE SECOND JEWISH WAR: THE KITOS WAR (115-117 AD)

When the Roman army devastated Jerusalem and Judea in 70 AD, most of the Jewish population went untouched because – as pointed out earlier – most of them didn't live in Judea. At first, these Jews kept their heads down because the First Jewish War had made Jews fairly unpopular. However, the fact that the Jews' national, religious, and historical identity had revolved around the now non-existent Jerusalem; and the fact that Rome levied a tax on Jews throughout the empire to help pay for the expenses of the Great Revolt (soon to be called the First Jewish War because the Jews were going to rise up again), caused deep resentment within Jewish communities; they felt adrift, unappreciated, uncertain about their future as a people, and defensively decided they were wrongly burdened. Then in 115 AD their simmering hatred made them think they saw an opportunity they couldn't pass up.

In 115 AD the Roman Empire was involved in a major war in the eastern part of its empire in areas in and around Babylon against the expanding Parthian Empire. During the war Rome kept reserve troops garrisoned in the rear of the fighting in places west of Babylon like northern Africa, Judea, Syria, Cyprus, Turkey, and Greece. The presence of these reserve troops had kept the peace where they were garrisoned. But the war with the Parthians hadn't been going very well for Rome, so these reserve troops were ordered to move up to the eastern front to help with the fighting – which left the reserve garrisons with very few soldiers to maintain order and to protect both the civilian populations and the families of the now-absent soldiers. The isolated soldiers, civilians, and families in these now-unprotected regions were caught completely off guard when their previously-peaceful Jewish neighbors suddenly turned against them with savage, sadistic, murderous, senseless, merciless rage. The Jews quickly gained the upper hand in the fighting because there was little effective resistance, and when they realized they had control, their killing became sport of the most shocking and appalling kind imaginable – the kind that shows we humans truly do differ nothing from beasts. Some statistics: The Jewish insurrectionists in Cyrene (Libya), using indescribable atrocities, slaughtered 220,000 people. In Alexandria the inhumane slaughter was accompanied by looting, burning the city, and destroying temples and monuments. On the island of Cyprus 240,000 were killed. Roman troops were quickly moved to these areas, hoping to save as many of their relatives, friends, and comrades as possible. However, these common soldiers were completely unprepared for the kinds of inhuman butchery they found...which caused them to retaliate by tearfully and angrily *annihilating* the Jews in Alexandria, Cyrene, and Cyprus. In Cyrene the Jews' uprising had come so close to killing *everybody* that Rome had to begin a massive program of resettlement by having people relocate there from other areas.

This Kitos – or, Second – War added to the general worldwide dislike people already had for Jews.

THE THIRD JEWISH WAR: THE BAR KOKHBA REVOLT (132-135 AD)

Rome decided it needed to proactively prevent future Jewish uprisings. The solution it came up with was to sever the Jews from their history by eradicating the names "Israel," "Judea," and "Jerusalem." Rome made Judea merge with Syria (making the large army garrison in Antioch more involved with Judea), and the merged result was named "Syria Palestina" – an ancient name that existed before the Philistines, and from which the Philistines got their name. Jerusalem was renamed "Aelia Capitolina," which combined one of the names of the Roman Emperor, Hadrian, with a word linked to the Roman god, Jupiter. Appropriately enough, Hadrian had two statues erected on the old site of Jerusalem's temple – one of himself, and one of Jupiter. (Hadrian was plagued by bad health, an unhappy marriage, and an unhappy life.) Aelia Capitolina (Jerusalem) was not to be the capital of Syria Palestina; for several reasons Antioch became the capital – its historic, ancient, lucrative trade routes; its large army garrison; and its overall beauty. (Those ancient trade routes were supposedly where the campfire tales originated that became the literary collection called *The Arabian Nights* – with its famous characters such as Sinbad the sailor, Ali Baba and his thieves, and Aladdin and his lamp.)

As the Romans generously and forgivingly prepared to rebuild what was to be Aelia Capitolina, a Jewish rebel militia leader who was called Bar Kokhba (his real name was Bar Koseva), effectively used guerrilla warfare to inflict heavy casualties on Romans. One of the local rabbis encouraged Jews to enlist with Bar Kokhba by telling everybody Bar Kokhba was their messiah. Embarrassed by the small number of resulting volunteers who doubted that he was their messiah, an angry Bar Kokhba slaughtered both peaceful Jews who refused to join the rebellion, and Jews who had converted to Christianity. Rome, fed up with these rebellions, amassed a *huge* army (from as far away as Britain and the Danube River region of Europe!) and attempted to obliterate this and any future revolts by razing over a thousand villages and towns in Syria Palestina. Bar Kokhba retreated to a fortified city, but was found, besieged, and killed. It is estimated that 750,000 Jews died of fighting, disease, and famine. Many thousands more were sold into slavery. The Jewish religion was outlawed, and Jews who were caught practicing it were brutally dealt with. The Hebrews' huge sacred Bible scroll was confiscated and burned on the rubble of the temple mount.

Not surprisingly, many surviving Jews decided to move away; the temple and their priesthood were gone, their way of life and worship were gone, and their country was in shambles. It looked like even the new "Rabbinic Judaism" under the leadership of local rabbis might become extinct. The few rabbis left in Syria Palestina worried that if large numbers of the surviving Jews moved away, the Jews' national and religious identity would perish. So, the rabbis stood up and loudly proclaimed that moving away from Israel was nothing short of idolatry – but this only kept a small remnant of Jews in "Palestine." Disappointed and discouraged, Rabbinic Judaism gradually abandoned belief in a literal messiah by making the messiah a spiritualized, meaningless, allegorical abstraction. If the Jews had believed the literal Scriptures of the Old Testament, they would have worshipped their literal Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ according to Ac 24:14). But they didn't believe the Scriptures...and became casualties of their own hatred and the wars they started.

The three Jewish wars help illustrate the fact that the Roman Empire was in decline; it no longer had large enough armies to keep the peace, and shuttling army units back and forth to fight against uprisings was merely *reacting*, not *controlling*.

The surviving Jews, after their three rebellions against their worldly authorities, lived in small, despised groups scattered around the world, and – like gypsies – had no national home or identity. It is not wrong to add the Jews to the above

list of people who messed with God and His people...and then suffered. The Jews would not regain possession of their homeland (*Israel*, not “Palestine”) until 1948 after World War II, a period of 1,813 years. The survival of the Jews, the survival of their distinct identity, and their return to Israel are unique in human history – even miraculous.

THE GREAT COMMISSION: SPREADING THE WORD

The Confusion of Languages

In the previous chapter we saw that the word of God *in whatever form* – whether it be the “original-autograph language,” or a “pagan” language, or a translation, or a translation of a translation – defies modern theological attempts to glorify one form and to debase another form. God confused the languages spoken by His people all over the world (Ge 11), and He used many of those “pagan” tongues in Acts 2.

Before Stephen was stoned, he gave – in his own words – a lengthy summation of certain parts of the Old Testament (Ac 6:8-7:60). And God included that in His Book as *Scripture*. Also, the NT often quotes OT verses using slightly different words. In those instances, we learn that neither the *language* (Hebrew vs. Greek) nor the exact *wording* is the important thing; *it's the message*. God's word is *truth*, no matter what words or languages accurately convey that truth. (As we'll see, before the King James Bible identified itself as *the authoritative word of God* by being the only version or manuscript on Earth that perfectly fits God's definition of His holy word, the printing press and “scholarly textual criticism” were causing Christianity to begin questioning the accuracy and trustworthiness of God's word. In other words, the KJV came out because there was an *unprecedented* modern-era need for an inerrant Bible manuscript.)

When God's apostles, evangelists, converts, and witnesses spread the Good News in accordance with the Great Commission, they did so via spoken and written languages...and as we saw in the previous chapter, language usage, vocabulary, and grammar can – based on conditions such as enslavement, captivity, and regional changes and interactions with different cultures and languages – change so rapidly that even the language spoken and written by God's Hebrews over the centuries had to be *translated* into newer forms of Hebrew in order to be intelligible to His people. The problem with modern Bible versions is they are not trying to make the relatively few “archaic” words in the KJV more intelligible to people by including footnoted word definitions; they are exalting old corrupt manuscripts to “justify” producing “Bibles” that are impure, untrue, and have radically different words – thereby subverting faith and casting doubt on the veracity and reliability of the literal *Thus saith the Lord*. We know Hebrew was a complex, sophisticated, and difficult language, and in chapter 5 we'll examine the centuries-long attempt by the pagan Masoretes to salvage and publish the Old Testament. But now let's examine the Greek language used to write the New Testament.

“The Greek”

- **Classical Greek:** Prior to about 330 BC, the Greek language (spoken by the famous Greek philosophers and writers such as Homer, Plato, Aristotle, and Thucydides) was the so-called “Classical Greek.” This Classical Greek, however, had many regional dialects that could be difficult or impossible even for Greek-speaking people in other regions to understand.
- **Koine Greek:** In about 330 BC, Alexander the Great began conquering the known world, which resulted in the establishment of Greek-speaking empires. When Alexander formed his huge army, its soldiers came from many different regions that spoke different local Greek dialects. To be able to communicate with each other in the army, these often-unlearned soldiers gradually developed a “soldiers’ Greek” by blending their regional dialects into an informal “street Greek” or “vernacular Greek” – which is usually called Koine Greek. Koine Greek had no rules of grammar, no standardized pronunciation, and used, as often as possible, simple words. As a result, noun-verb agreement, proper use of adverbs and adjectives, and correct spelling were rendered unimportant by the necessary expedient of *communicating*. It was very common for people to use technically-incorrect words because they didn't know the proper words – they expected the context to enable the listener/reader to figure out what meaning was intended. As these soldiers went all over the world, they spread this informal, non-standardized mishmash Koine Greek to the locals they conquered...and it became the universal language for over a thousand years. Not surprisingly, the different conquered regions often blended their own languages – such as the various regional dialects of Aramaic – with their newly-imposed “street Greek.” Did the apostles use Koine Greek to write *all* of their NT epistles? Nobody has ever seen an original or a direct copy of an original, so nobody really *knows*. But because “street Greek” was the universal language of the world, and because of some characteristics of some of the NT writings, it is commonly accepted that at least much of the Lord's Great Commission was initially carried out using this informal Koine Greek. (Speaking of Koine Greek: Because Christ was a *Hebrew*, some denominations insist on using His *Hebrew* name, “Yeshua” (and variations of it), because the *Greek* form, “Iesous,” used in the Greek NT epistles, and the *English* form, “Jesus,” are not the “original” “sacred” Hebrew. In the previous chapter we saw that none of the several different variations of the Hebrew language over the centuries was anything close to being “sacred.” The only thing special about languages is *communication* – not *language*.) An important thing to keep in mind about the Koine Greek in ancient Bible manuscripts: Koine Greek is *not* the kind of “language” that we identify with. Koine Greek is a *random* mixture of the following ingredients: Classical Greek from *different regions* of Greece that were difficult or impossible to understand by Greek-speakers from other regions; add to those problematic regional differences the often-encountered fact that people commonly used technically-incorrect words to say things they hope the listener/reader will know what they *really meant* to say. (Example: before I learned the proper Spanish word for testicles, I'd say, “He has big *pelotas*,” which literally refers to balls used in soccer or football, and Spanish-speakers knew from the context what I really meant.) In different language-speaking regions the Koine Greek spoken by soldiers stationed in that region was often “corrupted” by the commonly-used local language. (Example: In south Texas decades ago the Spanish “ferrocarril” (iron train or railroad car) was often bastardized by the English “railroad tracks” into “trackee,” which is *still* too localized and informal to make its way into Spanish dictionaries.) NT manuscripts were copied and recopied for 1,500 years before the printing press began to stabilize text, but the many, many different languages and dialects NT manuscripts were copied into morphed and changed to various degrees

(sometimes major changes, sometimes minor changes) so that translators in one century might use a different word from a translator in the next century...and that process happened during 15 centuries! Sometimes, personal factors influenced translator's work, such as education, morality, the "latest common usage," etc: (My dad's schooling educated him more in the works of Shakespeare than did mine a generation later, so I grew up hearing him using Shakespearian quotes that applied to various situations (just like you and I quote the Bible in certain situations). Therefore, before I used expressions like "hoist on his own petard" in *AOR*, I first made sure you'd be able to easily find out its meaning before I used it. And when I use "doesn't know his rear end from a hole in the ground," I do so thinking it is common enough or obvious enough that you'll understand the meaning of my "Koine/street English." My doing so is a result of my effort to either honor a father I loved and respected, or to be the kind of person you can identify with...which brings me to my point that there are so many various factors – over many centuries – that affected the many well-intentioned very-human translators of the NT (as did the relatively-few factors that affected *me* when writing *AOR* and this *WOW*), that there is no way we can definitively state many manuscript passages in Koine Greek – *because there is no definitive "Koine Greek!" ...and you'd think modern scholars would understand and apply that fact when pontificating about this reading or that reading in the NT...but they don't!* This is but one of the reasons the impressively-knowlegeable **Hugh Broughton** (we'll get to him in chapter 8) believed his omission from the translation committee of the King James Bible would result in its being but another of the many pedestrian "mere Bible versions" that preceded the KJV...and that have – as we have seen – succeeded the KJV. Overall point: when someone tells you he "speaks the Greek of the original manuscripts," you should realize – on so many valid levels – he has no idea what he's talking about! And therefore the only Christ-honoring alternative we born-again saints have is to combine the inconclusive evidence (some of which I've detailed in my writings) with the miraculously-unique evidence of the text of the KJV to stand by faith and belief on the literal, English, universal living-language words of the Authorized 1611 King James Bible.

- **Byzantine Greek:** When the growing Roman Empire took over the Greek-speaking empires established by Alexander's generals, Latin became almost as widely-used as Greek. In Judea that resulted in three "official" languages being spoken – Latin, Koine Greek, and Hebrew. A fourth language, a regional "street Aramaic," was also commonly used. But it was the "big three" – Hebrew, Greek, and Latin – that Pontius Pilate used to write the superscription for Christ's cross. (These "big three" languages would become universally associated with the written word of God for *well over a thousand years*.) Two historic events caused the *informal* Koine Greek spoken by the masses to begin transitioning to a more *formalized* Greek called *Byzantine Greek* or *Medieval Greek*:
 - First, in 330 AD the capital of the Roman Empire was moved from Rome to Turkey to the Greek-speaking city of Byzantium, which was renamed Constantinople (today it's called Istanbul). With the Latin-speaking Roman government now relocated to the center of the Greek-speaking eastern Mediterranean region, the previous *informality* of Koine Greek became influenced and changed by the *formal* precision of Latin.
 - Second, in 395 AD the government in Constantinople decided to divide its empire because the weakened (and dying) Roman Empire had become too vast to manage and defend effectively. Rome would therefore be reestablished as the capital of the western part of the empire, and it would have its own emperor who ruled over, appropriately enough, the "Roman" Empire. The existing capital of Constantinople would rule the eastern part of the empire, with its emperor ruling the "Byzantine" Empire. In order to differentiate their empires, Rome promoted the use of Latin, and Constantinople began promoting Greek instead of Latin. Over the centuries, especially now that the government in Constantinople had made Greek the official language of its empire, Koine Greek developed more consistency and predictability as it morphed into the more formal "Byzantine Greek" of the Latin-influenced Byzantine Empire.
- **Modern Greek:** About a thousand years later, in 1453 AD, the introduction of gunpowder helped the Muslim hoards conquer Constantinople – marking the end of the Byzantine Empire. Greek usage quickly died out everywhere except in Greece itself and a few neighboring areas. With Greek now limited to a small area, it was easier to formalize and standardize Greek grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and pronunciation...and modern Greek was born.

THE GREAT COMMISSION: THE WRITTEN WORD

When the apostles wrote the NT epistles it is believed they used papyrus and parchment (2 Tim 4:13). Over decades and centuries, the Old and New Testament books were copied and recopied to preserve and spread the gospel. A brief look at the "paper" that was used back then:

Papyrus was made from reeds grown in north Africa. Papyrus was a thin paper-like material used like we use paper today. (Our word *paper* is derived from *papyrus*.) It is believed papyrus was first manufactured in Egypt in about 350 BC. If undisturbed, papyrus could last for a long time in hot, dry climates; but humidity quickly caused it to fall apart and decay. When papyrus was used in a *scroll*, the constant rolling and unrolling caused it to crack, break, and lose parts. And when flat sheets of papyrus were bound into "codex" form (a book), turning the pages eventually caused cracking, breaking, and lost pages. (Theologians don't think using English words like *book* and *books* is very impressive, so they use the Latin words *codex* and *codices* instead; their emphasis is language – not *communication*. Just remember that a book and a codex are the same thing.) The convenience of the new *codex*/book form made the number of books in circulation increase until the number of books equaled that of traditional scrolls by about 300 or 400 AD. By about 550 AD people quit making scrolls. The codex form also lasted longer, and because it lay flat and its pages could be written on both sides, even multiple copies were easier to transport and store. Therefore, a *flimsy* papyrus codex could easily (depending on circumstances) outlast a *durable* vellum scroll.

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The War on the Word

Parchment was also used to write on, and it was more durable than papyrus. Parchment was made by taking the hide of animals like sheep, goats, camels, pigs, donkeys, deer, and cattle, scraping them to remove the flesh so the hide was thin, and then drying them.

Vellum was originally made exclusively from cow hides, which some people thought made better “paper” than the skins of other animals. However, if cows really did make better paper than other animals, the difference was so slight that paper makers began using all the other animals and selling them as “vellum” – so in practice the distinction between vellum and parchment vanished and the words became synonymous.

Paper is similar to papyrus, but much more durable in humidity and in use. It’s made from cellulose pulp, which is produced by pressing wood, rags, or grasses. In about 1300 AD in Europe, early paper mills along rivers and streams used flowing water to turn their rollers to make paper. By the mid-1400s paper had all but replaced parchment in Europe. For example, beginning in 1455 Gutenberg used his printing press to publish Bibles, and most of his Bibles were printed on paper. But a few were printed on animal-hide parchment/vellum for customers who wanted to imitate the “authenticity” of the old Bible manuscripts. The problem with early paper was similar to that of parchment/vellum: Water-powered paper mills were too slow and inefficient to make paper *abundant* and *affordable* enough to be used by everybody for everything. That’s why paper didn’t become a major part of modern life until the Industrial Revolution (1760-1840) enabled quick, cheap, mass-production of paper.

In practice (before the Industrial Revolution), animal skins (vellum/parchment) were durable, long lasting, and available everywhere – but at a steep price. Pressed reed pith (papyrus), on the other hand, while easier to produce, tended to get dry and brittle or to get wet and decay...and the reeds were only grown in north Africa, which made it a limited commodity whose shipping costs drove up the price. For those reasons the use of papyrus died out shortly before 800 AD. Most of the old Bible manuscripts we have today were written on more-durable animal hides.

THE GREAT COMMISSION: SURVIVING WITNESSES

We think the apostles completed their work of spreading the gospel by about 100 AD. By 500 AD we know their writings had been translated into more than 500 of the world’s languages. Today we have several types of surviving written sources – called “witnesses” – that were used to record and spread the gospel:

Scripture manuscripts

I will call them “Scripture” manuscripts here instead of “Bible” manuscripts to stress the fact that *most manuscripts* – because they were handwritten and therefore bulky and unwieldy – contained *only a small part of the Bible*. For example, when Luke penned the epistle of Acts, it was between 50-120 pages long depending on the size of the papyrus or parchment pages he used. Because of the bulkiness of old handwritten Bible epistles, it was common for Christians to have from zero to several epistles/books. And because papyrus was usually cheaper than parchment (if you were fairly close to Egypt), the fragility of papyrus made it all too common for Christians to have only *fragments* of epistles. In 400 AD, for example, if somebody wanted the *entire* New Testament, he had to buy parchments and hire scribes to hand-copy everything. He’d need enough parchments for his scribes to write from 365-880 pages (depending on handwriting and page size) for the NT. To begin his task, the scribe had to go find and buy or borrow all the books/scrolls that make up the NT...some of which would be fragile papyrus and some fairly-durable parchment. If they had all been written in the scribe’s language, he just needed to copy them (not translate them). It was a long, tedious, boring job. It was all-too-human, therefore, for him to get distracted and **inadvertently skip the underlined** in this exemplified segment of Scripture from Mk 9:28,29:

...his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting. And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee...

A commonly-encountered problem when copying Bible manuscripts back then was incomplete codices and scrolls (missing pages, groups of pages, and parts of pages), especially if they were made of papyrus. For example, theologians and scholars know that *expensive, complete* Old and New Testament manuscripts (which were very rare compared with *cheaper, incomplete* manuscripts) were usually copied from *multiple* scrolls and codices of both papyrus and parchment in widely-varying conditions. If the book of Mark had gotten old and brittle, and the last portion of the scroll or the last page or pages of the codex had broken off, the scribe might not know it and he’d therefore think he’d finished copying Mark when in reality the last 12 verses were missing. However, we know some of the scribes had written ways to indicate Scripture was missing. For example, in many of the old handwritten Bible manuscripts that have missing parts of Scripture, the copyists, apparently knowing verses were missing from the source document, either *left a blank space* large enough to later add the missing Scripture to their document if they could get their hands on a complete copy...or they put special marks in the page margin where the missing verses should be. It was also common for manuscripts at the very end to have distinctive marks or text to indicate *The End* of the book. Some of the *very few* manuscripts that do not have the complete ending of Mark, have something else that is missing: none of them contains the text or distinctive mark indicating *The End* – because it wasn’t the end. But that doesn’t stop some scholars from theorizing that – for example – the last 12 verses of Mark were invented and added by somebody, that these inventions were then wrongly copied into manuscripts all over the world, and therefore “probably” don’t belong there.

Scholars have a similar problem with the book of John. Based on “expert textual criticism,” scholars *for centuries* claimed that corrupt men back in about the year 400 AD, altered the first 14 chapters of the book of John to emphasize Christ’s divinity. This theory was “proven” by the fact that we hadn’t found any pre-400 AD manuscript fragments that “supported” the text that existed in most younger copies of John worldwide. Then in 1952 **Papyrus Bodmer II** (called **P66**) was dug up in Egypt’s very dry climate. P66 dates back to 150-300 AD (which makes it a lot older than the Alexandrian manuscripts), and it proves the centuries-old “scholarly position” that John was deceitfully rewritten in 400 AD was as wrong as it could be. Scholars react by ignoring their error and trying to change the subject by emphasizing that P66 – like the Alexandrian manuscripts and

P75 – doesn't have the episode about the woman taken in adultery/first cast a stone (Jn 8:2-11). They are correct...but they hope you won't know the Alexandrian manuscripts and P75 both have an unusual mark *right where the adulteress episode should be* – as if the scribe knew it should be there and wasn't happy that it wasn't. (P75, also dug up in the 1950s, dates back to 225-350 AD, and is loved by scholars because its two books have about an 85% textual agreement with the Alexandrian family...perhaps because its location and type of use preserved 85% of the original text – so that only 15% needed to be copied from other available manuscripts that happened to be from other “families.”)

The bottom line is this: sometimes Scripture is missing from old manuscripts, and it really might be that the strange marks in the margin where the missing verses should go are indeed calling attention to the fact that those verses need to be added...*but neither missing verses nor marginal marks are proofs*. We just don't *know*. *And there are many other unsolvable disputes and questions about many texts in the Bible*. That fact is why some people have been able to make their living researching, speculating, and arguing about which wording might be correct...*and then dying without solving a single thing!* That's why, even though the ending of the book of Mark *is included in the vast majority of manuscripts*, theologians have continued impotently whining and furiously debating it for over 1,700 years! These scholars' *perverse disputings* and *doting about questions and strifes of words (1 Tim 6:4,5)* were finally, beginning in 1611 AD, put to rest for most Christians when the King James Bible's *miraculously-inerrant text* was recognized as of a lamb without blemish and without spot (1 Pe 1:19); the *substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (He 11:1)*; it became one of many infallible proofs (Ac 1:3) for which the faithful quietly thanked God *with joy unspeakable and full of glory (1 Pe 1:8)*. For all Christian soldiers of every era the answer has always been a matter of faith in God and His word. Amen.

Early NT translations into various languages

Some of the early Bible versions ranging from 177-450 AD include the Gallic Bible of southern France, various dialects of the Coptic Bible of Egypt, the Armenian Bible, the Gothic Bible, various dialects of the Syriac Bible, the Georgian Bible, the Ethiopian Bible, the Slavonic Bible, the Old Latin Bible, and the Latin Vulgate Bible. Some of these Bible manuscripts do not seem to be “official” because they are not only incomplete, they seem to have been deliberately shortened by faithful groups of believers doing their best to have access to the word of God in their language. For example, translating the whole Bible or the whole New Testament was a project too large and too expensive for most groups of early Christian converts, so they went out and found whatever manuscripts in whatever language they could get their hands on and translated *selected portions* of the NT in well-intentioned efforts to capture the greatly-abbreviated “essence” of God's treasured message in a small manuscript they could afford. They just wanted to learn the Bible. And they had no idea if it was a “good” manuscript from this “family” or that “family” or not.

Because the Alexandrian manuscripts, especially the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, date back to about 325-425 AD, manuscripts that support the text of the KJV that are older than 400 AD are attacked by liberal scholars who use anything they can to discredit them. A good example is the Syriac version of the Peshitta Bible manuscript (260 copies exist) that date back as far as about 150-175 AD. Proponents of the KJV like to point out that the Peshitta manuscripts were produced in the region of Antioch, are older than the Alexandrian manuscripts, and could possibly have been handled by some of the Apostles. The Peshitta's text is corroborated by other ancient witnesses older than the Alexandrian family...such as Old Latin Bible manuscripts and Scripture quoted in documents written by early church fathers. Interesting – even impressive – information...but it proves nothing...and the arguments rage on.

Documents by early church fathers

Early preachers and scholars frequently quoted Scripture in their writings. Many of their surviving writings are older than Bible manuscripts. In fact, when scholars claimed the oldest – and therefore the “best” manuscripts – did not have the last 12 verses of Mark, and therefore the verses were supposedly added centuries later for unknown reasons, it was discovered that a large number of early Christian writings that were centuries *older* than the so-called ‘best’ manuscripts *had quotes that contained all of the last 12 verses of Mark*. When Bible believers wanted to know how all of these ancient Christians in their writings quoted Scripture *that didn't even exist until it was ‘invented’ centuries later*, scholars responded with incoherent, nonsensical theories.

Early lectionaries for church sermons

Lectionaries were collections of Scripture read in church on certain days throughout the year. They were mostly introductory readings that gave pewsters background information about topics covered by that day's sermon. Lectionary readings were good ways for people who had no access to bulky handwritten Bible manuscripts to quickly and efficiently become familiar with the Bible's teachings. Scripture quotes in lectionaries also – like early documents – often support the validity of the text of the KJV. For this reason, lectionaries are almost completely ignored by scholars who think *early writings should only be used if they subvert God's word!* I say again –! Sometimes lectionaries would quote the same Bible verse two or three different ways, which suggests early Christians thought faithfully presenting the *message* (like Stephen did in Acts 7) was more important than making sure they got all the words of the quote – and their order – exactly right. In other words, *they lived in an era when humble Christians read and listened thirstily with faith*...whereas in modern times the leaven of Reason has made *what-is-truth* skeptics of us; we're listening for ways we can attack the word of God.

New Testament Manuscript “families”

Four areas in the Roman Empire have been singled out as having numerous Christians who were actively involved in copying Bible manuscripts, and scholars have used these areas to develop confusing and hotly-debated “families” of manuscripts that are identified by some of their regionally-distinctive texts. The usual “families” that come up are the Majority Text, the Caesarian Text, the Western Text, and the Alexandrian Text. However, because *the Majority family* has the overwhelming majority of manuscripts, and because *the other three families* collectively contain so few manuscripts that have relatively insignificant numbers of textual differences, many scholars lump the Caesarian, Western, and Alexandrian into a

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single “Minority” family – often just referred to as the “Alexandrian Text” because it is the Alexandrian group that is used to attack the reliability of the King James Bible. I say again (2 Cor 11:16), if the King James Bible did not exist no modern-era Christians would believe the word of God (as He defines it) exists, and the culture war against God’s way of life would already be won by the Devil.

To be clear: These “families” apply to NT manuscripts only – usually only to Greek-language NT manuscripts. When focusing on OT manuscripts, you’d be talking about the Hebrew-language Masoretic OT Text (which shuns the Apocrypha) ...or about the Greek-language translations of the Hebrew OT (which have added the Apocrypha), and this group is called the “Septuagint” or the “LXX.” (The Septuagint-Apocrypha is covered in chapter 3, and the Masoretic Text in chapter 5.)

Byzantine-Majority Text

This “family” has manuscripts spread all over the world, but the style of the text seems to suggest these manuscripts originated in a geographic area loosely centered around Antioch and Constantinople. This group is by far the largest, and therefore has been called by many other names such as Textus Receptus/Received Text (we’ll get more specific about the Textus Receptus in chapter 8), Constantinopolitan Text, Antiochian Text, Byzantine Text, Koine Text, Apostolic Text, and Traditional Text. This group contains more than 95% of all Greek NT manuscripts. This text *mostly* supports the text of the KJV – but not all. This text was used for all Bible versions up until 1881 including Catholic versions (except for the anti-Protestant Douay-Rheims Version of 1582). The manuscripts in this text group are *younger* than the Alexandrian text group, and that was for a hundred years the main complaint with scholars and theologians (until we learned about manuscript readings we hadn’t known before). They also claim that corrupt copyists, for unknown reasons, invented text when they were copying manuscripts to make the text longer...such as adding “and fasting” to “by prayer” ...even though it is more likely that they inadvertently omitted text. What actually happened cannot be proven. As for the ‘older and therefore better’ readings of the Alexandrian manuscripts, we have now found witnesses – such as ancient papyrus manuscript readings, and most quotations by early Christians, and most lectionary readings – that are *older than the Alexandrian group*, and support the Majority Text (but not all of them).

Caesarean Text

The city of Caesarea was built by King Herod the Great in Judea north of Jerusalem on the Mediterranean coast. It was favored by Romans who had high-ranking government positions because it was prettier, cooler, and more modern/liberal than Jerusalem. It was also popular with Christian scholars such as Origen, Eusebius, and Jerome. The Caesarean Text has similarities with the other three text types.

Western Text

This group is thought to have originated in the *western* Roman Empire in the scholarly communities of the Italian-African region anchored by Rome, Italy up in the north, and by Carthage, Africa down to the south. The Western Text is so close to the Caesarean that many scholars now consider them to be the same; it’s all guesswork. The Western and Caesarean groups are relatively insignificant when compared with the Byzantine-Majority and the Alexandrian-Minority Texts.

Alexandrian-Minority Text

The manuscripts in this “family” are thought to have originated in the used-to-be scholarly community in the faded-glory city of Alexandria, Egypt. This group’s text tends to be characterized by short, choppy sentences whose meanings are more difficult to grasp, and it tends to have missing words and verses. There are just a few manuscripts in this group, and only three of them really matter – the Vaticanus, the Sinaiticus, and the Alexandrianus manuscripts (copied in about 325, 350, and 425 AD respectively). These three manuscripts are “the big three” to liberal scholars because they are among the oldest manuscripts, are in relatively-pristine condition, and have *almost single-handedly kept “textual criticism” and Reason-based theology alive and “respectable.”* The Alexandrian-Minority Text – through no fault of its own – causes some confusion in discussions about Bible manuscripts: Usually, the word “Alexandrian” would apply only to the NT, but the three mainstays of the Alexandrian family – the Vaticanus Sinaiticus, and Alexandrianus manuscripts – don’t just contain the NT; they also contain both the Septuagint (the OT in Greek) and the Apocrypha. So, if you mention the *Septuagint* (usually in reference to the OT only), many people will also automatically associate it with the Alexandrian’s NT and with the Alexandrian’s Apocrypha. There *are* some good Greek-language translations of the OT that rejected the Apocrypha (as seen in the next chapter), but modern scholars tend to downplay them in favor of the Alexandrian-Minority group. An example of this bias is Mt 5:22’s “without a cause”:

Mt 5:22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment...

The KJV has “without a cause.” All of the thousands of Greek NT manuscripts – *of all four textual families* – with Mt 5:22 contain “without a cause.” All of the lectionaries contain “without a cause.” Most, not all, of the early other-language Bible versions contain “without a cause.” *But within the Alexandrian-Minority family the “big three” don’t have it.* And because of the war on the word, almost all modern Bible version committees decided to omit *without a cause*. Instead, Bible version committees, pointing to the fact that modern people cannot read as well as previous generations, have deliberately focused on producing versions with shorter sentences and simpler words “that clarify the meaning while remaining faithful to the message.” But, while they have taken the Bible version text down to a 6th grade reading level, have they really “clarified the meaning and message”? Let’s compare the “difficult to understand” KJV’s Amos 3:3 with some of the latest examples of modern scholarship that are making it “more clear” how to please God:

AV1611: Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

Voice Bible of 2012: Do two people travel together if they had to set up a time to meet?

Amplified Bible of 2015: Do two men walk together unless they have made an appointment?

English Standard Version of 2016: Do two walk together, unless they have agreed to meet?

New English Translation of 2017: Do two walk together without having met?

Summing up the “families”

The family groups are hotly disputed. One of the reasons for that is the fact that no manuscript in existence has a text that is 100% Byzantine or Caesarian or Western or Alexandrian; they all contain a mixture of family types – and are therefore assigned to a particular family if that family’s type of text has 1% more readings than the other text types...even though the “types” are often based purely on hotly-disputed opinions. Because the manuscripts of the first several centuries of the Great Commission were so unwieldy, bulky, expensive, and fragile, those manuscripts usually consisted of a single book/epistle, which *vastly* outnumbered multiple-book Bible manuscripts. Also, in order to keep bulk and expenses down, manuscripts were sometimes edited to make them shorter. And, because these codices and scrolls were so fragile, it wasn’t at all unusual for normal usage to cause the beginning or ending of a scroll to break off, or for the last page-or-three of codices to break off – especially the last pages because we generally put books down face up, which causes more wear to the back of the book.

MANUSCRIPTS IN REAL LIFE – A SEA STORY: In the real world, books, especially constantly-used Bibles, don’t have easy lives sitting on shelves – whether it’s 400 AD in a dirt-floored tent or stone hut...or 1968 AD on the high seas. Back in ‘68 I was a midshipman serving aboard a U.S. Navy destroyer as part of the ‘Orange Fleet’ war games against the ‘Blue Fleet.’ My duties ranged from rapid-fire drills as a crewmember on the big deck-guns...to bending *snapping* signal flags onto halyards in the roaring wind at flank speed high up on the signal bridge during battle exercises...to putting chairs up on tables, swabbing the mess decks, and peeling potatoes during KP duty. During downtime we midshipmen passed around paperback novels about the Old West. Among the worn, crumbly-edged paperbacks was a 12-year-old (copyright 1956) novel (*Thirty Notches* by Brad Ward) about a gunslinger with integrity. Through much use it had lost its cover, and its cheap-paper pages were brown and fragile with age. I read the whole book from non-cover to non-cover and, as a youngster killing idle time on a Navy warship, loved it – especially the ending. And then I passed it on to another midshipman. All of us enjoyed it. Many years later as a Bible believer and married man, I was in a bookstore with my wife – when, what to my wondering eyes should appear, but *Thirty Notches* on a shelf...with a cover and in mint condition! I pointed it out to Robin, picked it up and examined it...and was shocked to discover it had a short chapter at the end that had obviously flaked off the badly-worn book I’d read decades earlier on my destroyer! I read the short chapter...and, like modern theologians who hate the *real* – ‘longer’ – ending of Mark, I hated the ‘longer’ ending of the novel! (It’s not a ‘longer’ ending; it’s the *real*, the only, ending of the novel.) End of sea story.

If that could happen to me with modern paper and printing, it could happen to the ending of Mark over 1,500 years ago. Add to manuscript fragility the fact that manuscripts made long, rough journeys by foot, by ships, carts, donkeys, and camels...which thereby transported so-called textual “families” way out of “their areas.” And then decent, innocent scribes were hired to collect enough manuscripts (many of these scrolls and codices were a *lot* older and in no better shape than the 12-year-young book I read on board my destroyer) so they could, from the many, make single copies of an entire Testament or Bible. (These scribes *thought* they were just making copies of Scripture – they had *no idea* modern theologians over a thousand years later would falsely accuse them of “*conflating*” textual “families” that “didn’t belong together.” I say again, the texts of *all known Bible manuscripts* are random collections from different “families,” and it is impossible to segregate, collate, deduce, and derive the original wording. The so-called “textual families” of the NT manuscripts have no importance, reveal nothing to anyone, and should be done away with. The examples I have covered in this chapter are but a few of the myriad reasons some of the best scholars throughout history – those with both intelligence and integrity – concluded after much study and research that *no amount* of textual criticism, when applied to *any* number of manuscripts of *whatever* “family” or century, could *ever* figure out the “best reading” ...let alone the “original reading.”

My imaginary compilation of early NT manuscripts – to summarize what we’ve learned they were typically like

Before about 200 AD, it looks like most groups of believers only had a single (whole or partial) copy of a gospel or epistle, with Matthew being the most common. Ancient manuscripts show that humble believers were engaged in copying Bible manuscripts well over a century before the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus manuscripts (circa 350 AD) existed. The pages of these early manuscripts are *papyrus* (it is surprising that papyrus survived so long) and they are in *book form* (200 years before scholars thought Christians began routinely using the more-easily-transported book form). The discovery of old papyrus manuscripts over the past 75 years has contributed to the undermining of the wrongly-assumed authority and importance of the Alexandrian manuscripts. There is one thing about this compilation-manuscript example of mine that is rare: it covers (not *contains*) the entire NT; the entire NT would take *hundreds* of handwritten pages. In my fictitious compilation, the early believers who produced it took several steps to reduce bulk so their codex manuscript would be smaller, cheaper, and easier to handle:

- They divided the NT into several books. The first codex would contain the 4 gospels and Acts; and the two or three subsequent books would contain the epistles and Revelation.
- To reduce the number of pages required, these early Christians focused on the *message* rather than on exact wording – similar to Stephen’s preaching the *message* of the OT in Acts 7, which God validated by putting it in the NT. These early believers carefully omitted words like adverbs, adjectives, participles, articles, nouns, and prepositions; they omitted parts of sentences, and even entire sentences that were repetitious or unnecessary; and they abbreviated commonly-used names and nouns. *But their omissions never made the message confusing, ambiguous, or obscure*; the text was obviously made to be readable and understandable. They also never added words to the word of God; they faithfully *copied* – they didn’t *embellish* or *change*. They produced for their own use a shortened NT that faithfully and effectively conveyed the Bible’s story and its doctrinal teachings.
- The handwriting in some early Bible manuscripts, while highly legible and in the same hand, is uneven and somewhat inconsistent, which suggests faithful Christians didn’t/couldn’t always hire professional scribes to do their copying – they did it themselves. They treasured their Bible manuscripts, even the papyrus ones, so they rebound them when they began falling apart, and they continued studying them...and they wrote notes in them. **For this cause also thank we God**

without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe (1 Thes 2:13).

The *Diatessaron* (this is a real example of a compilation), was created (probably in the region around Antioch) by a Christian scholar, *Tatian*, in 160 AD as a teaching text. It efficiently *combined the four Gospels into a single, concise, chronological narrative* that covers most of the Gospel's message without undue tweaking of the actual words. The abridged *Diatessaron* was *compact* and *relatively inexpensive*, so handwritten copies of it in various languages spread quickly and became popular among Christian congregations in both the eastern regions of the Roman Empire around Antioch, and the western areas around Rome. Over decades, as *Diatessaron* manuscripts began falling apart, the missing sections were replaced by copying from other manuscripts – thus adding to God's orchestrated "manuscript mess." For example, a 546 AD "mixed manuscript" of the *Diatessaron* was found (almost 400 years later than the original!); its missing pages had been "repaired" with readings copied or translated from a Latin Vulgate manuscript. This 546 AD handwritten "mixed manuscript" of the Vulgate and *Diatessaron* was then passed around and copied by spiritually-hungry individuals and local congregations all over Europe over the *next 800 years* (!) until the printing press began making hand-copied manuscripts a thing of the past. This shows that manuscripts – even "conflated families" of manuscripts – were recopied many times and, like the fishes and loaves, fed multitudes of spiritually hungry Christians over many centuries. This suggests that some of the "shorter readings" in the Alexandrian manuscripts are not the "original-text readings" some scholars think/thought they are; they may have simply resulted when Alexandrian scribes unknowingly copied/translated from mixed manuscripts like the Vulgate/*Diatessaron*, and from deliberately-shortened manuscripts like the *Diatessaron*. Nobody knows...and the Lord has used the impenetrable confusion of this manuscript mess as a stumblingstone for those of little faith. Note: The earliest *Diatessaron* copies may or may not have included the incident of Christ and the woman caught in adultery. All we know is the portions of the *few* *Diatessaron* manuscripts that have survived don't have it. Nobody knows if the missing adultery story was one of a number of deliberate omissions to keep the size of the manuscript "more manageable" or if some "repaired" *Diatessarons* contained parts copied from manuscripts that did not have the story...and therefore your Bible shouldn't have it, either – according to scholars who admit they don't know all the facts! Deliberately-abridged manuscripts like the *Diatessaron* were, for well over a thousand years, swapped back and forth among grateful congregations so they could repair lost portions of their tattered old Bible manuscripts – thus creating more "mixed manuscripts" with "conflated" textual "families"...that centuries later would be dug up by some scholar who – not knowing his rear end from the hole he just pulled an old decayed manuscript out of – would pompously decree that any textual reading that differs from his manuscript's text...well, you understand my point – and my Koine English.

NT manuscript copies made by early believers show that Christians – *very* early in the NT era – somehow knew about the writings of the apostles – *even though those apostolic epistles had been sent to places geographically far away and far apart*. The manuscripts of these humble believers also show the apostolic writings were copied and widely distributed, were believed to be God's word, and that copies were in great demand so believers could learn and share. Our Good Shepherd was taking good care of His early believers. ...for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day (2 Tim 1:12).

I have merely provided a glimpse at this topic. You may decide you want to research this textual criticism/manuscript mess business in depth on your own. If you do, you'll initially think there's something to it; you'll find stuff that's interesting, stuff that seems relevant, stuff that supports your KJV-only view...and then run across stuff that supports theology and Reason. You'll eventually get bogged down in quagmires of facts and opinions and cleverly-worded arguments that establish and prove *nothing*. The more you realize that the common denominator of all of these useless wranglings over "the best readings" is that *nobody knows*, the more you'll realize you're losing respect for some of the people you'd hoped would help you figure out these ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth (2 Tim 3:7) theological dead ends. And then you'll realize your time is best spent reading *Thus saith the Lord* rather than the pompous guesses of theologians who know they don't have all the facts – *and don't care*.

CHAPTER 3 (8 pages)

ORIGEN'S QUEST TO FIND THE TRUE TEXT AND THEREBY END THE MANUSCRIPT MESS

THE PROBLEMS ORIGEN FACED

When the Roman army finished fighting the three wars the Jews waged against them from 66-135 AD, millions of Jews had been killed or sent into slavery, Jerusalem was destroyed, the temple was destroyed, the Jews' religion was (temporarily) outlawed, and their historic homeland had been renamed. The Jews' last national language, "Babylonian OT Hebrew," which had been declining in use for about two centuries, began rapidly sliding into extinction. Jews who lived in regions outside of Judea had already spoken very little Hebrew – even *before the wars*...and most of them were proficient in Koine Greek. Quite logically, therefore, beginning about 150-200 years before the Jewish wars, many of these Greek-speaking Jews wanted the Bible in Greek so they could read it. These Bibles, whether they were papyrus or parchment, were expensive and bulky because a handwritten complete Old Testament (OT) was well over a thousand pages. But finding quality translators who were truly proficient speaking a *dying Hebrew language*, and who were capable of effectively and accurately converting that sophisticated Hebrew language into street Greek, and who employed decent copyists who were hard to find and harder to afford, *was an uncertain and difficult quest*. It can be difficult and awkward translating a sophisticated language into a simple language: For example, in English we say "sunglasses." In Spanish sunglasses is expressed as: "Anteos para sol." Literally, that means: Ante: *before* or *in front of*; ojos: *eyes*; para: *for* or *in order for*; sol: *sun* ...or: "In front of the eyes for the sun." Other examples that English speakers will understand: If the Babylonian OT Hebrew text said things like, "You're kidding me," "You're pulling my leg," and, "It was coming down cats and dogs," a translator who was not *really* fluent in the now-rarely-spoken Hebrew, would do the best he could...and miss the point of the original text.

In the first century of the Christian era, Greek-speaking Jews who were already familiar with the Hebrew Bible but who had family members who were barely literate in Hebrew, ordered Greek-language Septuagints. They were often horrified by the text they paid for because it so often changed the *message* of the Hebrew they'd grown up knowing – sometimes in awful ways, and sometimes in laughable ways. This was the primary reason Jewish communities who were already familiar with the text of the Hebrew Bible – even in Alexandria, the heart of "Septuagint country" – rejected the Septuagint and instead procured more accurate non-Septuagint Greek translations. (More about the superior non-Septuagint manuscripts later.)

If you could not afford a quality translator, there were less-capable translators available who would produce a Koine Greek manuscript for you at "reasonable" prices. These "translators" and "scribes" could usually speak and understand Koine Greek – most people could. But not many of them were truly proficient reading, writing, speaking, and understanding the nuances and complexities of the no-longer-spoken Biblical Hebrew. Various Bible manuscripts over the centuries show that not having a sufficient and proper understanding of the sophisticated Hebrew – and not having a sufficient and proper understanding of the "simplistic-but-full-of-almost-unknowable variations" of Koine Greek – has always been a problem. Therefore, it really didn't matter if these cheaper "translators," who did not and could not properly understand Hebrew, were truly proficient with the many-century-variations of Koine Greek or not; the "Bibles" they produced were going to be poor quality because it was difficult using simplistic Koine Greek to accurately and fully convey the meaning of complex Hebrew. The English language is sophisticatedly-complex and can therefore relatively, effortlessly, and accurately express the sophisticatedly-complex Hebrew. The same is *almost* as true when making a Latin translation of Hebrew. But trying to use the almost-unknowable varieties of street Greek over the *many centuries* it was used to produce OT Bible manuscripts to accurately convey the complexities involved with Babylonian OT Hebrew was a lot higher on the scale of difficulty. That's one reason God used Hebrew to write the sophisticated Old Testament, and street Greek to write the relatively simple NT...which – many centuries later – turns out to be a lot more complicated than we knew, thought, and hoped. And that's why many, many scholars and theologians today study the relatively simple Koine Greek (so they can incorrectly brag that they speak "the original" Greek) ...but very few have the patience and the study discipline to tackle even the new, easier Masoretic Hebrew that replaced the Babylonian OT Hebrew 600-800 years after it became a dead language. This is not to say the relatively simple Koine Greek isn't a problem for modern translators and scribes. For example, even though the "big three" manuscripts of the Alexandrian "family" are written on expensive vellum, and even though their NT texts are loudly claimed to be "the best" because they were produced by "impeccable scholarship," the facts call their scholarship into question:

- **The Vaticanus manuscript:** Somebody went over places in this faded-text manuscript with a dark-inked heavy pen...making it impossible to see what words were originally there. A blank section large enough to contain the "long" ending of Mark is still blank, which may mean the end of Mark was already known to exist – it was not a "later invention." In the four gospels alone, words or clauses are omitted 1,491 times. The myriad problems that exist with this manuscript have caused scholars to say *the Vaticanus testifies against itself*. The problems with this manuscript were so extensive they caused the famous Catholic scholar, Erasmus, to exclude it from his research when he looked into making a more-accurate copy of the NT.
- **The Sinaiticus manuscript:** 14,800 corrections were made after the not-very-competent scribe finished this poorly-done, error-filled manuscript. The "long" ending of Mark was originally there, but somebody erased it! A lack of attention sometimes caused the scribe to repeat letters, words...and sometimes even *entire sentences* were copied twice. The same inattention caused 115 sentence clauses in the NT to be accidentally *omitted* because they end with the same word the previous clause ended with – making the bored copyist lazily assume he'd already written it.
- **The Alexandrinus manuscript:** The beautiful Alexandrinus is in excellent condition, and is so-named named because it was created in Alexandria. However, like its two manuscript brethren, upon close inspection it turns out to be anything but

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impressive. *It was prepared by a semi-illiterate scribe that scholars believe spoke – but couldn't read – Greek* because of the kind of ignorance-based mistakes he made: As the translator dictated the text, this scribe put spaces in the middle of words, and he confused the letters M and N, and he sometimes used the wrong vowels to represent sounds, and after he was finished *somebody erased whole sentences and wrote in new text*.

John W. Burgon (1813-1888), who was the Dean of Chichester Cathedral, defender of the existence of Moses, and defender of the inerrancy of Scripture, said the Alexandrian manuscripts “...have become – by whatever process, for their history is wholly unknown – the depositories of the largest amount of fabricated readings, ancient blunders, and intentional perversion of truth, which are discoverable in any known copies of the Word of God...without a particle of hesitation, that they are three of the most scandalously corrupt copies extant...[they] exhibit the most shamefully mutilated texts which are anywhere to be met with.” He also said they are so bad that you have to think their survival is because scholars kept them on their shelves as laughable examples of how bad some “scholars” of antiquity really were. He also said the manuscripts’ corruption, and the fact that they disagree with each other so often, mean none of them can be taken seriously.

It is believed that the modern-day printed/published versions of these Alexandrian manuscripts – *because they deliberately hide all of the sloppiness and damning changes, erasures, and corrections* – have kept the bulk of lazy theologians, authors, and seminary professors from seeing with their own eyes how appallingly unimpressive these manuscripts are. Why “*deliberately*” *hide*? Because in order for ancient historical documents to be worth anything to scholars, modern reprints must include all of the info we know about the documents, and to not do so goes against everything that *scholarship* is supposed to mean. Indeed, the quickly-apparent and undeniable problems with these manuscripts tend to support what many scholars believe: Because Bibles in regular use tend to get worn out, it appears the Alexandrian manuscripts survived so long without wear because they were known to be inferior, were not used, and therefore spent 1,500 idle years sitting on a shelf.

CHURCH FATHER, FATHER OF THEOLOGY, AND FATHER OF TEXTUAL CRITICISM

Origen was born in 185 and died in 254 AD. In some circles he is praised as a scholar; in many conservative religious circles he is despised as a heretic. We'll deal with his scholarship in a minute, but it might be helpful to briefly put his heresy into perspective.

When Origen lived, Christianity was in its infancy, churches were all local, access to the complete Bible was rare, Christianity was more about your relationship with the Lord than about having all doctrines correctly ironed out, and many Christians back then thought (like many Christians today!) that Greek Reason was a good and important tool that could help understand life in general and Christianity in particular. Origen was born into a Christian home in Alexandria, Egypt, and that city was a huge center of Enlightened Greek scholarship. Origen's well-intentioned Christian father made sure his son read the Bible daily and got a good Greek education. Origen became a Bible literalist who, because of **Mt 10:10** decided to live with but one coat and went barefooted. He also ate no meat (**1 Cor 8:13**), and when he thought that his being a teacher of young women was causing some people to doubt that his relationship with them was purely non-sexual, he castrated himself (**Mt 19:12; Mk 9:43-47**). I, too, am a Bible literalist, and I've *never* had those verses affect me like they did Origen...and that makes me conclude that, while Origen had some doctrines screwed up (such as thinking *everybody* will eventually go to heaven), he didn't have a problem humbly reading and submitting to some very plainly-worded Bible verses. Origen “the heretic” did things that make modern conservatives grudgingly admit he may have truly believed the written, literal *Thus saith the Lord*.

When Decius became the emperor of Rome in 249 AD, he decreed that all Christians had to offer a religious sacrifice to the pagan Roman gods...or be executed. Proving that Satan was right when he said to the Lord in Job 2:4, **Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life**, many Christians complied...but Origen, living in Caesarea at the time, refused. He was arrested, thrown into prison, shackled, and horribly tortured for *two years*. Because he continued to steadfastly refuse to renounce Christ, he was scheduled for execution...but the sudden death of Emperor Decius ended the persecution of Christians, and the near-death Origen was released from prison. However, he was in such bad shape he continued going downhill and died a few months later. Was he a heretic, or should we admit we don't know everything we need to know – and refrain from judging him? Let's move on and look at his scholarship and at what he found out while searching for the True Text of the Original Autographs of the Bible.

Origen lived at a time when there were lots and lots of Bible manuscripts available...if you wanted either the NT or the OT *in Greek*. The quality of copies of the NT wasn't generally a problem; many people could copy Greek into Greek. The OT in Greek, however, was a problem because the poor translations of Hebrew into Greek outnumbered the good, and both Christian and Jewish scholars were alarmed by that fact. Origen was well-equipped to examine that problem because he wasn't just a Bible scholar, he was also fluent in both Koine Greek and Babylonian OT Hebrew, and could therefore quickly recognize the difference between a quality manuscript and a poor one. He was an “ancient church father,” he was respected throughout the Mediterranean region as a man of brilliant intellect, strength, and high moral character, and he was *the* foremost scholar and intellect of his time. He is praised by liberal scholars today as the father of both theology and textual criticism.

Over a thousand years later, scholars of the Protestant Reformation, such as Hus and Zwingli, still admired Origen. The Dutch Catholic scholar, Erasmus (who is beloved among KJVers because he was involved in researching the text of the Textus Receptus) believed Origen was a greater Christian scholar than both Augustine and Jerome. Yes, Erasmus knew Origen was an Enlightened “Christian philosopher” who espoused some false doctrines; but unlike some Christians today, Erasmus did not use Origen's Greek-philosophy-based heresy as an excuse to discount anything and everything he ever said. But Erasmus wasn't blind to facts, and he had good reasons to disparage Augustine: he was well aware that Averroes (see **AOR p.H7-8; D27-15**) revealed that Augustine used a brain-dead “proof” that all humans have immortal souls, and Erasmus may have agreed with other scholars such as Vincent of Lérins who believed Augustine to be an overrated, ever-popular purveyor of false doctrine (**AOR p.H6-2**). Erasmus' diminished opinion of Jerome, on the other hand, was solely because of scholarly pride: Jerome was famous for his life's work, the *original* Latin Vulgate Bible, and Erasmus' scrutiny of the *much-revised* Vulgate 1,100 years later (!) by the growing Roman Catholic denomination (which made it no longer *Jerome's* work), led

Erasmus to conclude that “Jerome’s” Latin Vulgate was doctrinally biased and therefore Erasmus needed to produce his own Latin NT. (We’ll see why Erasmus was wrong about Jerome, his character, and his scholarship in chapter 4.)

Origen, to his credit, did not let the Reason of Greek philosophy change his belief in the inspiration of Scripture, which he considered to be the living word of God and superior to human knowledge. He believed all interpretations of Scripture and all allegorical renderings of Scripture were invalid unless they were based on the actual wording in the Bible. That belief, together with the fact that in his day the Hebrew language was dying, which contributed to its often being poorly translated and inaccurately copied into manuscripts, caused him to quit his teaching job and devote himself to figuring out the original-autograph words of the Bible.

Origen was so brilliant, and other scholars of his day were so impressed with his works, they actually sent dozens of researchers, secretaries, and copyists to work for him so he could more efficiently and quickly complete his various projects. He was considered to be a walking, talking fount of research-based knowledge, insight, and wisdom. He was the brightest of the bright, and research and knowledge were his whole life. The fact that he spent much of his life in Alexandria, which was the library and research capital of the world, certainly contributed to his education, which he supplemented by traveling widely in search of more information and more Bible manuscripts. Origen was sometimes criticized by contemporary scholars who envied and resented his intellect and accomplishments. Modern scholars and theologians, however, are awed by the breadth and depth of his intellect and by his feats of Biblical scholarship that still dwarf today’s somewhat doltish, cookie-cutter type of “scholarship.” Origen’s young friend, Eusebius of Caesarea, who was a brilliant scholar in his own right, owed much of his reputation and many of his accomplishments to Origen’s work, upon which he relied heavily. For example, Eusebius’ writings were later used by theologians when they were trying to see if they could make educated guesses about which NT books and manuscripts of the first several centuries were and were not credible enough to be considered “genuine,” “authentic” ...or even “better” or “more reliable.” How did Eusebius know so much about early Bible books and manuscripts – is it because he was an expert? No, but he was smart enough to realize Origen was an expert: Origen had firsthand, unsurpassed knowledge of Old and New Testament manuscripts that he had acquired during his tireless research in the libraries of Alexandria and during his extensive travels throughout the known world examining and acquiring Bible manuscripts. For example, he traveled to Jericho and purchased a huge (that’s an understatement!), increasingly-rare handwritten manuscript that contained the full text of the Hebrew Old Testament in the rapidly-vanishing “Babylonian OT Hebrew” language that had been used by the Jews for 700 years ever since their Babylonian Captivity.

Alexandria’s huge library complex had well over a million manuscripts and was called the “Musaeum” after the “Muses,” who were Zeus’ mythical Greek-goddess daughters who presided over knowledge...and *Musaeum* is the origin of today’s word *museum*. Because the library complex and its scholars sought out and collected manuscripts that dealt with any and every topic – including complete Bible manuscripts from all over the world in all languages – numerous scholars actually moved to Alexandria and resided there for research purposes. The Musaeum was destroyed and its manuscripts burned in 272 AD by Roman armies trying to discourage the increasing number of rebellious uprisings against the weakening Roman Empire. That was about 20 years after Origen died, and about 50 years before the inferior Vatican and Sinai manuscripts were created on expensive vellum by mediocre scribes. However, in all fairness to the poor quality of the Alexandrian “family” of manuscripts you have to set the quality bar very low: 50 years after the Musaeum and its manuscripts were destroyed, *decent* manuscripts were scarce and Alexandria was no longer the world’s foremost center of knowledge and scholarship. After Alexandria went into decline, the world’s best scholars moved to other places like Caesarea and Antioch in Syria Palestine; to Rome, Italy; to Hippo in northeast Algeria in north Africa; and to various Greek-speaking cities in Constantinople’s Byzantine Turkey. Alexandria had become a rubble-filled has-been city, and some of its manuscripts were created by men who couldn’t even read Greek. Therefore, the truly amazing thing about the Alexandrian manuscript family isn’t its abysmally-corrupt text, it’s the deceitful public-relations job modern scholars have done: They use the “rich vellum” they were written on, and they use the pre-Alexandrian manuscript glory days of the Alexandria Origen lived in to make it seem as if these manuscripts have an impressive history and pedigree.

Modern scholars wish they could go back to the year 240 AD so they could sit at Origen’s feet to learn more about the many complete manuscripts he examined (*which we’ve never seen*). Origen was a living treasure trove of information about early manuscripts that were the closest to both the original Greek autographs of the New Testament, and to the Babylonian OT Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament. Therefore, scholars would like to know what he knew about those ancient manuscripts that caused him to choose some and reject others. Compared to what Origen knew about Bible manuscripts, modern scholars know *very* little – even with the addition of the over-hyped, very disappointing Dead Sea Scrolls. Modern scholars are missing so many pieces of the manuscript-mess puzzle they cannot be sure of anything except, like Socrates, the fact of their own ignorance.

Origen produced roughly 6,000 different works before he died. But he took most of his knowledge and expertise to the grave because most of his works are lost, and many that survive are written in an ambiguous, cryptic, impenetrable vocabulary that some scholars say was deliberate – they think Origen was mocking and baiting the mediocre minds of the scholars who scoffed at many of his works. But it is a single work of his that interests us – his *Hexapla*.

THE HEXAPLA

Origen knew, because the hated Jews had been dispersed all over the world, the Old Testament manuscripts written in Babylonian OT Hebrew were rapidly disappearing. Those Hebrew manuscripts were known for their impeccable scholarly quality and consistency, and he wanted to compare them with the “new breed” of Greek translations of the Hebrew OT, which are called the “Septuagint.” Two kinds of Septuagint manuscripts existed, and Origen knew they *often disagreed with each other*: These Greek-language Old Testament translations included “the Septuagint” (Apocrypha-including); and “the non-Septuagint” (Apocrypha-excluding). Just to be clear:

Septuagint defined: A Greek translation of the Hebrew OT...with the Apocrypha added.

Non-Septuagint defined: A Greek translation of the Hebrew OT...with nothing added – no Apocrypha.

The Septuagint (with Apocrypha) was translated from the Hebrew OT...and the Hebrew OT *never included the Apocrypha!* Now add to that confusion the fact that “the Alexandrian Text” is often used as a synonym for Septuagint, and Septuagint technically only refers to the Greek-language translations of the Hebrew OT (no Apocrypha)...but the Vatican and Sinai manuscripts are not just OTs, they are whole-Bible manuscripts containing the Greek-language OT, the Greek Apocrypha, and the north-African version of the Greek NT. In other words, of the three parts of the Alexandrian and Vatican manuscripts, the only part “Septuagint” technically applies to is the Greek translation of the Hebrew OT part – not to the NT part or to the Apocrypha part. Another of the problems with the Alexandrian manuscripts is they are said to contain “the Apocrypha” – but *there is no such thing as “the Apocrypha!”* Much to the chagrin of modern scholars, every Alexandrian manuscript’s “Apocrypha” differs from every other manuscript’s “Apocrypha.” The various “Apocryphas” contain different collections of books, and books with different names and content, and books arranged in different orders. In other words, *even back when the “Apocrypha” was first added to these manuscripts, nobody knew what “the Apocrypha” consisted of.* That is but one of the reasons no Hebrew Bible manuscript contains “the Apocrypha,” and one of the reasons it was always rejected as Scripture.

Origen was smart, he was disciplined, he was zealous about research...and he determined to use textual criticism to carefully evaluate and compare manuscripts and readings to determine the true original-autograph text of the Old Testament. His work is important not just because he was bright, it is important because:

- He lived back when Babylonian OT Hebrew was still spoken – and he was fluent in it.
- He lived back when OT manuscripts in Babylonian OT Hebrew were still available – and he purchased a magnificent, massive handwritten-by-impeccable-scholars manuscript that contained *the entire text*.
- He lived back when Septuagint and non-Septuagint Greek translations of the Hebrew OT were commonly available.
- He lived back when NT manuscripts – in Koine Greek *as well as many other languages* – were commonly available...and remember; Origen lived in the third century when Koine Greek hadn’t yet undergone the coming ten centuries of language bastardization that most modern “Greek-speaking” scholars try to ignore.
- He lived in Alexandria during its heyday: it was the scholarship capital of the world, and its famous library was at its peak.
- The Septuagint and the Apocrypha were popular among many of the scholars in the Alexandrian community. And because Origen was not blindly biased, he became very familiar with all of their arguments in favor of those manuscripts he rejected.
- He lived back when the manuscript predecessors of the not-yet-existing “Alexandrian-Minority” family of manuscripts that are so exalted today were plentiful and readily available.

Even though Septuagint OTs were popular among a number of his fellow scholars in Alexandria, Origen did not favor those manuscripts; and, by extension, neither would he favor today’s manuscripts that are descended from them – the Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, and Alexandrinus of the Alexandrian “family.” A big reason for that was the Biblical research resources in the massive repository of the Alexandrian libraries of the Musaeum complex conveniently located just down the street from his home. The Alexandrian/Septuagint manuscripts are popular today because they’re the oldest fairly-complete manuscripts available, but Origen had access to a wealth of much older manuscripts of all text-type “families” that were both complete and in mint condition. Logically therefore, since the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus were copied in 325 AD – which was 71 years after Origen died in 254 AD – they were copied in the rubble-filled has-been Alexandria by third-rate “scholars” *from manuscripts with which Origen was familiar...*and rejected.

In his quest to discover the True Text, Origen selected six manuscripts to be in his “critical apparatus,” which was a six-columned manuscript with side-by-side direct-verse comparisons and copious textual criticism notes. (“Critical apparatus” is what theologians call the methodology used to make choices as to which textual readings they prefer.) Because Origen’s critical-apparatus manuscript had six columns, it is called the Hexapla:

- Column 1** of his Hexapla was the Babylonian OT Hebrew text of a Bible manuscript used by the Jews. This was the traditional Bible in use by God’s people since the Babylonian Captivity, and as such had to be favored because *it was the basis for all other-language translations* of the OT.
- Column 2** was the above same Hebrew text, but it was written in the Hebrew language using the Greek alphabet. It was to see how the Greek alphabet affected Hebrew as a baseline comparison when examining Septuagint (Greek) manuscripts.
- Column 3** was the Aquila non-Septuagint Greek-language translation of the Hebrew OT (which shunned the Apocrypha). Origen included this Aquila non-Septuagint because his research caused him to respect this manuscript as a scholarly, literal, and accurate translation. This Aquila non-Septuagint translation was created in 126 AD (200 years before the Vaticanus manuscript) for Greek-speaking Jews by an influential scholar, Aquila, who was from Sinope, a town in Turkey east of Constantinople. Sinope had been founded by Greek-speakers from Miletus, a town near Ephesus – see Ac 20:15-17. Aquila was related to Rome’s Emperor Hadrian, was involved in the rebuilding of Aelia Capitolina (Jerusalem), and, interestingly enough, he rejected Christ and converted to Judaism. Aquila’s non-Septuagint manuscript was preferred by many Jews, including those in Alexandria during that city’s academic heyday. Aquila’s pro-Jewish manuscript was lauded by both Origen and Jerome, even though they noted and exposed several bias-based faults that subverted Christian doctrine...such as the use of “woman” instead of “virgin” in Is 7:14. It aligned mostly with the Babylonian OT Hebrew Bible, avoided most of the translation problems in the later 4th-century Alexandrian manuscripts, and therefore was very similar to the later Masoretic OT. It is despised by modern Alexandrian-text-promoting scholars.

Column 4 was the **Symmachus non-Septuagint** Greek-language translation of the Hebrew OT (which shunned the Apocrypha). A famous scholar from Syria-Palestina who rejected Christ and converted to Judaism, Symmachus created this translation for Greek-speaking Jews in 175 AD, making it an older witness than the Alexandrian manuscripts. Origen respected this Symmachus non-Septuagint, as did Jerome, who used it when making his Latin Vulgate Bible two centuries later...although Jerome properly used *virgin* instead of Symmachus' *woman*. The use of *woman* in Is 7:14 in Hebrew Bible manuscripts that were copied during the early NT centuries after Christ may be a result of the enmity Bible-rejecting Jews had for the rapidly-growing number of Bible-quoting Christians who used the OT to show Jesus really was the Messiah (Ac 24:14). Today, two thousand years removed from scholars who fluently knew Hebrew, many scholars suggest the ancient Hebrew word's meaning *might* have been broad enough to include *young woman*, *pregnant woman*, *virgin*, or *unmarried woman*. I say yet another time: a huge number of things we modernists simply do not know about the past have been pompously and scurrilously filled in by guesswork. There was no authoritative manuscript in existence that could settle this dispute until an authoritative manuscript was published in 1611 AD. Symmachus paid particular attention to accurately translating the sophisticated Babylonian OT Hebrew into street Greek because he knew poor translators were beginning to give Greek-language OTs a bad reputation. His ability to smoothly capture the purity and essence of the Hebrew original without making the Greek translation too abrupt and unwieldy (like poorly-qualified translators tended to do) starkly highlights one of the problems with the Alexandrian/Septuagint family of manuscripts. The Alexandrian family is widely acknowledged as having suffered the most from poor scholarship – perhaps because the city of Alexandria had become known for its academic mediocrity. In fact, the Sinaitic manuscript is so obviously oafish that modern scholars all agree that those who produced it were very poorly educated men whose “careless and illiterate” errors ranged from “poor spelling” to “unusually serious mistakes.”

Column 5 was one of the better versions (their quality varied widely) of the Greek-language Septuagint translations of the OT (which contained the Apocrypha) from Origen's own region of northern Africa. However, Origen deliberately excluded its books of the Apocrypha because he had little respect for the Septuagint/Alexandrian texts. He may have included this one manuscript because, even though it already testified against itself by including the Apocrypha, it was a rare Greek-language manuscript that captured his attention because it wasn't as poorly translated as many of them were back then. This higher-quality 5th column has textual *differences* from today's existing lower-quality Septuagint/Alexandrian manuscripts. And these higher-quality 5th-column readings *agree* with today's respected Masoretic Hebrew text (which did not exist until centuries after Origen died). Today many scholars seriously doubt if a “family” of Alexandrian manuscripts existed in Origen's day. In support of that theory is Origen's integrity: he would not have used any manuscript, no matter where it came from, if it contained as many head-scratching errors and outright corruptions as Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, and Alexandrinus. Therefore, according to the theory, the few manuscripts in today's so-called “Alexandrian family” do *not* represent “ancient faithful manuscript witnesses;” they are merely 4th-century witnesses to the known fact that the scholarly Alexandria of old was gone...and it was populated by the kind of mediocre “scholars” whose most famous works were rejected and therefore sat on shelves for 1,500 years until resurrected by modern-era theological mediocrity. But nobody knows; it's all guesswork.

Column 6 was the **Theodotion non-Septuagint** Greek-language OT (which shunned the Apocrypha). Theodotion was a Jewish scholar from Ephesus, Turkey, and he created his fine translation in 150 AD. His finished work was widely copied by early Christian groups. Origen respected this Theodotion non-Septuagint manuscript, and noted that the Theodotion manuscript did not have the major problematic differences from the early Hebrew Bible that the Septuagint had. For example, when Jerome was later preparing to create his Latin Vulgate Bible, his research revealed that the book of Daniel in the Alexandrian (Greek-language) family of manuscripts had substantial differences from earlier Hebrew versions of Daniel. Jerome wrote: “I...wish to emphasize to the reader the fact that it was not according to the Septuagint version [with Apocrypha] but according to the [non-Septuagint] version of Theodotion himself that the churches publicly read Daniel.” When the Masoretic Hebrew scholars produced their Hebrew OT centuries later, they, too, agreed with Origen, Jerome, and Theodotion...and the mass of evidence is so strong that even modern Bible version committees have quietly shunned the Alexandrian/Septuagint version of Daniel...and contain the Theodotion/Masoretic non-Septuagint version instead.

In his *Hexapla* critical apparatus, Origen used extensive notes, comparisons from other sources, and cross references. His in-depth study grew to 6,500 pages spanning numerous volumes. Modern theologians do not have anywhere near the manuscript-and-witness resources Origen had upon which to base his conclusions. In addition to the resources we've already mentioned, Origen had personal relationships and in-depth discussions with other ancient church fathers. He was the world's foremost expert on the Septuagint/Alexandrian family in any era because he lived right there when they were (supposedly) being produced (according to a popular modern theory) ...and he rigorously compared them with now-extinct Babylonian OT Hebrew Bibles and with reputable Greek translations of the Hebrew OT. Based on his research, Origen leaned *away* from the Septuagint/Alexandrian family (a conclusion that was repeated by other famous scholars throughout history), and he disdained the Apocrypha. Surprisingly though, during his many years of research, study, and critical-apparatus comparisons, Origen arrived at a conclusion he didn't expect – and it caused him to permanently put aside his decades-long work trying to discern The True Text of the Bible. I say again: after this brilliant Bible-believing literalist created the greatest, most respected, most complete, and most *unbiased* “layman's aid” in history from the best manuscript resources known to man – he arrived at a conclusion (agreed to by modern computer analyses evaluating if critical textual apparatuses can ever deduce “the True Text”)

that caused him to carry his prodigious faith-driven work into an unused cobweb-filled storage room...never to be consulted again.

Perhaps it started with different scholars chatting about all of the poor Bible translating going on, and then agreeing about how important and critically-necessary it is to have translators who are dual-language experts: First, the translator must accurately understand the original *message*, and second, he must have the language skills to correctly convey that message in writing in the second language. Then, those discussions may have led to the fact that you'd generally have more faith in the accuracy of a Hebrew manuscript than in a Greek translation of that Hebrew (like the Septuagint manuscripts). And that undeniable logic then led to the fact that the steadily-dying language of Babylonian OT Hebrew was in no way close to the versions of Hebrew of Moses or David: The Hebrew manuscripts of Origen's day were merely translations of the old, extinct "Davidic Hebrew" spoken 800 years before. And before the Davidic Hebrew there were the "pre-Davidic Hebrew" and the "Egyptian Hebrew" manuscripts that were written during the different-dialect phases the Hebrew language went through during the centuries from crossing the Red Sea up to King David.

Origen was also certainly aware of the "manuscript mess" caused by honest efforts by many men to put together both Old and New Testaments from piecemeal sources from different geographic areas, and to replace crumbled, lost parts and pages of papyrus manuscripts.

But no matter what it was that began to make the pieces of the manuscript-mess puzzle fall into place for Origen, at some point during the prodigious effort he was putting into his incomparable work with various manuscripts and readings, he began to realize an inescapable truth that most scholars and all mediocre scholars have rejected throughout history until very recently. Multiple computer analyses have shown the fact-based logical conclusions of the few scholars with integrity throughout the last two thousand years beginning with Origen have always been correct: No matter how many manuscripts and no matter which manuscripts you consult, and no matter how many layman's aids you consult, trying to determine the True Text of the Original Autographs is a *waste of time* because *nobody knows which readings are correct, and there is no way for anybody to know...no matter what their decision-making methodology is*. I say again, no matter which type of "critical-apparatus" layman's aid you use – *it's nothing but futile guesswork!* The reasons *useless* layman's aids and other references are still being published isn't because the religious skeptics who publish them (oh, *you didn't know that?!*) aren't well aware of this info; it's because

1. they are still making lots of money meeting the demands of ignorant well-intentioned Christians who naïvely believe the advertising hype, and
2. scholars and theologians do not view all of this time-wasting research into "what this word should really be" as a *waste of time!* ...because it's a very profitable waste of time! *And there's no law against publishing or purchasing layman's aids!*

The years between 1900 and 2000, when it wasn't widely known and admitted that "textual criticism" is an intellectual fraud and waste of time, one new Bible version was being churned out by publishers every year. But since the year 2000, even though it is widely known that this "textual criticism" stuff is a racket, the number of new Bible versions published each year is up to two per year. Is the increased rate of publishing "new, improved" Bible versions because we keep digging up new Bible manuscripts that are "better and more reliable"? No, it's because shallow humans are susceptible to the Mars Hill fascination with what's new, what's cool, with "the latest" (Act 17:21,22). Look at this review of a popular layman's aid:

"I just-purchased the 27th edition of Nestle-Aland's Greek-English Interlinear New Testament, which – because I prefer to use the latest critical text apparatus for serious study – will occupy a prominent position on my shelf next to my previous 4 editions. Though more often than not I agree with the conclusions in this latest edition, there are a number of cases where I feel that one of the provided alternative readings should be preferred, and for that reason I support the idea of Christians using these critical texts to choose their own individual Bible readings."

Today's scholars and publishers of layman's aids are keenly aware that we simply do not have access to the now-lost superior manuscripts used by luminaries such as Origen, Jerome, Jimenez, Erasmus, Stephanus, etc. And they are also quietly aware that the manuscripts *avored* by many scholars today are the very manuscripts that were consulted and rejected by those luminaries. Today's scholars are also aware that when a modern Christian puts down his Bible and grabs his cherished Hebrew/Greek dictionary off the shelf to see what Genesis 2:2 *really* means when it says **And on the seventh day God ended his work...** because he has a new friend who seems impressively-knowledgeable about his adamant belief in evolution – and he wants to see if the "original-autograph" wording supports evolution or Creationism. When he opens the book that he thinks will help his religious faith, he gets more than he bargained for: The Hebrew word for "day" is the word "Yowm," which can mean: 1) a period of light or warmth rather than of darkness or coolness; 2) a period of 24 hours or from one sunset to the next; 3) an undefined length of time; 4) a specific point in time; 5) a year; 6) a season; 7) an age; 8) a lifetime; 9) a while; 10) ago; 11) ever or forever...and *then* he learns that *more word definitions are added to Hebrew and Greek dictionaries every time some "scholar" comes up with another guess* based on how some dead-language phrasing struck him in an old manuscript fragment. Over time he realizes *nobody knows; it's all guesswork!* And by definition any and all guesses could be wrong! And Judgment Day is coming, so he needs to decide if he's the kind of faithful Bible believer who sticks with the literal *Thus saith the Lord* as in **John 12:48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day** ...or if he's going to allow himself to be a pride-filled fraudulent lightweight by perfecting the age-old theological art of "baffling them with bullshit."

An undeniable truth is that if one manuscript says X, and another says Y; or if a manuscript says X in one part, and that same manuscript in another part says Y, *there is no way to know which is the correct reading!* And no matter how you try to pretend various scenarios, notations, and cross references "lend credibility" to one reading or another, the bottom line is *you're still guessing!* For example, if 10 manuscripts say X, and only 1 manuscript says Y, and you also have research that suggests the Y reading *might* not be the "best," that information in your "critical apparatus" may tempt you to claim "the odds" favor the "majority reading" of X. But the undeniable scientific truth is you don't know if hundreds of wonderful "Y

manuscripts” were burned when the Alexandrian library was destroyed...or a million other things that could have happened. This example applies to all of the different readings in the *same* manuscripts, it applies to different readings between *two different* manuscripts, and it applies to different readings among *any number* of manuscripts. In fact, even if you could trace the X reading back through many generations of manuscripts and translations, unless you get your hands on a verified copy of the very first “original autograph” *you have proven nothing!* And even if you thought you’d found the “very first original autograph,” according to the Bible you have proven nothing – as we’ll now see.

A brief review of a few Biblical facts to show how correct Origen was when he realized no amount or method of textual criticism can penetrate the manuscript mess in order to reveal the inspired reading God has provided for us:

Question: Which copy of Jeremiah is the Original Autograph?

Answer: *It’s the one we have today, the one whose content exposes modern textual criticism as fatally flawed:*

- Creation of original autograph #1 of Jeremiah: God had Jeremiah create “original #1”: **Jer 36:1-4.**
- Destruction of original autograph #1: Pagan King Jehudi cut up and burned “original #1”: **Jer 36:20-23.**
- Creation of original autograph #2 with added content: God not only had Jeremiah re-create what King Jehudi destroyed, He had Jeremiah add content that hadn’t been in the first original: **Jer 36:27-32.**
- Destruction of autograph #2: God had His autograph #2 thrown into a river in order to emphasize what was going to happen to Babylon (**Jer 51:59-64**). (We know at least part of what autograph #2 said because it is reproduced in today’s Jer 45-51 – see the next point.)
- Creation of today’s existing original autograph #3 compilation: The book of Jeremiah we have today (autograph #3) contains material that was added to a re-creation of #1 and #2. In other words, today’s inspired original of Jeremiah contains the material from original #1; plus the material from original #2, *plus* the info added to #2; plus the material added to today’s original #3. We know all of this because today’s “Book of Jeremiah #3” accurately records the things that God put the book of Jeremiah through on its way to becoming the finalized Scripture we have today.

Question: Did somebody “falsify” Deuteronomy by adding to Moses’ book?

Answer: *No; it’s the word of God – not the word of Moses:*

If you found a perfectly-preserved Deuteronomy manuscript in what was proven to be Moses’ handwriting (which is what Mormonism’s founder, Joseph Smith got caught lying about when he said he owned original papyrus manuscripts written personally by Abraham himself – look up the info we now know about Smith’s fraud-based book, *Pearl of Great Price* and the *age* and the *previous content* of the papyrus Abe supposedly wrote on), and the Deuteronomy manuscript ended with chapter 33, and right next to it you found another Deuteronomy manuscript in somebody else’s handwriting that ended with chapter 34 (which, beginning with verse 5, contains information that happened *after* Moses died) – and, using theology’s latest accepted “critical apparatus,” you decided the former was the correct “original autograph” copy in Moses’ handwriting that we should use today...*you’d be wrong!* God has deliberately used the “manuscript mess” to see who believes in Him...and who believes in research, scholarship, Reason, etc., etc.

Applying what we learn from Jeremiah and Deuteronomy:

Origen’s research led him to the correct conclusion that no matter how many manuscripts of whatever “textual types” and ages we find, we have no way of knowing what the original wording was or wasn’t. It is wrong for scholars to depend on “textual criticism,” “the original languages,” and science falsely so called:

God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise...Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men...For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent... hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? (1 Cor 1).

- Did Adam relay to Eve God’s *exact* words when He prohibited eating the forbidden fruit...or did he accurately paraphrase it in his own words *because it’s the message that matters?*
- The NT commonly quotes OT Scripture without using the same exact words, and sometimes adds info we didn’t know from the OT quote alone, and sometimes adds info that isn’t recorded in the OT...*because it’s the message that matters, because God is the author, because He knows what He’s talking about, and as we learned in the 3rd original autograph of Jeremiah, God can add whatever He wants to His word whenever He wants.*
- In Acts 7 Stephen preached a history of God’s people from the OT that contained summaries in *his own words*, and it contained paraphrases of important prophesy (cp. **Ac 7:37 & Dt 18:18**) ...and God had “the word of Stephen” put into His Bible as “the word of God” ...*because God approved it and it’s the truth that matters.*
- God’s disciples wrote a bunch of letters to a bunch of saints – letters that sometimes contain folksy, personal information. And, by the authority of God, those letters became part of His holy Scripture...*so we could know the truth.*

As the book of Jeremiah shows, God has no interest in “original” *anything!* He has no interest in our figuring out exactly how He shepherded His people way back in the “long ago.” But He is very serious about our present-day walk being conducted not by sight, but by faith in His word. In these dark last days, God expects us to use His definition of His word (preserved inerrancy) when selecting a Bible version so we won’t have our faith diluted by theology’s modern error-ridden versions. If we reject His definition and go our own way based on what we “prefer” – that’s self-based carnality and idolatry because we’re putting what self wants above what God wants...and it’s on us.

Origen began his quest because he believed the inspired word of God existed and it could be scientifically and conclusively discovered. But as he compared and evaluated many manuscripts, he realized every “conclusion” he made along

the way was really just an ignorant opinion/guess. Indeed, he had several times *changed and reversed his opinion* about a number of readings – even though he was working with the exact same material. It was even possible that he had evaluated one or more manuscripts that contained verses that were true copies of the inerrant originals...*without even knowing it*. But our duty isn't to *know*; it's to *believe*. God's word isn't something physical that we recognize by sight; it is spirit, it is truth, and we find it by faith. From the moment he had that revelation, Origen could either *pretend* he'd accomplished his scholarly goal by entering the lucrative Bible version racket by publishing his "Guesses" ...and later his "*New Revised Guesses*" (to the critical acclaim of the mediocre masses); or he could put aside his vanity, realize *he'd actually found true riches*...and obediently walk by faith in *Thus saith the Lord*. Origen had too much intellectual integrity to pretend his scholarly goal was attainable when in fact he now *knew* it was not possible. More manuscripts, "better" manuscripts, more learning about language usage, learning more about societal influences that might have influenced textual wording, and learning more about commonly-made mistakes when translating Babylonian OT Hebrew into Greek by men of varying educational backgrounds, etc., etc., etc., would only produce more and more and more *questions* and *debates*...but no *answers*. So, he bowed his head, humbly accepted the truth he had discovered, and permanently consigned his massive-but-unfinished, well-intentioned, pipedream project to a back room. He then set his affection on things above, not on things on the earth (Col 3:2), began his new life...and was horribly tortured and martyred for his faith in Christ.

WHY ORIGEN IS SIGNIFICANT

Today's theologians who publicly promote textual criticism's ability to figure out the True Text of the Original Autographs even though they privately know it cannot be done, exalt Origen as the brilliant father of theology and textual criticism. And they try to exalt themselves by modestly claiming all of their "accomplishments" have only been possible because "we've been standing on the shoulders of giants" like Origen. They make empty and misleading statements like that because they cannot make simple, direct, factual statements like, "The three most important accomplishments I've ever made as a result of textual criticism are..." *They have accomplished nothing*, and they know if they ever listed their three most important "accomplishments," they would be revealing to everybody the fact that *it's all trivial busywork and vanity*. The true significance of Origen, therefore, is his conclusion that it is impossible for mankind – no matter what methodologies and critical apparatuses he uses – to establish anything definite about the True Text of the Original Autographs.

About 50 years after Origen was martyred, some scholars found his dusty old abandoned *Hexapla*. They did not realize it was an unfinished – indeed, unfinishable project Origen knew was *junk* – and they decided to make some money by copying the Septuagint column because Greek-language Bibles were in great demand. One of the popular-but-foolish fairy tales attached to the Vatican and Sinai manuscripts is that when Emperor Constantine of the Christian Byzantine Empire commissioned the elderly Eusebius in about 331 AD to produce 50 Greek Bibles for him on expensive vellum, Eusebius supposedly used the *Hexapla's* Septuagint column as his source text...and the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus were two of that order of 50 Bibles. This oft-repeated contradictory and inconsistent story attempts to use Origen's reputation to lend credibility to the text of the Vatican and Sinai manuscripts. But this fairy tale makes no sense. If Eusebius (or anyone else) had copied the Vatican and Sinai manuscripts from Origen's *Hexapla*, the two Alexandrian manuscripts: 1) wouldn't have texts that differ in thousands of places; 2) wouldn't have formats that are different; 3) wouldn't include the Apocrypha – because the *Hexapla* doesn't have it; 4) wouldn't be written on animal skins of different quality and size; 5) would have been called "the Caesarean textual family" because Eusebius lived and worked in Caesarea, not Alexandria; and 6) since Vaticanus and Sinaiticus are *at least 25 years apart*, we are supposed to believe Emperor Constantine (who died in 337) waited *decades* to receive the Bibles he ordered.

Scholars know everything *factual* about the Alexandrian manuscripts is execrable, so they invent stories like this to try to make their favorite manuscripts look praiseworthy. That's why scholars throughout history who carefully researched the Alexandrian manuscripts concluded that Origen was right; *the Septuagint-Alexandrian-Apocrypha manuscripts weren't worth the short time they had on Earth*.

Origen's *Hexapla* was destroyed in 638 AD by Muslim conquerors.

Other Christians in Origen's day had an advantage he didn't have: they lived "normal" lives away from the Reason of Greek philosophy, and away from the shallow, competitive insecurity of the academic community. It appears that, after most of his mistake-and-vanity-filled life was past, Origen finally rejected knowledge and embraced faith.

Today we live in an Enlightened Alexandrian world that has embraced Reason, knowledge falsely so called, scholarship, and theology. Our modern world of darkness has rejected God's definition of His word, and has embraced ERROR manuscripts and their corrupt offspring – modern "*Best Guess*" Bible versions. Scholars would have us, with the paltry ERROR manuscript evidence that has survived the ravages of time, try to do what even Origen couldn't do with all of his resources. We shouldn't be looking at what manuscripts choices we think they may have had way back in the "used to be;" *we should be basing our walks on the easy manuscript choices God has given us today*. Based on Origen's example, if he were alive today, he would put aside his incredible 6,500-page *Hexapla*, put aside Nestle-Aland's 28th "*Best Guess*" edition of its comparatively-rudimentary 1,008-page layman's aid, and put aside UBS's 736-page 5th "*Best Guess*" critical apparatus...and make a simple faith-based choice: He'd examine the texts of today's most-used, most-recommended Bible versions. If one of them made Christ a liar (or some of the other no-brainer verse comparisons discussed in AOR's chapter D22 on the KJV), he'd reject it as corrupt. If one of the Bible versions bragged that it used the Alexandrian-Minority Apocrypha-exalting text rather than the Byzantine-Majority text, he'd shake his head at the immaturity that causes men to think any reading should be regarded as true *just because it comes from this textual "family" or that textual "family"*. He'd stick with the type of Bible manuscript that he only *dreamed* of finding 1,800 years ago: a text that stood out from all of the other irrefutably-corrupt texts because of its miraculously-unique inerrancy – the Authorized 1611 King James Bible. And if Origen wasn't all that familiar with the more archaic English words, he might get himself an English dictionary so he could effortlessly look up the few words he needed to learn during the short period of time it took him to add those words to his own working vocabulary. In short, he would humbly walk by faith in God in accordance with *Thus saith the Lord*.

CHAPTER 4 (9 pages)

JEROME AND THE THOUSAND-YEAR LATIN VULGATE BIBLE**WHY LATIN?**

When Alexander the Great's army, beginning in 330 BC, conquered the known world it quickly made the Koine Greek language spoken everywhere. But then the rising Roman Empire, beginning with its crushing victory at the Battle of Corinth in 146 AD, began taking over that vast Greek empire. As it did so, it made the Latin language spoken everywhere – *almost* as widely spoken as Greek. Does *almost* mean Latin wasn't that big of a deal throughout the world? No; Latin was a big deal; big enough that most of the populations of Europe spoke Latin – including as far north as Britain. That's why, in 1455 AD when Gutenberg printed the first Bible to sell *throughout Europe*, he printed it in *Latin*. (His printed Bible cost the equivalent of three years of a clerk's annual pay. Bible manuscripts weren't cheap.) Latin was also widely spoken as far east of Rome as Babylon, which is one of the reasons Pontius Pilate included Latin on the cross of Christ. Latin was also spoken west of Rome in today's Spain, and south of Rome all across the northern part of the continent of Africa.

In 313 AD, Emperor Constantine made Christianity tolerated across the Roman Empire. In 330 he moved his capital from Rome to Constantinople, which caused the bishop in Rome to become insecure about his political prestige, power, and influence. Then in 379 AD, Theodosius the Great became emperor in Constantinople and announced that when he died, he was going to split the too-large empire, put one of his sons (the 10-year-old) in charge of the western, Latin-speaking Roman Empire; and put his other son (the 18-year-old) at the head of the Byzantine half...*and switch the eastern empire back to Greek instead of continuing with Latin*. It was (wrongly) hoped splitting the empire would help the smaller halves get control over the increasing numbers of barbarian immigrants who were flooding into the empire to escape the Mongol Huns from China. Half of these incoming barbarians sought refuge; they hoped the law and order of the Roman Empire would protect them from the Huns. The other half of barbarian immigrants didn't want law and order; they wanted to use violence to carve out various autonomous districts within the empire for themselves. All of these geographically-widespread assaults on the Roman Empire's sovereignty gradually drained the empire's wealth, which was then forced to defund the military...thus rendering it incapable of enforcing the laws and maintaining social order. *The issue in the Bible is authority, and as the empire's ability to enforce law and order was reduced, the authority of the government suffered a proportionate loss. And as the government lost its authority (because it could not enforce/maintain its authority/will), the social and moral stability of the empire deteriorated into increasing chaos. I say again: Authority without enforcement is no authority.*

Damasus I, in 366 AD, became bishop of the church congregation in Rome at age 61. He was disturbed by the increasing barbarian-caused social chaos that was fragmenting the culture and identity of the Roman Empire that had traditionally helped the empire's diverse regions, peoples, and nations stay unified. He was also worried about the increasing unrest among various Christian congregations throughout the empire who wanted to form their own regional church groups, and thereby possibly divide and weaken the unified body of Christ. Damasus, knowing the empire was going to split when Emperor Theodosius died (in 395), and knowing the eastern half of the empire was going to return to the Greek language, correctly feared the churches would split along with the empire and language. As a result, Damasus began to pay attention to the fact that there were too many poor-quality Latin-language Bible manuscripts in the areas under his tenuous control. He realized the numerous textual diversities would contribute to a weakening of the unified "one-body, one-church" Christian identity, so he decided having one of the empire's top scholars produce an accurate Bible version (the "Latin Vulgate") would help all Christians stay unified and "on the same page." (History shows Damasus was correct; two competing denominations would gradually emerge: Christians in the Latin-speaking regions tended to use the Latin Vulgate Bible and support the bishop in Rome; Christians in the Greek-speaking regions tended to support the bishop in Constantinople and to use either Greek-language Septuagint (with Apocrypha) Bibles or Greek-language non-Septuagint (without Apocrypha) Bibles.)

But before we get to the unifying Latin Vulgate Bible Version, let's see what bothered Damasus about the diversity of the existing Latin-language Bible manuscripts, or as many people erroneously call it – the "Old Latin Bible Version."

THE OLD LATIN BIBLE "VERSION"

The Latin language commonly spoken before about 50 BC is called "Old Latin." Between 50 BC and 200 AD this Old Latin, because of the impact of the mighty Roman Empire, slowly morphed into "Classical Latin" or "Late Latin." During the early centuries of the Christian era (from Christ until 405 AD when the Latin Vulgate came out), many people throughout the Roman Empire naturally used the "Old Latin" translations of the Bible they already had – even though the Old Latin language was slowly dying between 200 and 400 AD. However, because modern scholars have been unable to identify distinct and consistent differences between Old Latin and the Classical Latin used in the Latin Vulgate Bible, and because any language differences in manuscripts may very well have been primarily due to things like translator characteristics and regional language differences, many scholars now think the pre-50 BC Old Latin and the post-50 BC Classical Latin were close enough that they're no longer sure if the labelling of manuscripts as Old Latin or Classical Latin was ever valid. (We know so much less than we pretend.) Therefore, any Latin-language Bible manuscript that isn't a Latin Vulgate, and that came out prior to 405 AD, is automatically-and-confusingly called "Old Latin" – which means 1) it is older than Jerome's Vulgate; 2) it is written in some form (!) of Latin; 3) it will create confusion among scholars about which Bible manuscripts were used by Jerome when he created the Latin Vulgate; and 4) whether or not Christian groups from different regions used "good" Bible manuscripts that had been hand copied from "pure" Old Latin manuscripts, or if they used "bad" Bible manuscripts that had been hand copied from "corrupt" Latin Vulgate manuscripts, or if they used both (or mixtures of both) because they couldn't tell the difference.

The Old Latin manuscripts are also sometimes collectively referred to as "the Itala" ("Itala" and "Old Latin" are synonyms) to differentiate them from the Latin Vulgate. The Latin Vulgate was a Bible version (a true version, albeit an unofficial version). The reason some people get the idea that the older, pre-Vulgate manuscripts are a standardized "Old Latin version" is the terms "Old Latin" and "Itala" are wrongly thought to be version descriptives such as King James, Latin Vulgate,

Douay-Rheims, New American Standard, etc. Old Latin Bibles, however, were anything but standardized; they were translated and copied locally and informally; they were *independent, unrelated* manuscripts that merely shared the same language (ignoring regional differences). *Old Latin* and *Itala* on the one hand, and *Latin Vulgate* on the other, are descriptives that are only intended to make it clear which Latin Bible manuscripts you're talking about – whether it is the older, diverse, pre-Vulgate Latin-language manuscripts (of any and all varieties of Latin) ...or the newer, unified *version* (now called the Latin Vulgate). Adding to the confusion is the fact that back in the Roman Empire both the handwritten Old Latin manuscripts and the handwritten Latin Vulgate manuscript were commonly referred to as “the vulgate” (the local language) to differentiate whether you were talking about a Latin-language Bible manuscript, a Greek-language Bible manuscript, or a Bible in some other language. How, then, did “vulgate” come to be associated only with Jerome's Latin Bible version? 800 years after Jerome's translation was finished, the famous English Franciscan monk, Roger Bacon, began exclusively calling Jerome's Bible the “Latin Vulgate.” The name stuck, largely because by that time the consistency and quality of Jerome's Bible had helped it become more commonly used all over Europe than the inconsistent, often-inferior text of the Old Latin manuscripts.

The Old Latin Bible manuscripts were mostly translated from Greek-language Septuagint (with Apocrypha) manuscripts merely because they were more widely available in the western regions of the Roman Empire than the non-Septuagint (without Apocrypha) manuscripts more commonly found in the eastern regions. Not surprisingly, the Greek-language Septuagint (with Apocrypha) manuscripts that were translated into Old Latin Bible manuscripts by Latin-speaking non-scholars who lived in the western, non-Greek-speaking areas, often produced low-quality translations. This was especially true of the Old Latin OTs. As we saw in the previous chapter, accurate OTs in general were hard to find because of the difficulty of translating complex Babylonian OT Hebrew into simple, no-rules, “everything goes” Koine Greek. But creating Old Latin OTs was even more of a problem because they were going to be translations of translations: First, the Septuagint manuscript was created by turning Hebrew into street Greek; and second, the Latin manuscript was created by turning the Septuagint's street Greek into Latin. Most of the Old Latin translators wrongly assumed, because they spoke both fluent Latin and passable Greek, it would be relatively easy to translate a Septuagint/Koine Greek OT into Latin. Another problem for these well-intentioned Latin-speaking translators was they had *no idea* if the Septuagint manuscript they were using was a quality translation of the original Babylonian OT Hebrew. Hebrew-into-Greek was a difficult transition to make because the two languages were so different, and that resulted in a plethora of awful Septuagint manuscripts – even if they were written on expensive vellum. That was one of the reasons Origen learned to avoid Septuagint Greek manuscripts by sticking with Hebrew or with quality non-Septuagint Greek manuscripts. Old Latin translators were tasked with turning a relatively crude street-Greek Septuagint into a fairly sophisticated Latin...and they had *no idea* how many Hebrew-language nuances their street-Greek Septuagint may have failed to properly express, or if it was just plain mistranslated.

To show how popular and widespread Latin Bible manuscripts were, we have surviving today about 10,000 ancient Old Latin and Latin Vulgate manuscripts and fragments, which easily outnumber the roughly 6,000 Greek manuscripts in the Byzantine-Majority Text “family.” The reason Greek manuscripts became more popular and widely-promoted by scholars than the previously ubiquitous use of Latin manuscripts was because scholars, when Reason-promoting Greek philosophy flooded Europe along with Greek Bible manuscripts, everything Greek (which was a lot easier to learn than the more complex Latin) became all the rage among lazy-minded scholars – especially Protestant ones who wrongly equated anything in Latin with the Roman Catholic denomination. The Old Latin manuscripts, partly because they are translations of translations and usually done by non-scholars, are very diverse. Contributing to their diversity is the fact that handwritten papyrus and parchment Bible manuscripts were expensive, bulky, and short-lived. Therefore, most manuscripts, to reduce cost and bulk, were produced locally and contained but a small portion of the Bible. When an entire Testament or Bible was being produced, therefore, it was copied from a bunch of these smaller manuscripts, which made the result a textual mishmash that came from different regions with different language nuances, and from translators of differing abilities...which is exactly what happened with the various “families” of Greek manuscripts...which resulted in the “manuscript mess” scholars and theologians have been endlessly and futilely evaluating and uselessly quarreling about for centuries.

All of this indicates the fact that – despite how people word things today – there was no “Old Latin Bible Version” in circulation for centuries before Jerome produced the Latin Vulgate in 405 AD. A *version* is singular; it has one text. Yes, a version will acquire differences/mistakes when it is hand copied, but those “version differences” will be things like missed words, missed sentences, and misspellings – not the fundamental textual differences that result when different translations are made by different men who have varying knowledge and abilities. The “Old Latin Version” is a myth; nobody back in the couple of centuries before Christ or in the couple of centuries after Christ, produced, marketed, or distributed an Old Latin OT or NT version. What really happened was exactly what you'd expect: many, many, many individual Christians all over the Roman Empire did what they could to have Bible manuscripts made for their use, which quickly produced the humanly-unsolvable *huge* manuscript mess that Origen found out about...which is similar to the humanly-unsolvable *tiny* manuscript mess you'd have if you found just three Hebrew manuscripts: the three very-different “original autographs” of the book of Jeremiah...and remember, those three manuscripts *wouldn't have the added confusion of copyist mistakes, translation misalignments, and having been compilations of various other manuscripts from various other regions*.

Today, some evangelical Protestants wrongly think Jerome was a Catholic, and his Latin Vulgate was a Catholic Bible. They don't know the Catholic denomination didn't exist until Gregory I, who, as the Roman church's bishop in 600 AD, began gaining control over the independent church congregations in Italy, Spain, Gaul, and England – which was almost *200 years after* Jerome's Latin Vulgate came out. These Protestants wrongly claim the Cathari groups that lived from northern Italy to southern France, *deliberately* shunned Jerome's “Catholic Vulgate” and used the Old Latin “version” or “text” (again, there was *no version* and there was *no text*) ...even though more-informed scholars have evidence that suggests the Cathari groups preferred the Latin Vulgate because of its consistency and quality. You can find some fairly convincing arguments for both sides...but no proof – which is why the argument persists. The problem is the texts of the *few surviving* manuscripts used by massacred Cathari groups are *mixtures* from Old Latin manuscripts, from Jerome's Vulgate Version, and from various regional textual “families” ...so you can find “proof” for whatever you want – as long as you're willing to ignore the stuff that contradicts your position. Nobody knows. In fact, one of the only reasons some scholars say the Old Latin manuscripts were different from

the Vulgate is *Augustine said so* (Augustine despised Jerome and his Vulgate because Augustine couldn't read Hebrew and for other reasons we'll get to). It is increasingly evident that the popular-but-overrated Augustine was wrong, and today's surviving Old Latin/Itala manuscripts that are post-405 AD (that were *previously* thought to have been written using the *Old Latin* language manuscripts) were not from "better texts" than those used by Jerome – *they were largely copied from his Vulgate itself!* What manuscripts, then, were used to make "genuine Old Latin OTs" before Jerome's laudable 405 AD work was available? It is surmised they were made from the Greek Septuagint OTs rather than from the Hebrew OT...but nobody knows because the surviving ancient fragments don't have enough information for comparisons.

Now let's look at Jerome himself; the man responsible for producing all – or most (nobody knows) – of the Latin Vulgate Bible Version.

JEROME

Eusebius Hieronymus (347-420 AD), whose name in Greek and Latin is Hieronymus, and in English is Jerome, was a famous historian and theologian who has been honored by – and falsely claimed by – the Roman Catholic Church as a Catholic Church Father, a Doctor of the Catholic Church, and as a Catholic saint. (Neither Jerome nor Augustine was Catholic. But in attempts to obscure the fact that the Apostle Peter did not start the Catholic Church, they like to say Saint Jerome and Saint Augustine because it implies the Catholic Church did, indeed, go back that early in NT history.) He and Augustine, who was roughly his same age, were considered the top two scholars of that time. They lived at a time when the Roman Catholic Church *didn't exist*; what did exist was a struggling congregation in a big, important, political city...which tended to make its bishops ambitious, political, and cliquish. When Damasus was elected to be bishop of the church, political ambition on his part took a back seat to *survival* for two reasons: First, the empire he lived in was soon to be ruled by a small child who would never amount to anything. Second, in a divided empire there would be less of a sense of a unified body of Christian believers. Adding to that lack of unity were the textual variances of the unofficial and unregulated Old Latin Bible manuscripts. To alleviate that problem, Pastor Damasus wanted the four gospels of the Old Latin revised and made trustworthy, which was a large task involving hundreds of handwritten pages. In 382 AD, in choosing the best scholar for the task, he decided against Augustine and appointed Jerome to make the gospels reliable and respected everywhere.

Jerome was a wise choice because he knew Hebrew, Greek, and Latin; he had experience as a translator; he was conscientious; he had integrity; and he wasn't the egotist Augustine was. When he began evaluating Old Latin gospel manuscripts to see which ones he would use as the basis for his work, Jerome was surprised to find the Old Latin manuscripts had so much diversity they lacked the kind of textual consistency that would tend to identify the majority text...which might therefore be the better text. Anticipating attacks from critics who thought he should just go ahead and use the "tried-and-true" Old Latin manuscripts, Jerome wrote (emphasis is mine):

"If they maintain that confidence is to be reposed in the Latin exemplars, *let them answer which*; for there are almost as many [different] copies of translations as [there are] manuscripts. But if the truth is to be sought from the majority, why not rather go back to the Greek original, and correct the blunders which have been made by incompetent translators, made worse rather than better by the presumptions of unskillful correctors, and added to or altered by careless scribes?"

Jerome then turned to the manuscripts that were popular among his scholarly "peers" – the NT of the Apocrypha-containing Septuagint Greek-language manuscripts. Jerome's research caused him to make some of the same conclusions Origen had made 200 years before about the inferiority of the Septuagint/Apocrypha: they were too inferior to be used as a textual basis. Then – again consistent with Origen's choice – Jerome concluded it was better to use the non-Septuagint Greek-language manuscripts (with no Apocrypha). When Jerome finished his assignment in 384 to redo the gospels, Damasus examined them, was pleased, and then died that same year.

Jerome's adamant rejection of the Greek-language Alexandrian/Septuagint manuscripts and their accompanying Apocrypha, and his decision to rely on the Hebrew OT and the non-Septuagint OT for his Latin OT (he was the very first scholar to use the Hebrew to produce Latin OTs) did not make him popular among some of the other influential scholars of his day. Augustine is a prime example: he and many of his fellows *couldn't speak Hebrew*, so they "preferred" the Greek-language Septuagint translation of the Hebrew OT *largely because they could at least read it*. And, since these men touted the Septuagint manuscripts, they – like small, weak men often do – felt obligated to also promote the Apocrypha because its inconsistent, contradictory texts were included as part of their wrongly-hyped Septuagint. Augustine, because he *could* read the Greek-language NT manuscripts and the Greek-language OT Septuagint/Apocrypha, argued that the Septuagint OT should always be used because the apostles in the NT quoted (he guessed) from Greek-language OTs rather than from Hebrew OTs. Jerome then embarrassed Augustine (because Augustine should have known this) by agreeing that, while there *are* times the NT quotes a Greek version of the OT, the NT *never quotes the Apocrypha*, which tends to raise questions about the origin and reliability of the Septuagint/Apocrypha – and makes the Hebrew OT and the non-Septuagint manuscripts look like more dependable references. Jerome went on to further embarrass Augustine (because Greek-only Augustine didn't know this) by pointing out that sometimes when the NT quotes the OT, those quotes don't match *any* OT readings in Greek; they only match the OT manuscripts in Babylonian OT Hebrew (which, you recall, Jerome was fluent in).

The more I learn about the "saintly genius" of Augustine and compare him with Jerome and with the "heretic" Origen, the lower my opinion of Augustine gets. Jerome and Origen both had intellect, integrity, and strength of character; Augustine only had intellect. An example: The Hebrew-illiterate Augustine who couldn't read the "original Hebrew" OT and wanted the Greek-language Septuagint to be the basis for translating the OT into Latin, pompously and hypocritically contradicted himself when he said about translating the NT from Old Latin manuscripts: "The literal translation cannot be ascertained without referencing the text in the original tongue [Koine Greek]." (Do many of today's "scholars" also promote the Greek-language OT and NT-containing Alexandrian (with Apocrypha) manuscripts (Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus) because they, like Augustine, can only read simple Greek – not the more difficult Hebrew? I trow so, bro.)

Jerome and Origen's rejection of the Apocryphal books is considered by many scholars – because those two men were the foremost experts during an era when manuscripts were readily available – as but another worthy argument against those

4 Chapter 4: JEROME

The War on the Word

dubious manuscripts. In fact, it was Jerome who coined the word, *Apocrypha*, which means *hidden* – as in “They should remain hidden because they have no evidence of authenticity.” Jerome wrote about the Apocrypha: “There is no evidence that they are of God because they lack the authenticity of truth, and they share no similarities with the New Testament or the Old Testament.”

The origin of the Apocrypha’s books is a mystery. They began appearing around 200 BC, during the 400 years of silence after Malachi and before the birth of Christ. They have no prophetic confirmations like the books of the Bible do. They are neither quoted nor referred to by Christ and His apostles like the books of the OT are. These supposed OT books were added to the canon of the OT not by Jews but by Roman Catholics...and that wasn’t done until 1517 AD! The Jews have *never*, in any era, accepted the Apocrypha as part of the OT. When the printing press began – slowly – to make Bibles cheaper, and when the Catholic Church canonized the Apocrypha in 1517, these books had a period during which they tried to become “*unhidden*,” which resulted in their being included as non-Scripture in many Bibles as a selling point. But after people became familiar with them – *yawn* – the fact that they have no impact and lack that special *feeding* quality of Scripture, caused people to lose interest in them...and they faded into “*hiddenness*” again. Since then, the only apparent reason they have for existence is to be another source for Catholic, Protestant, and wannabe theologians’ waste-of-time “*unanswerable*” items on theology’s long, rotating list of inconsequential debate topics that will never be settled.

Review of facts about the Apocrypha:

- The Jews have *always* rejected the Apocrypha; they have *never* included them as part of their Hebrew Scriptures.
- The origin and authorship of the books of the Apocrypha is unknown.
- Differing content loosely called “the Apocrypha” is included in the Greek-language Septuagint manuscripts (the Alexandrinus, the Vaticanus, and the Sinaiticus); but it is excluded from the Greek-language non-Septuagint manuscripts (the Aquila, the Theodotion, and the Symmachus).
- Even though we all tend to say the “Apocrypha” and “Alexandrian” manuscripts are synonymous because all Alexandrian OTs *include* Apocryphal books, that’s technically not true: None of the Alexandrian manuscripts contains the same Apocryphal books as any other Alexandrian manuscript, and no Alexandrian manuscript contains all of the Apocryphal books. There is no manuscript in existence that *is* or that *contains* “THE” Apocrypha. In fact, even though the Roman Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox churches are the only ones that accept “the Apocrypha” as divinely inspired, they don’t accept the same books.
- All unbiased scholars (such as Origen and Jerome) who didn’t have some kind of agenda (like Augustine, and like the Vatican during the Protestant Reformation when in 1546 it declared the Apocrypha it had decreed in 1517 to be official books of the OT to be “divinely inspired and inerrant”) have rejected the Apocrypha.
- Because of what Jerome wrote about the Apocrypha in the introduction to the Vulgate, for the next 1,100 years nobody paid any attention to the Apocrypha because they wanted to read God’s word. But when the Apocrypha was canonized in 1517, and then started being included in published Bibles in 1546, people became more interested in it, which caused the spate of Bible versions that were published in the 1500s to follow Jerome’s lead and reluctantly include it in their Bible versions. By the time the KJV included it between the Testaments, interest in the Apocrypha was waning, and by the late 1800s the only Bibles that continued including the Apocrypha were Catholic ones...and the Apocrypha returned to being “hidden.”
- Unlike the Bible, which has always proven to be historically, archeologically, scientifically, and doctrinally inerrant, the Apocrypha contains a number of proven errors. It wrongly says, for example in Judith 1:7, that Nebuchadnezzar was the king of the Assyrian Empire. And in a doctrinal error, Sirach 3:30 (among other places) says charitable donations of money and goods *atone for sins*.
- Christ and His disciples often quote readings from the OT, but they *never* quote the Apocrypha.

When Bishop Damasus died, Jerome – without the protection of his patron – suddenly found himself outside of “the clique” that included Augustine. Without friends and allies his situation in his church congregation along the Tiber River quickly got ugly. No problem; Jerome simply left – never to return. He traveled around the Holy Land a bit, and settled in a quiet area just outside of Bethlehem so he could work in peace. His research into the Old Latin Bible manuscripts had convinced him redoing the gospels wasn’t nearly enough; the entire NT and OT needed to be redone. He sighed and shook his head at the amount of work it would require for him to translate both Testaments into Latin...and then he took off his coat, sat down, and got started. The Latin Vulgate became his life’s work. For the OT he worked primarily from the Hebrew, but wisely decided to use both the Aquila and Theodotion Greek-language non-Septuagint, non-Apocrypha Bible manuscripts to verify his understanding of the Hebrew so he could double-check that his Latin translations of more-difficult Hebrew readings were accurate. His task added 15 years to the time he spent working on the gospels, and his critical apparatus (very little of which has survived) was extensive, showing why he made the decisions he did. Perhaps yielding to pressure from other scholars, he *did* put the Apocrypha into his finished Bible...but he included an introduction that made it clear the Apocrypha was in zero Hebrew Bibles, and that he did not believe the Apocrypha was inspired Scripture. Also, to further emphasize his scorn for both the Septuagint and the Apocrypha, Jerome didn’t waste his time translating the Septuagint’s Greek Apocrypha into Latin – he just got an Old Latin Bible and copied its Apocrypha straight into his Latin Vulgate without even bothering to see if it might need revising; the Apocrypha just wasn’t worth his time.

SUPERSUBSTANTIAL VS. TRANSUBSTANTIATION

AOR correction: Over 25 years ago when I wrote AOR, I incorrectly said on p.H10-8 that Jerome based his Vulgate on the “Septuagint.” I had apparently missed the distinction between the *Septuagint* (Alexandrian manuscripts) and the *non-Septuagint* (Aquila and Theodotion manuscripts). I also said – somewhat incorrectly – Jerome included the Apocrypha in his Vulgate. He did...but he also included his disdainful remarks mentioned above.

I'm now going to single out one of Jerome's translation choices – supersubstantial bread – that Protestants typically, and wrongly, use to show how much of a “biased Catholic” he was...because they should have known this example is not among the “deceitful Catholic verses” Erasmus found in the Vulgate in 1516. Erasmus knew “supersubstantial bread” in the Vulgate had *nothing* to do with Catholic doctrine – and that's why he did not include it in his deceitful Catholic verses...but Protestants, in their haste to badmouth all things they think are “Catholic,” have failed to examine the evidence. In all fairness to Jerome, it must be noted that by the time Erasmus examined the Vulgate, 1,100 years had passed since Jerome did his work. The Vulgate over the centuries had undergone a number of unauthorized, shady revisions. In fact, evidence suggests that Augustine – *not long after Jerome finished the Vulgate Bible* – used his influence to quietly have certain parts of Jerome's original text *changed* to make the Vulgate more in agreement with the Alexandrian textual family – thus adding a textual variation from Jerome's original, which added to the impenetrable “manuscript mess.” Another of the revisions to the text seems to have been done by one of Charlemagne's scholars, Alcuin, around 800 AD. Why could people arbitrarily make changes to Jerome's Latin Vulgate Bible Version? *Because Jerome's Vulgate Version had never been made official*...because he was just a guy who lived outside of Bethlehem, and because he and his Vulgate weren't popular among many Hebrew-illiterate scholars with “cliquish influence.” Jerome's Vulgate wasn't “sanctioned” by any kind of authority, and therefore had to fight its way to the top based solely on its merits – in spite of clandestine changes made by Augustine's crowd. Also, just like all pre-printing-press Bible manuscripts, the handwritten Vulgate manuscripts were “repaired” by copying/translating from *whatever manuscript was available*. For these reasons, when Erasmus compared ancient scholarly commentaries that quoted directly from Jerome's original Latin Vulgate of 405 AD with the Vulgate Erasmus had in his hands 1,111 years later (!) in 1516 AD, he concluded that Jerome's text had quietly – *but extensively* – been changed/corrupted over the centuries...and that's why Erasmus decided he needed to produce his own Latin New Testament; he wanted to restore the quality of Jerome's original Vulgate Bible Version. Erasmus failed to do that, but his work did open scholars' eyes to the existence of the “manuscript mess,” whether it was accidental or deliberate.

That means the “Catholic” readings Erasmus found in the Vulgate were probably not done by Jerome but by unscrupulous Catholic officials over the centuries trying to make their denomination look more credible – but no proof exists. I think many of the “Catholic words” were added during revisions long after Jerome's death...here's why: I've often read that Jerome – supposedly trying to justify the false Catholic doctrine of *transubstantiation* (communion wafer/bread becomes actual living body of Christ) – deliberately falsified the “daily bread” of the Lord's prayer by making it say, “supersubstantial bread.” I never really thought about it until doing deeper research, and I'm not trying to make Catholic doctrine look any better...but here's a bigger picture that helps us figure out whether Jerome is guilty of what Protestants accuse him of or not:

In the year 600 AD the Catholic Church, under Gregory the Great, was *just beginning* to get other congregations under control of the bishop of Rome, and Gregory was *just beginning* to establish Augustine's doctrines in *The City of God* as official. *City* was published in 426 (42 years *after* Jerome finished the Vulgate's NT, and 6 years after he died), and *City* did not preach transubstantiation. If we go back to writings of scholars who lived before Jerome, *some* of their work *can* be construed as promoting transubstantiation...but only if we ignore the fact that their *context* had nothing to do with communion. The salient fact is that both *Catholic doctrine* and *Catholic control of other congregations* didn't *begin* to become meaningful until 600 AD. In fact, it wasn't until around 800 AD that people in Europe – both preachers and pewsters – began learning how to read...largely because of Charlemagne. Charlemagne (“Charles the Great”), who would become a predecessor to the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire (covering most of Europe), stressed the importance of learning to read and write, the importance of having books – especially the Bible – and encouraged libraries and institutions of learning that taught Christianity. Charlemagne was crowned by the bishop of Rome...and that marked the *beginning* of the era of widespread Catholic power and influence *when behind almost every throne in Europe there was a bishop or cardinal calling the shots*. When Jerome's wording of the Lord's prayer came out, it was about 400 years before most European Christians even learned to read. When they did learn to read, they wanted to have a Bible. And in 800 AD almost everybody knew Jerome's Vulgate was superior to the Old Latin manuscripts: The Old Latin manuscripts were falling apart, were very hard to replace, and contained textual readings that were so different they started arguments and began to make people wonder about the trustworthiness of God's word. That is when use of the Vulgate began to surpass that of the Old Latin manuscripts in Europe. And that is when some people started to wonder about some of the wording in the Lord's prayer. A look at the verses in question:

King James Mt 6:11 Give us this day our daily bread.

Latin Vulgate Mt 6:11 Give us this day our supersubstantial bread.

King James Lk 11:3 Give us day by day our daily bread.

Latin Vulgate Lk 11:3 Give us this day our daily bread.

The first thing we notice is the fact that in Lk 11:3 Jerome did not use *supersubstantial* (a fact that Protestants never mention when badmouthing Jerome's translation) – he used *daily*, just like the KJV. If he were trying to promote a doctrine (*that wouldn't exist for another 800 years!*), he'd have used *supersubstantial* again. It “*seems*” that when Matthew and Luke, under the inspiration of God, penned their gospels in Koine Greek, they had plenty of existing words (that we know about) they could have used to say *daily*. But they not only chose not to use any of those commonly-used words (for reasons we don't know), they “*apparently*” decided to “invent” a brand-new word that does not appear anywhere in history – ever – except two times: once in Mt 6:11 and once in Lk 11:3. The Koine Greek word they apparently invented is made up of two halves that, when combined, do “imply” several closely-related things such as *daily*, *for the coming day*, and *this day*; but the combination *also* “*seems*” to have something to do with *necessary for life*, *urgently-real*, *sustaining*, and *perpetually available*. That makes it look like (because we do not *know*) Jerome, way back then, understood the meaning and uniqueness of Matt and Luke's invented Greek non-word for *daily*...and he thought *supersubstantial* was a good-and-meaningful translation. (I hope this adequately illustrates how *unregulated* and “everything goes” the “communicate-the-best-you-can” *unstructured* nature of Koine Greek was during fifteen centuries of use...and we have ignorant people today claiming to “speak the Greek!” Also, the word “invented” is used above because it sounds more “scholarly” than admitting “there is so much about Koine Greek we

6 Chapter 4: JEROME

The War on the Word

don't know, and this is one of those places.") Jerome knew the contexts of both chapters in both gospels have nothing to do with the *physical last-supper communion*; but rather with spiritual sustenance:

Mt 6:31-33 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Lk 11:9-11,13 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth...If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? ...If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

They refer to some kind of spiritual feeding or blessing that, if the Lord's miraculously turning a few loaves of bread into an all-sufficient supply has anything to do with it, imply that the bread we need daily has more to do with our word-based submissive obedience to the Lord than to a physical communion bread-eating ceremony:

Jn 4:34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me...

Jn 6:63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

The use of *daily* in the King James Bible is proper...and its use in Jerome's Lk 11:3 above may have helped prevent lazy Christians from using *supersubstantial bread* to wander off into doctrinal fiction unsupported by Scripture. Jerome's use of both *daily* and *supersubstantial* was intended to help people think about the spiritual *necessity* of the word of God. His translation neither taught nor did it justify transubstantiation. And when Christians all over Europe, the Middle East, and the northern parts of Africa read *supersubstantial bread* during the more than 1,000-year reign of the Latin Vulgate, it cannot be said that they were reading an error...and that's one reason the ignorance-based controversy over Jerome's supersubstantial bread died out...but the controversy over Catholicism's transubstantiation (which is not in Jerome's Vulgate) did not die out – as we'll see.

In 800 AD when people learned to read, some of them with limited vocabularies wondered if *supersubstantial* was the same as transubstantiation – even though they're different words. Let's look at Jerome's *supersubstantial bread* vs. the Catholic Church's *transubstantiation*:

Supersubstantial bread: **Super** – superior, higher, better, or more important in some way. **Substantial** – a considerable amount, important. **Supersubstantial bread** – bread that is better or more filling than normal bread.

Transubstantiation (significantly, this is *never* followed by the word bread): **Trans** – to change into something different. **Substantiation** – the act or process of being a certain substance or nature. **Transubstantiation** – to change into a completely different substance.

Over the next 400 years that question about what *supersubstantial bread* meant to people who had just learned to read, slowly, gradually went from an ignorance-based debate to a heated controversy...and along the way the vocabulary-based **debate** over the meaning of *supersubstantial bread* changed into a philosophical/theological argument about whether the bread at communion actually transforms into the physical body of Christ. (If you had started a debate because you didn't know the word definition of *super* or the definition of *substantial*, that basic ignorance might cause you a *substantial* amount of embarrassment...you might even be *super-embarrassed*. And your pride might then cause you to quietly drop the easily-settled *vocabulary* issue and spend your time with useless, endless wranglings about unanswerable theological musings.) Some people became pro-transubstantiation and others remained con...and Mt 6:11's supersubstantial bread and Lk 11:3's daily bread *vocabulary non-arguments* vanished amid all the *doctrinal arguments* about *transubstantiation*.

Then in 1215 AD, the Pope, having had actual control over Europe's Holy Roman Empire for 250 years (ever since Otto I was crowned emperor in 962 AD), summoned everyone to a huge, official Fourth Council at his Rome residence, the Lateran Palace. Items high on the Vatican's agenda included: establish the papacy's supreme rule; stamp out heresy (in other words, finish killing the Cathari); launch another crusade to the Holy Land; curb drunkenness among the Catholic clergy; curb homosexual wantonness among the Catholic clergy; terminate the Catholic clergy's over-used prerogative to condemn people to death and to execute them...and there was also a brief-but-infallible decree that defined transubstantiation (not *supersubstantial bread* – a topic that had died centuries before) and made transubstantiation an official doctrine of the Catholic Church. The decree was based neither on Scripture nor on vocabulary words – or anything of *substance*...it was just an "infallible" decree. But how could the 1215 ruling be an infallible decree – indeed, the *first* infallible decree – if Popes didn't officially declare themselves to be infallible until 1870? Because in 1215 AD the Catholic Church had had so much frightening power for two and a half centuries that *even drunken, low-ranking homosexual tiny-village priests had the power to execute people arbitrarily and with impunity*. This 1215 decree was – in practice – backed by so much power that it *instantly* ended all debate *on pain of being tried for heresy by the Inquisition*. I say again: back then *you didn't dare to question the Catholic Church*.

Protestants have wrongly said Jerome was a Catholic – *even though the denomination didn't yet exist and didn't have established doctrines*; Protestants have said his Latin Vulgate was an effort to justify the false doctrine of transubstantiation – *that wouldn't exist for many centuries*; and Protestants have said "good Christians" used "only the Old Latin Bible *Version*" because they knew the "Catholic Latin Vulgate" was "an attempt by Satan to subvert the inspired manuscripts" that were used to make "the Old Latin Bible *Version*" – *even though there was no Old Latin Version*, even though Jerome *wasn't a Catholic*, and *even though the Latin Vulgate he produced was never Catholic*: That's right; in 1546 at the Council of Trent, the Catholic Church ordered that the existing Latin Vulgate (that had already received numerous unscrupulous, secretive revisions) be "officially corrected" so it could, for the first time, become the Church's official Bible. (This 1546 decree was largely the result of Erasmus' embarrassing 1516 revelation that the Vulgate had been Catholicized/corrupted over the centuries.) But, despite

the decree, nobody began revising the Vulgate until twenty years later...but then lost interest and quit. Eventually, several decades later, the Vulgate was *revised* (which technically made it a different version) by Pope Sixtus V in 1590, mass-produced on the Vatican's printing presses, and put up for sale. It was now the Catholic Church's first official Bible version – for *three whole months*...and then the Catholic Church banned its own officially-claimed version! Two years later, in 1592, based largely on the Vaticanus/Alexandrian manuscript with Apocrypha, a revision of Sixtus' "officially-revised-but-short-lived" pseudo-Vulgate was published by Pope Clementine VIII (the "Clementine Vulgate"), and it remained the official Latin Bible Version of the Catholic Church for centuries. In other words, it looks like somebody pointed out that Pope Sixtus' 1590 revision was an embarrassment because it didn't use the Vatican's newly-acquired Alexandrian manuscript...so the revised Vulgate was banned. Jerome's Latin Vulgate was neither based on the Vaticanus nor was it ever the official Bible of *any* denomination.

THE LEGACY OF THE LATIN VULGATE

Christian unity

I've mentioned the problematic textual diversity of the Old Latin manuscripts that caused Damasus to have Jerome create the Latin Vulgate Bible Version. Why was (and is) "textual diversity" a problem? Because God's message is Truth, and Truth is unifying. But if God's message is obscured by nonsensical and erroneous passages (such as those in modern versions), faith in the inspiration, accuracy, and existence of the word of God is eroded. I'll use Amos 3:3 again (from different sources many centuries apart) as an example that shows why Origen and Jerome rejected the Septuagint...and would have rejected today's NASV:

Masoretic Hebrew Amos 3:3 Will two walk together, except they have agreed?

Latin Vulgate Version Amos 3:3 Shall two walk together except they be agreed?

King James Version Amos 3:3 Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

Septuagint Amos 3:3 Shall two walk together at all, if they do not know one another?

New American Standard Version Amos 3:3 Do two men walk together unless they have made an appointment?

When the spate of new Bible versions began coming out in the 1500s (from the Coverdale Version to the Geneva Version); and when the Catholic Douay-Rheims Version came out in 1582/1610; and even when Westcott and Hort's two Alexandrian-text-based versions – the Revised Version of 1881/1885 and the American Standard Version of 1901 – came out, they all got Amos 3:3 correct because back then the Bible still had to make sense – no matter what the Alexandrian manuscripts said. Today, however, theology and unbelief have turned the text of the Bible into a pathetic joke that nobody takes seriously. Ever since the mid-to-late 1900s it has become well known that Origen was right: it is impossible for anybody to figure out what the original-autograph texts said, and that has unleashed a torrent of modern-text *asininities*.

The textual diversity and corruption that Bishop Damasus correctly worried about over 1,600 years ago, has become rampant today – and it's too late for any new Bible version to accomplish what Jerome's Latin Vulgate did – to reestablish a semblance of order and unity in the worldwide body of Christ. How do we know another Latin-Vulgate-like Bible won't produce the unity that Jerome's version did? *Because we have had for over 400 years a better version than the Vulgate – the miraculously-inerrant King James Bible.* To paraphrase our Lord in Mt 12:41:

"The saints of the Middle Ages shall rise in Judgment and **condemn today's generation**: because they repented when they read their Latin Vulgate; and, behold, *a greater than the Vulgate is here that bears my name.*"

Today's different Bible versions have, together with our modern culture of Reason, eroded faith and caused many people to quote Pontius Pilate, shrug, and decide God Almighty's own definition of His word is no longer valid.

The Latin Vulgate's influence on later Bible versions

The Latin Vulgate was originally published in handwritten manuscript form, and it didn't achieve parity with the already-numerous Old Latin manuscripts until about 800 AD. From then on, the Vulgate – because of its merits – pulled ahead of the Old Latin with increasing speed. There was growing enthusiasm for the Vulgate as people became more familiar with its impressive text and flowing language. When printing presses were invented, its circulation skyrocketed.

The Vulgate, which was *the first significant Bible version of the Christian era*, was read all over the western and eastern parts of the old Roman Empire because of the widespread use of Latin, and because of the common practice of using translations from the Vulgate to "repair" missing pages of Greek-language manuscripts. Any Greek-language Bible versions that were used in regional churches throughout the eastern parts of the old Roman Empire, had neither the longevity nor the geographic spread of the Vulgate. One reason for that is as early as 650 AD the *entire Holy Land* had been conquered and had become part of the expanding Muslim caliphate...causing the Greek language to begin its hasty retreat to Greece. Even the "impregnable" fortress of Greek-speaking Christians – Constantinople – fell to the Muslims in 1453 AD...and then Greece itself fell in about 1500 AD. All of this coincided with the Muslim destruction of many Greek-language Bible manuscripts...which is one reason (along with weather) the surviving Byzantine-Majority manuscripts are not nearly as old as the Alexandrian manuscripts of the dry north African deserts. Historically, it looks like Europe – which came very close to being conquered by Muslims – resisted the savage Muslim onslaught *because of the Latin Vulgate Bible*.

The longevity of the Latin language was greatly extended by the Vulgate and the rise of the Catholic Church, and that helped the Latin Vulgate have a duration and geographic spread unequalled by any other version...until the AV1611, in so many unprecedented ways, went all around the world at a rate that no other version or manuscript has ever matched.

From about 800 to almost 1600 AD for most people of all generations, the Latin Vulgate was the only Bible version they ever knew, it was the only Bible they ever needed, it was the only Bible they ever quoted, and it was the only book they ever owned. We talk about how God has blessed the King James Bible for over 400 years in ways He never blessed the Latin Vulgate, but He obviously did bless the Vulgate – all over Europe and in parts of the old eastern Roman Empire among Latin

speakers – for over 800 years. (Not to mention the *vast numbers* of personal-use manuscripts in other languages that were translated from the Vulgate.) It is a historical fact that it was *the Latin Vulgate Bible* that caused early Catholic reformers to begin preaching the word of God rather than the catechism of Rome. When early Catholic and Protestant reformers began translating the Bible into the new English language that was spreading over Europe, they used the Latin Vulgate: In 1381 John Wycliffe translated the Vulgate gospels into English. In 1522 Martin Luther consulted the Vulgate to see how it worded various readings when producing his Bible. And four years later, 1526, William Tyndale used Luther's Vulgate-influenced Bible to make his own New Testament. Then in 1535 Miles Coverdale used the Latin Vulgate and Tyndale's NT to make the first complete Bible in English. The Great Bible of 1539 consulted the Vulgate. The Textus Receptus Greek-language NT was created from several texts, including the Vulgate. The Geneva Bible of 1560 used the Vulgate via Tyndale's NT and the Textus Receptus. And some of the King James Bible's famously-worded verses originated with Jerome.

Everybody liked the Vulgate's language; it was religiously respectful, it had dignity and majesty, and it flowed smoothly when read aloud. It was known as a very-good-but-not-perfect translation that had accumulated flawed "corrections" over the centuries. When the Protestant Reformation damaged the Vulgate's reputation among Protestants because it was presumed to be "Catholic," those anti-Vulgate Protestants – as they researched and compared and worked to produce their various Bible versions – regained their respect and appreciation for the Vulgate's accuracy and inspiring prose, as we saw above. The Latin Vulgate had been the premier Bible version for almost 800 years (or 1,200 years depending on how you look at it) for some very good reasons. Yes, it had flaws – just like all versions and manuscripts back then did...as scholars would begin to learn soon after the advent of the printing press. But for most of the NT era, Christians were not Enlightened: they did not use Reason to critically scrutinize Bibles to find errors; they just wanted to learn God's *message* from His holy word...and they knew and accepted the fact that their manuscripts had been handwritten or typeset by fallible human beings. If the last 12 verses of Mark's gospel were missing, or the woman caught in adultery was banished to a footnote – or if the Bible manuscript they were reading had any number of other flaws and errors we are so aware of today – they either didn't notice them or they ignored/discarded them as human error and *focused on the verses they did have* in fading ink on their carefully-handled crumbling papyrus pages...which sometimes were precious few. I am reminded of me as a young man: I had no idea I'd been born again, and I was about as ignorant as you could get...but *I was suddenly hungry* for God's word. I'd been given a Revised Standard Version when I graduated from the Naval Academy – which sat, unused (and therefore in pristine condition!) on the shelf. Suddenly hungry, I devoured it, doing a lot of underlining and note-taking. I'll never forget what happened to me when I got to John 11:25. Talk about *supersubstantial bread* – *the Lord fed me, brother, and my Pilgrim's Progress journey began right then...*and I am eternally thankful.

Latin Vulgate Version Jn 11:25 Jesus said to her: I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, although he be dead, shall live:

Revised Standard Version Jn 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,

King James Version Jn 11:25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

I knew nothing about corrupt Bible versions, ERROR manuscripts, or the war against the KJV. But the Lord fed me with His *message* via the RSV. When I later heard about supposed differences between the KJV's unique inerrancy and the obvious errors in all the modern versions, I simply compared the verses in the King James with those in the other versions. I was as ignorant as the day is long...but *I wasn't stupid, and I could see there wasn't even a choice to be made*; I simply accepted and submitted to the truth: the Authorized 1611 King James Bible is the inerrant word of God. But make no mistake about it: if our Christian brothers and sisters around the world are using other versions and other languages because they either don't know about the KJV (like I didn't) or can't read English, our Good Shepherd will take care of and guide them just like He has done with all of us throughout history via the spoken word, the written word...and even the RSV, *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart* (Heb 4:12).

But verily, verily, I say unto thee, brother: if I had compared the Christ-honoring truth of the verses in the King James with the *modern-version verses that make my Saviour's definition of His word a lie...*and then decided to stick with a modern version because I "preferred" it, that irrational, stubborn, illogical, indefensible decision would have indicated that I was *impudent and hardhearted* (Ezek 3:7).

Many of the English words used in all of the above early English Bibles *came into being* because of their first-in-history use in the Latin Vulgate, such as: creation, justification, regeneration, salvation, sanctification, and testament.

Today, many evangelicals who "prefer" the King James Bible (but do not believe it, or anything else, is the inerrant word of God) zealously promote the traditional Masoretic Text for the OT and the Textus Receptus for the NT, and vehemently reject the Greek-language Septuagint OT text that is so popular among liberal scholars and theologians today. Ironically, they do not realize the Masoretic Text became "traditional" largely because of Jerome and his Latin Vulgate. The vast majority of scholars (such as Augustine) in Jerome's day actively promoted the Greek translation of the Hebrew OT popularly called the Septuagint. One of the main reasons they did so was the fact that "Bible scholars" back then who could only read common street Greek – but *not* the "original Hebrew" OT manuscripts – *really weren't accomplished Bible scholars*. But Jerome was a true Bible scholar who was fluent in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, so when he compared the texts of the Septuagint and the Hebrew manuscripts and saw how obviously inferior the Septuagint was, he based his Latin Vulgate OT mainly on the Hebrew – thus embarrassing big-name pseudo scholars like Augustine because they couldn't say anything about the Vulgate's OT one way or the other *because they couldn't read the "original Hebrew" from which it was translated!* When Jerome deliberately, confidently, and knowingly defied the ignorance-based "scholarly" preference for the Septuagint, he had no idea the Vulgate would become THE Bible version for Christians throughout the vast Roman Empire – *which helped establish the Masoretic Text as the de facto standard text for over a thousand years...*which angered scholars like Augustine because there was *nothing* they could do about it because over time it was increasingly discovered that the Hebrew was, indeed, a more accurate text than

the Septuagint, and Jerome's reputation and popularity increased...all of which left Augustine to impotently stew in his ignorance of Hebrew. I say again, because Jerome used the Hebrew language-based OT itself...instead of the Greek-language translation of the Hebrew OT of the Septuagint, and because God made the Vulgate so ubiquitous, the Masoretic OT Text that was published four centuries after Jerome's Vulgate, became – and remained – THE foundation for all translations of the OT until well into the 1900s when modern apostates who'd soaked their heads in theology finally convinced many Augustine-like wannabe scholars to begin using the Greek Septuagint instead of the Hebrew Masoretic Text.

The undeniably-impressive history, long life, and widespread effects that Jerome's Latin Vulgate had, may tend to remind people of the fact that Latin was one of the three languages used in the superscription on the cross of Christ.

Before we get too carried away about how great Jerome's Latin Vulgate was for a thousand years, let's remember that, right from the start, this unofficial Bible version – no matter how great it might have been when Jerome finished it – underwent a number of clandestine revisions that made the text increasingly corrupt...as officially exposed and proven by Erasmus in the early 1500s. But let's end this chapter by using the Vulgate's increasing corruption over the centuries to underscore two points: First, the Holy Spirit can use a corrupt Vulgate, RSV, NIV, or NASV to reach his people...because Christianity is a matter of our hearts, not our smarts. Second, the "knowledge" that scholars and theologians had been acquiring ever since they swallowed Greek philosophy hook, line, and sinker (that poisoned people like Philo of Alexandria, Justin, Clement, Origen, and Augustine) was eroding academia's faith in Scripture. And, that knowledge-based erosion began affecting society in general when Charlemagne encouraged formal education in 800 AD. In general, knowledge is an enemy of faith; spiritually speaking, smarts are bad for our hearts. Faith is the victory.

In closing, keep in mind that it was the manuscript mess that, after more than a thousand years, ended the useful reign of Jerome's Latin Vulgate Bible Version. And you'll see in chapter 7 that it was Erasmus' exposure of the Catholic Church's deliberate corruption of the Latin Vulgate that started the 1500 AD century-long flood of "mere Bible versions" that threatened to replace faith in what God Almighty literally says in His Book – with philosophy-based humanistic Reason/carnality of all things! And that is what necessitated – because you and I are no more resistant to the Devil's Yea, hath God said war on the word than Eve was back in the garden of Eden – the undeniable, uniquely-miraculous inerrancy of the Authorized King James Bible. It was the King James Bible's black-and-white, plain-as-day superiority over the error-ridden modern versions that made a mostly-ignorant about "religious stuff" guy like me realize there is absolutely no logical way – and no faith-based way – to choose any of the modern ERROR-based mere versions over the KJV with the myriad unique things it has going for it that all point to the fact that it really is God's word – as He defines it – for us in these dark-and-awful end times.

CHAPTER 5 (7 pages)

THE MASORETES, THEIR OT MANUSCRIPT, AND THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

TIBERIAS

Before Herod the Great died, he arranged that his kingdom of Judea would be divided into four parts (called *tetrarchies*) that would be ruled by his four sons (called *tetrarchs*). The northern tetrarchy that included the region of Galilee went to Herod Antipas (19 BC - 42 AD) who participated in the executions of John the Baptist and Christ. Galilee in those days was a poor area that lacked attractive cities. Nazareth, for example, was a poor town known mostly for its garrison of Roman soldiers, and therefore Nazareth was looked down on by many Jews (Jn 1:45,46). Herod Antipas didn't want his Galilean capital to be a poor town like Nazareth; therefore, he built a beautiful new city (naming it Tiberias after the Roman emperor of the same name) on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee – often thereafter called the Sea of Tiberias (Jn 6:1). During the Jews' three wars of rebellion, Tiberias was spared from destruction by the Romans because they appreciated the military help provided by Herod Agrippa II (27-96 AD) – the last of the Herodian dynasty. Agrippa had been driven from Tiberias by Jewish rebel forces during the first war, refused to surrender, raised an army, and helped the Romans defeat the rebels. The Roman armies, therefore, spared Tiberias. After the three very destructive wars, the fact that Tiberias was largely unscathed caused a hefty percentage of the relatively few Jews who decided to stay in the Holy Land to move there – which helped Tiberias become a center of culture and scholarship. Among the Jewish scholars who settled in Tiberias were the Masoretes.

When Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman army in 70 AD the Bible-rejecting, “sola scriptura,” conservative Sadducees vanished from history. But plenty of Sadducee-like conservative Jews remained who shunned the old Pharisaical belief that the collection of writings in the Talmud should be used to determine what the Bible “really meant.” These conservative Jews who gave lip service to the supremacy of Scripture would become the nucleus of modern “Karaite Judaism,” which rejects Talmudic “rabbinic Judaism.” Conservative Karaites – like the old Sadducees – believed the Old Testament to be the sole authority, and a group of these Karaite scholars settled in Tiberias after the Jewish wars, and are believed to be the origin of the scholar-scribes – later called *Masoretes* – who, from about 550-950 AD produced the famous Masoretic Text of the Old Testament.

The work of the Masoretes was endangered in 634 AD when the spreading Muslim armies conquered the Holy Land. Muslim armies, trying to conquer the world for Allah, quickly subdued vast areas across North Africa and the Middle East for several reasons: the Roman armies were gone, the Jews were mostly gone, the region had no real national identity, and most of the territory was populated by tiny desert kingdoms, isolated squatters, and a few has-been cities like Alexandria that had no way to protect themselves from...*anybody*. As usual, the Muslims destroyed everything in their path, especially if it had anything to do with Jews or Christians. When they conquered Caesarea, for example, they destroyed almost all of Origen's works, including the *Hexapla*. The city of Tiberias was different, though; when the Muslims got there, they liked its location and simple elegance enough to settle there. But if they killed all of its occupants, there wouldn't be enough of a population for it to continue functioning, so the Christian-hating Muslims made an alliance with the local Christian-hating Jews in which the Jews could occupy half of the buildings and the Muslims would occupy the other half. Most of the Masoretes' work, therefore, was done during the Muslim occupation because the European Christian Crusades wouldn't regain control of the Holy Land until over 400 years later in 1099 AD.

THE MASORETES BEGIN WORK IN 550 AD

The three vicious wars the Jews began and lost between 66 and 135 AD backfired and were perhaps the three most ill-advised wars in history: They caused most of the Jewish population in the Holy Land to vanish; many Jews were killed, were taken away into slavery, or fled to other regions. The temple no longer existed, the priesthood was extinct, Judaism was (temporarily) outlawed, and Judea and Jerusalem were renamed. It is no surprise, therefore, that the few Jews who remained in “Syria Palestina,” and those who lived in other regions of the world, quickly lost their ability to read and speak their native Babylonian OT Hebrew. By about 200 AD it was a dead language, and Jews who inherited handwritten Babylonian OT Hebrew manuscripts had no idea how to read them, so they went outside and buried them in their back yards – thinking that was more respectful than letting them collect dust in some forgotten corner.

Meanwhile, NT Christians – *many of whom were converted Jews* – were using the OT verses referred to by the Apostle Paul in Acts 24:14 to convert many more Jews throughout the Middle East, which alarmed the Christian-hating Jewish scholar-scribes in Christian-hating, Muslim-ruled Tiberias and (to a lesser extent) in Babylon. The Masoretes believed Christians, who were wrongly-but-successfully using the Jews own Scriptures, were beginning to overshadow Judaism. It was offensive for the Masoretes to see “*their*” Bible increasingly claimed to be *incomplete* because it was “just the Old Testament” ...which Christians were claiming had been superseded by a “New Testament.” The Masoretes were painfully aware that these upstart Christians were converting many Jews by using parts of this “New Testament” (such as Gal 3; Heb 7-10) to explain why the Jewish Messiah had to die and why this “New” Testament had to displace the “Old” Testament. These Christians were also using OT prophecy to prove that if the Jews had believed their own Bible, they'd have accepted Jesus of Nazareth as their Passover Lamb/Saviour, their Messiah, and their God (Lk 24:25-27; Jn 5:46; Ac 3:18-24; 7:52; 18:27; 24:14; Ro 1:1,2; Gal 3:24). In fact, astonishing numbers of Jews who already knew and believed the OT, had accepted Christ as their Messiah (Ac 21:20). In other words, Christians were using the Jews' own Bible to show that many Jews were Bible rejecters...and the Masoretes resented that.

The Masoretes weren't alone, however; many hard-hearted, Christ-rejecting Jews thought these Scripture-using Christians were “twisting” the “true meaning” of the OT Scriptures...which helps explain why OT manuscripts, beginning about 100 years after Christ was crucified, began appearing with “young woman” in Isaiah 7:14 instead of “virgin.”

2 Chapter 5: MASORETES

The War on the Word

The Masoretes were worried that their traditional Jewish religion might perish. (*Traditions* in Hebrew is *masora*, from which the Masoretes got their name.) The Masoretes also thought the Hebrew-language Bible and the traditional Hebrew language, which neither they nor anybody else had spoken for *several hundred years*, were important to the survival of traditional Judaism. The Masoretes needed to somehow learn a dead language nobody spoke anymore, and therefore needed to find as many Babylonian OT Hebrew manuscripts as they could. They scoured the countryside collecting old unused manuscripts and parts of manuscripts, and they even dug up “buried” manuscripts from Jews’ back yards. The result was they had lots of manuscripts they couldn’t read; the text consisted only of consonants – no vowels, and all the word letters were run together. They were faced with a challenge that was compounded by the fact that the Masoretes didn’t even know the Hebrew alphabet, much less speak Hebrew. I’ll write the underlined phrase again to simulate how the Masoretes saw the thousands of handwritten, block-lettered manuscript pages:

CHLLNGHTWSCMPNDDDBTHFCTTHTTHMSRTSDDNTVNKNWTHHBRWLPBHTMCHLSSSPKHBWR

Like everybody else, the Masoretes could read, speak, and write Koine Greek. Therefore, they used the many-available Greek-language Septuagint and non-Septuagint OT manuscripts that had been translated from Hebrew as teaching aids. Over time, the more the Masoretes learned, the more they agreed with many Jewish groups – and with earlier scholars such as Origen and Jerome – that the non-Septuagint, non-Apocrypha Greek translations were more faithful to the old Babylonian OT Hebrew Bibles than were the Apocrypha-including Septuagint manuscripts of the Alexandrian family. Therefore, “ancient” Greek OT translations like the Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus *from hundreds of years earlier during the second century* (!) were chosen by these sixth-century Masoretes as helpful texts as they tried to figure out what words were represented by the strange block letters of the old “Hebrew” alphabet that their ancestors got from the Babylonians.

The “manuscript mess” proved to be insurmountable. The Masoretes learned that Babylonian OT Hebrew had, over the centuries, become but one of several regional dialects of Hebrew-Aramaic, so when they found different readings among manuscripts written in different regional dialects, they had no idea which, if any reading, was “the original.” So, they had three options: they could leave blank spaces, they could insert several textual possibilities, or they could insert their “best guess.” They decided option three – guesswork – looked more scholarly and authoritative. When the Masoretes disagreed with some of the Greek-manuscript words used by the ancient translators, Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus, the Masoretes decided those ancient translators who were fluent in Hebrew “probably” inserted incorrect vowels into the consonant-only Hebrew, which produced incorrect words. Therefore, the struggling-to-learn-Hebrew Masoretes, knowing nobody had any proof that they were wrong, produced different words by inserting vowels they thought were more “likely.” This “Masoretic method” contributed to the manuscript mess, and it caused scholars in the coming centuries (who were at least as ignorant as the Masoretes) to have massive *opinion-based* arguments about many different issues...that would not be settled until a thousand years later in 1611.

The Masoretes also found over time that reading a manuscript with no vowels, with all the consonants run together, and with no sentence and paragraph breaks was too difficult for them. So they invented a new “Masoretic Hebrew alphabet” with marks that indicated which vowels they thought should be inserted, where sentences and paragraphs should begin and end, and various other aids that let people know what the Masoretes guessed. This newly-invented, greatly-simplified, “cheat-sheet” version of the Hebrew alphabet – called “Masoretic script” or “Masoretic written Hebrew” – is what today’s scholars and theologians are referring to when they claim to know “the original Hebrew” of “the original manuscripts.” In reality, it is just a modified, easier-to-read alphabet that conveyed what the Masoretes thought the dead-language Hebrew said, and it is these Masoretic modifications that have helped Masoretic Hebrew survive today. This version of written Hebrew is unique because:

- It is the only Hebrew alphabet in history that was never associated with God’s Bible-believing Hebrew saints.
- It was the first time in history that a manuscript of God’s living word was made using a dead language.
- It was the first time a Hebrew manuscript was drafted by unsaved men who *had done the best they could to learn how to read and write* a form of Hebrew neither they nor anybody else could read or speak.
- It is the only form of Hebrew in history that God never used to create an inspired, inerrant original autograph.
- I say again: this Masoretic Hebrew cannot properly be called “the original Hebrew” of “the original manuscripts.”
- The Masoretic manuscript is the only manuscript that was created by men who *deliberately and systematically destroyed* every precious surviving OT manuscript – no matter what language they were written in – they had diligently collected over *hundreds of years*!

That’s right: when the Masoretes finished creating their “Masoretic manuscripts,” they shocked all Christian and Jewish scholars and all historians of every era by destroying all of the myriad manuscripts they’d spent several centuries finding, buying, and collecting so they could research God’s original “true text” – hoping their sole-surviving text (with readings such as “young woman” instead of “virgin”) would become the sole manuscript authority for the Old Testament. They did not want anyone else to ever use the many manuscripts the Masoretes collected to see if the Masorete’s research was valid or not. Was it extreme insecurity on their part, or something more sinister? We don’t know, but we do know the Masoretes didn’t have all that many places in the Hebrew OT with uncertain vowel choices; in most places the context left no wiggle room to select different words. Therefore the finished Masoretic Hebrew OT, while not inerrant, is mostly correct...and is today considered a testimony to the academic discipline of the Masoretes...even if there are reasons to question their character.

Some of the existing manuscripts the Masoretes produced include:

- **700 AD: The Ashkar-Gilson Manuscript and the London Manuscript.** These aren't two manuscripts; they're two small fragments from the same manuscript. They prove the Masoretes produced manuscripts at least 200 years earlier than scholars originally thought.
- **920 AD: The Aleppo Codex.** For years (before it was senselessly vandalized by Muslims after World War II) this was the most complete, most accurate Hebrew-language manuscript. (Liberal scholars still "preferred" the inferior Greek-language Alexandrian manuscripts.)
- **1008: The Leningrad Codex.** When the Aleppo Codex was vandalized, this manuscript became the new most complete, most accurate Hebrew-language manuscript. Its text is identical to the Aleppo – a tribute to the accuracy of the Masoretic scribes when they copied the finished works of the Masoretic translators.

Before we get to some of the arguments scholars have over whether the Masoretic Hebrew text should be preferred over the Alexandrian Greek text, let's take a quick look at the Dead Sea Scrolls and what we have and haven't learned from them.

THE ESSENES AND THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

When the Hasmoneans (the Maccabees) successfully rebelled against the Seleucid Empire about a century and a half before Christ, they took advantage of their popularity and made themselves rulers and high priests, which appropriately filled some Jews with righteous indignation. Among those offended by the Hasmonean's flagrant disregard for Scripture was a Jewish religious group called the *Essenes*. The Essenes agreed with the Sadducees that only Levites were to be priests and only the Bible had any authority. The Essenes disagreed with the Pharisees about the authority of oral and written "as-memory-serves" traditions; they disagreed with both Sadducees and Pharisees about politics, believing God's people without dominion should have no political involvement; and they could not sit by and watch Greek Reason turn Biblical Christianity into well-intentioned humanistic apostasy. So little is known about these people that we cannot even be certain that we should call them "Essenes." Because they shunned all political involvement, and because some or most of the Essenes lived quiet, separated lives in rural hermitages, they do not appear in the Bible and are almost invisible in history. Almost. It seems that, beginning about 150 BC, as the Essenes began forming separated self-reliant communal communities for themselves, they also began putting together their own reference library containing all sorts of documents – including many Bible manuscripts. One of the communities they'd been building or living in was out in the wilderness near the Dead Sea, and when the Roman army – during the three Jewish wars – began destroying Judea in 70 AD, the Essenes quickly stuffed their growing library of Bible scrolls and other documents into clay pots, stashed those clay vessels in a number of inaccessible cliffside caves, and fled for their lives from the wrath of the enraged Roman army – hoping they could survive, return in more peaceful times, retrieve their library of scrolls, and live separated lives. They may not have escaped the Roman army, however, because they completely vanished from history. Their hidden "Dead Sea Scrolls" sat in the dry desert air near the northwestern tip of the Dead Sea for almost 1,900 years. Then the accidental discovery of these Bible scrolls from 1946 through 1956 temporarily (as we shall see) restored respectability and hope to the increasingly-fragmented, discredited, and discouraged fields of modern textual criticism and Christian theology.

Many of the Dead Sea manuscripts have nothing to do with the Bible; they concern secular stuff that is of little interest to us. The Bible manuscripts did reveal some things we didn't know before...but nothing of substance. Looking at the importance of the Dead Sea Scrolls through the perspective of hindsight, it is easy now to see why the Dead Sea Scrolls have had so little impact on newly-published modern Bible versions. In fact, recent modern Bible versions have been more impacted by the shocking social fruit of equality such as "gender identity" and "diversity." I say again, the Dead Sea Scrolls have proven to be so worthless that nonsense and bullshit have influenced Christianity much more than the Dead Sea Scrolls have – all of the bluster and protestations of theologians notwithstanding. None of this was a surprise to Bible believers: we knew if there really were any "church-helping valuable nuggets" of info in the Dead Sea Scrolls, our Good Shepherd wouldn't have let His NT people go without it for 1,900 years.

The Dead Sea Scrolls have proven valuable in one way – \$. A number of museums tried to profit from the public hype about the scrolls by purchasing and displaying some of them to attract visitors. However, most of these museum "Authentic Dead Sea Scroll" displays have been proven to be counterfeits...but they made money! You will sometimes read old articles from past decades that loudly proclaim the Dead Sea Scrolls are "the most important Biblical discovery of the 20th century." However, if you look deeper you'll find they are referring to Biblical archeology...which is also not true; there are numerous archeological finds supporting Biblical accuracy that surpass anything we've learned from the Dead Sea Scrolls – as you saw in chapter 1. The more you learn the more you'll conclude scholars are wrong about the scrolls being truly important in any respect – because the "experts" only talk about minor details – like what they've learned about how scrolls were made back then, where they think the materials they used to prepare the scrolls might have come from, and about how a few minor historical details that we had already thought/concluded have now been proven. For example, many scholars had already concluded, based on manuscript evidence, that the Masoretic text was more accurate and more reliable than the Alexandrian text, so when the Dead Sea Scrolls emerged from hundreds of years before Christ to verify that, Bible-believing scholars yawned because they already knew it...and liberal scholars got childish tight-lipped. From a Biblical text standpoint, therefore, the scrolls have turned out to be unmentionably insignificant. I say unmentionably because liberal scholars who had for years been over-hyping the importance of what we would learn from the Dead Sea Scrolls, began, as we learned more and more about them, downplaying their importance.

Indeed, the scrolls have generated more interest, made more money, and proven to be a bigger deal to businessmen who deal in fiction: Hollywood movie-makers, actors, book authors, and book publishers have capitalized on the fact that most people know that, even though the scrolls were found more than half a century ago...we have, strangely, heard almost nothing about them! Scholars did not fill that informational void with facts because almost none of it was interesting, helpful, or informative...so movie producers and book authors have filled the void with fiction by dreaming up books and movies in which scholars search for mysterious "codes," or discover that Christ married Mary Magdalen and had several children, or that He

survived the crucifixion and went into hiding for the rest of His life, or that certain important scrolls have been “suppressed” because they reveal all religions based on the Bible are bogus.

Now that we’ve gotten the hype out of the way, let’s look at what we’ve really learned from the scrolls.

The Dead Sea Scrolls were tucked away in those caves *before the NT was written*, so the scrolls had little interest beyond the OT theological debate over whether we should place more value on the error-ridden, Apocrypha-containing Septuagint/Alexandrian text or on the relatively-but-not-completely-error-free Masoretic text. Therefore, when the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls showed that the insecure, low-character Masoretes had *failed in their considerable efforts to destroy all OT manuscripts that might reflect on the accuracy of their work*, and when early scholars found textual differences that suggested several “families” of OT texts existed before the Masoretic text came out, scholars got all excited because they hoped the scrolls would generate more interest in layman’s aids, bring some semblance of order to the unsolvable “manuscript mess,” and rekindle the flagging interest in the time-wasting quest for the “True Text.”

As the textual differences between these “families” were more closely examined, however, scholarly excitement quickly waned for several reasons. First, the differences were so minor (scribal errors) that ordinarily no unbiased scholar would assign them to different “families.” Second, there were relatively few differences in what the texts say – the texts were practically identical. Third, the vast majority of the hundreds of Dead Sea “manuscripts” are mere scraps; only 10 manuscripts that are in fairly good shape and contain a good portion of the OT survived the 1,900 years in the caves. Fourth, while some of the Dead Sea wordings did tend to support some readings in the Septuagint/Alexandrian manuscripts (more on this later), the majority of Dead Sea readings testified to the accuracy and consistency of the Masoretic text. It was pretty hard for many scholars to go along with the liberal party line that different “families” of texts existed among the Dead Sea manuscripts because they have such consistent support for the *Masoretic* text. Indeed, there are NT “families” that have a lot more textual diversity *within themselves* than exists among all of the Dead Sea Scrolls lumped together.

Scholars were also disappointed to find that these “wonderfully exciting” OT manuscripts that were older than any we’d ever seen, *actually added to the reputation for reliability of Masoretic manuscripts* such as the Aleppo Codex of 920 AD. The Aleppo had been regarded as the most accurate ancient OT text for many years, but then when Muslim vandals destroyed 200 of its pages, the textual *completeness* of the Masoretic Leningrad Codex of 1008 AD made it more useful than the now-incomplete Aleppo...and therefore the familiarity/fame of the Leningrad increased. Yes, the Leningrad was almost a hundred years younger than the Aleppo (an invalid distinction because the highly-regarded Aleppo still existed as a comparison...and the two texts were known to be identical), but now *only* the Leningrad contained *all* of its pages...so the Leningrad was used in the 1970s as the basic text of the *Yea, hath God said* Stuttgart layman’s aid – and this Bible-correcting manual was hypocritically hyped (by scholars who knew better) by using the “newly-discovered, wonderfully-exciting” Dead Sea Scrolls. However, despite all the hopes that the Scrolls would undermine the credibility of the hated Masoretic text that was used for the vast *majority* (but not all) of the King James Bible’s OT, the Scrolls did the opposite by letting everybody know scholars had led them astray by saying the numerous errors in the Alexandrian/Septuagint text should be *disregarded* simply because *the Alexandrian was 500 years older* than the Masoretic text. That’s right; the Dead Sea Scrolls, written in pre-Masoretic Babylonian OT Hebrew, reveal that the “scholarly” mantra of “*older is better*” is utter fiction: The Dead Sea Scroll Bible manuscripts are from 400 to 700 years *older* than the Alexandrian/Septuagint manuscripts...and yet they testify to the overwhelming (but not complete) accuracy of the *Masoretic text*. That kind of textual purity and consistency is rare, especially when it spans 1,300 years from 400 BC to 900 AD, so you’d think unbiased scholars would admit how wrong they’d been to tout the Alexandrian over the Masoretic...but they have continued to exalt the younger, corrupt Alexandrian manuscripts as if they now think *younger is better!* There is no reasonable explanation for their inconsistencies, but there is a spiritual explanation – the war on the word.

The Dead Sea Scrolls lend credence to Jerome’s rejection of the Alexandrian/Septuagint and his use of the Babylonian OT Hebrew manuscripts that we now know are essentially identical to the Masoretic text. Perhaps because Jerome was not a Catholic, perhaps because his *original* Latin Vulgate was never adopted by the Roman Church, perhaps because the Vatican owns one of the main Alexandrian manuscripts, and perhaps because of the Vatican’s financial interest in the pro-Alexandrian Stuttgart layman’s aid, the Catholic and Protestant churches have continued to support the crumbling façade of textual criticism.

No matter what I say about the Dead Sea Scrolls’ overall support for the Masoretic text, we must not lose sight of the fact that we are unaware of *any* OT or NT manuscript or *modern* Bible version that is always right. Yes, we believe inerrant manuscripts existed and were used by scholars prior to the KJV (more on this later), *but we modernists have never seen those manuscripts*. Both the Masoretic and Alexandrian texts are *usually* right; the texts of both are right vastly more than they are wrong. It’s true that the Alexandrian has many more errors than the Masoretic, but that’s just a matter of degree. The salient point to remember is the difference between the mindset of humility-based, authority-respecting unenlightened saints of yesteryear...and the pride-based, authority-despising Enlightened saints of these dark last days: when old-time saints read the Bible they weren’t taught to react in horror when it said “young woman,” when it omitted “yet,” and when it omitted “and fasting.” But ever since the age of Enlightenment began in about 1300 AD, we have been formally taught and manipulated/conditioned (*by scholars and theologians of all people!*) to *doubt*, not *believe* that the word of God exists as He defines it; we’ve been taught to be *skeptical*, not *faithful*. When looking at the sad state of modern Christianity, we have to wonder if the KJV may be an indication that we, compared with saints of old, are so weak-faithed and vulnerable to Reason that we are in desperate need of something previous saints didn’t need – the miraculously-unique infallibility of the AV 1611. As Bible believers we are constantly reminded as we read the news and look around us that so many Christians have little understanding of Scripture-based doctrine...and are therefore groping along in the dark following tradition. We, on the other hand, have God’s word to be a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path during these dark last days, to be a staff that steadies us as we do our bumbling best to stay on the strait and narrow way that leadeth unto life. If we worldwide NT saints didn’t have the demonstrated inerrancy of the KJV, would our Reason have convinced us, too, that modern Christianity’s broad way that leadeth to destruction is the right way? Are we spiritual cripples who couldn’t make it without the modern – and perhaps unprecedented – crutch of the KJV? And has our pride made us focus too much on our *crutch* rather than on our *walk*?

ISSUES INVOLVING THE MASORETIC, ALEXANDRIAN, AND DEAD SEA MANUSCRIPTS

One of the most famous discrepancies between the Alexandrian and Masoretic texts:

King James Bible Isa 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a **virgin** shall conceive, and bear a son... (When a virgin conceives and has a child, that is, in fact, an attention-getting sign.)

Masoretic Hebrew Isa 7:14 Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign. Look, a **young woman** is with child and about to give birth to a son... (Young women get pregnant and birth children every day...and nobody thinks it's a sign of any kind. This may mean the Masoretes deliberately eliminated a messianic prophecy.)

Alexandrian Greek Isa 7:14 Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign. Behold, a **virgin** shall conceive in the womb, and shall bring forth a son... (This is a decent rendering, but the unnecessary redundancy of "in the womb" makes some people think the "sign" included the fact that she *conceives in the womb* – even though "in the womb" is where all women conceive, which makes conceiving "in the womb" a weak, confusing "sign.")

The NT – as we expect – sometimes quotes the Masoretic OT text:

King James Bible Mt 2:15 ...Out of Egypt have I called **my son**.

Masoretic Hebrew Hos 11:1 ...out of Egypt I called **my son**.

Alexandrian Greek Hos 11:1 ...out of Egypt have I called **his children**. (This eliminates a messianic prophecy.)

Sometimes you have to wonder how (or why) the Masoretes got it so wrong:

King James Bible Isa 11:10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.

Alexandrian Greek Is 11:10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall arise to rule over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust, and his rest shall be glorious.

Masoretic Hebrew Is 11:10 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting-place shall be glorious.

The NT sometimes quotes OT readings that are not in any known text:

King James Bible Mt 2:23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, **He shall be called a Nazarene**.

Scholars have claimed Christ and His apostles in the NT sometimes quoted the Alexandrian OT text:

King James Bible Heb 1:6 ...And **let all the angels of God worship him**.

Alexandrian Greek Dt 32:43 ...and **let all the angels of God worship him**...

Masoretic Hebrew Dt 32:43 Sing aloud, O ye nations of his people...

Were scholars right – as suggested by the example above – to say Christ and His disciples used and quoted the Alexandrian Greek OT manuscripts? Well, there was no evidence to suggest they might be wrong...until a little detail was discovered about the Dead Sea Scrolls: Among the ancient Hebrew OT manuscripts and fragments there are some readings that agree with the Masoretic Hebrew text and some that agree with the Alexandrian Greek text. Before the Dead Sea Scrolls, *nobody knew the Alexandrian-like quotes in the NT also existed in Hebrew manuscripts*. That means Christ and His disciples could have been using and quoting Hebrew manuscripts...manuscripts that we didn't know existed that said, "virgin;" that said, "let all the angels of God worship him;" and that say – in an as-yet-undiscovered manuscript – "He shall be called a Nazarene." That's right; the Dead Sea Scrolls showed that the fact that Christ and His disciples sometimes quoted truths that appear in the Alexandrian but not the Masoretic text *does not prove they quoted or used the Greek-language Alexandrian text*...because we now know those truths were in Hebrew manuscripts that were centuries older than the Alexandrian manuscripts.

Also, since the *Nazarene* prophecy seems to come from manuscripts that "never" existed – and therefore according to scholars was "probably" invented – do we have *any* manuscript evidence that may apply? The answer is a simple one, and we'll get to it when we look at the "manuscript ancestry" of the King James Bible in chapter 8.

Let's review some interesting points about manuscripts:

- The Hebrew readings in the Dead Sea Scrolls that sometimes agree with the Masoretic and sometimes with the Alexandrian, may mean the Masoretes, Aquila, Theodotion, Symmachus, and the scribes responsible for the Alexandrian manuscripts did not deliberately delete or add "virgin" or "young woman," and may have done all their work with complete integrity to the best of their sometimes-dubious skills. In other words, *the Dead Sea Scrolls showed us the "manuscript mess" is a lot bigger than we thought* – even going back to a century-and-a-half or two before Christ when His people had become *so apostate they wouldn't even recognize their own Messiah*. In other words, there may have been groups of Jews who, like the Sadducees and modern theologians, were so Enlightened by Greek philosophy that they rejected anything supernatural in the Bible that they, "in good conscience," could neither ignore that which was right in their own eyes (such as "child" rather than "virgin") nor the now-known-to-be false readings in the manuscript they were translating, and thereby produced manuscripts that contributed to the overall manuscript mess. Therefore, it might be better and more charitable for us to simply say the errors and contradictions in the Alexandrian manuscripts, the Masoretic Hebrew, the Textus Receptus, "older" manuscripts, "more reliable" manuscripts, etc., exist because *no scholars have ever been able to unscramble the unfathomable manuscript mess* because **God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are**

mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence (1 Cor 1:27-29).

- When scholars say misleading things like, “There are numerous differences between the Alexandrian and Masoretic texts,” they are *technically* correct only because the Alexandrian contains the Apocrypha and the Masoretic does not. Both texts of Scripture are mostly in agreement with a few glaring problems such as the Masorete’s “young woman” and the Alexandrian’s making Christ a liar. Scholars knowingly avoid correctly saying, “Textual differences among the Masoretic manuscripts are very rare,” and they could correctly say (but do not), “There are many textual differences among Alexandrian manuscripts.”

Does God want us to obsess about “problems” from many centuries ago concerning the Masoretic text, the Septuagint text, and the unfathomable manuscript mess? Or does He want us to believe now is our day of salvation (2 Co 6:2) and concentrate on walking by faith in the unique inerrancy of the KJV and get about our Father’s business?

Did the same God who deliberately put a whore into the ancestry of the sinless Word of God Who would be born at the end of the OT era, also deliberately put some “whorish manuscripts” into the ancestry of the inerrant Bible that bears His name and rank that would show up at the end of the NT era?

Or did God make His holy word available *only* to His faithful believers of old by deliberately distributing certain inspired readings “here a little, and there a little” among various manuscripts because His faithful *accept* His truth as being line upon line; here a little and there a little? But they of little faith *cannot accept* His truth because to them it is nothing but line upon line; here a little and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken (Isa 28:9-13). The manuscript mess has been the kind of blinding stumblingstone to they of little faith that they actually “prefer” readings that *make the Lord of the universe a liar – and it doesn’t even bother them!* More about how “unsupported” readings and “unknown manuscripts” reveal that He has, indeed, always preserved His inspired, inerrant word for us in chapter 8 about the King James Bible.

THE NAME ‘JEHOVAH’ ...AND THEOLOGY’S ABUSE OF THE MASORETIC TEXT

Theology, because it is based on Reason rather than faith, loves unanswerable questions because no matter how cockeyed a theoretic answer to those questions may be...*it cannot be disproven*. One of the questions they’ve never been able to answer concerns the authenticity and correctness of the Hebrew alphabet invented by the Masoretes: The first of two main arguments raged over whether they inserted the right vowels between the consonants. The second topic of debate was the Masoretic invention of “points” – the little marks that govern pronunciation, punctuation, and sentence and paragraph breaks. Some said the works of the Masoretes should be considered just as “original” as any of the other variations in the Hebrew and pagan alphabets and languages that had been used to record the Scriptures over many centuries. Other scholars said the Masoretic Hebrew should be considered illegitimate. Those two opinions are so far apart they caused more and more scholars to invent myriad compromise opinions between the two “bookends.” One of the more popular alphabet-related topics of debate concerns one of the many names God has – **Jehovah**.

After the Babylonian Captivity the Jews began to not say God’s name. Like *every word in the Hebrew* Scriptures, God’s names were written with only consonants – no vowels...and the name at issue is the one spelled YHWH. (I say again, “YHWH” wasn’t special or different because it lacked vowels – vowels didn’t exist for any words.) The Jews became horrified by how many gods the pagan Greeks and Romans had, and they wanted to stress the fact that there is but one God by always saying “God,” which they usually did by saying “Adonai,” which means “our Lord.” They thought if they uttered *Jehovah* or any of His other names, pagans might assume they were referring to one of the many gods rather than to the one-and-only Lord. Over time among the Jews this well-intentioned practice created a *tradition* that it was blasphemy to dare to say God’s name – *even though all of God’s people since Adam had been doing just that*.

When the tradition-loving Masoretes were confronted with inserting vowels between the four consonants, YHWH, they were on the horns of a dilemma: Should they insert the correct vowels and thereby promote “blasphemy,” or should they respectfully insert incorrect vowels into the Book of God’s always-correct word? I’ll ignore the complexities involved in how the Masoretes took the four vowels in “Adonai,” and the way they were pronounced, and ended up inserting three vowels – **YeHoWaH** – and over-simplify it by just saying this: They took the three pronounced vowel sounds (as distinguished from the four actual *written – but not all pronounced* – vowels) from the respectful “our Lord” (Adonai) and put them into YHWH. That was the only word in the Bible they did that to; all the other words they may have tried to spell accurately with correct vowels. Their “misspelling” was deliberate; they were being respectful – according to their invented tradition, that is. But their pronunciation was accurate. Now we’ll look at how **YeHoWaH** became **JeHoVaH**.

When the Roman Empire conquered the known world, the Roman alphabet was widely adopted. Back in those days, early alphabets were borrowed from other languages and then modified to better represent the sounds of different languages. The Roman letters used to be all caps. The I was used (sometimes confusingly) to represent vowel and consonant *sounds* – such as the commonly-heard *sounds* that we think of as a soft G and J, but the letters G and J didn’t exist yet. When the ‘I’ became ‘i’ in lower case, and when the Roman numeral ‘i’ ended a string of i’s – such as the number 8 (viii) – the last i was often given a fancy flourish, as in viij. It wasn’t a j; it was an i; the letter j didn’t exist.

The sound for the modern letter V used to be written/printed as a U and as a UU (starting with Charlemagne’s efforts to increase literacy and education). Eventually the need for separate letters to represent U sounds, double-U sounds, and V sounds, caused U, W, and V respectively to become formally finalized letters.

France and England, whose alphabets derived from Latin, for centuries (until after the Middle Ages) used an I to represent J sounds just as in the Latin language. Gradually people began *informally* borrowing the j-shaped i from Roman numerals whenever an I was supposed to have a J sound – but that practice was not yet “officially correct.”

In the 1500s, Germans like Martin Luther (the German language derived from Latin and Greek), took the Hebrew letters YHWH (which don’t look like YHWH in Hebrew) and wrote them using German letters that *tried to imitate the Hebrew sounds* – and that is how the modern YHWH that we’ve become used to seeing originated.

The name “Jehovah” first appeared in an English Bible in 1530 when William Tyndale published a translation of the five books of Moses. Because of the state of the English alphabet (no J or V), it said, Iehouah – with the i sounding like a j, and the u sounding like a v.

When the King James Bible was published in 1611, even though the English alphabet had continued to adapt to proper pronunciation, the standardized use of Js and Vs hadn’t yet become common, so the limited letters available to typesetters at printing presses continued to produce words like Iehouah, Iesus, and David – using the same dual-purpose letters *that had been used for many centuries*. When the alphabet was modernized (which, for example, made *I* a full-time vowel, and *J* a full-time consonant) and different printing businesses became able from the early-to-mid 1700s to afford expensive new inventories of letters that included Js and Vs, subsequent printings of the KJV naturally and correctly utilized the complete inventory of letters to print Jehovah, Jesus, and David – which were pronounced the same way they’d always been for centuries when certain letters did double duty.

When the NT century of the 1800s arrived, education, knowledge, Reason, theology, and scholarship produced an unprecedented deluge of apostasy when scholars and theologians stumbled over unanswerable, trivial issues and turned them into big tempests in teapots. A few examples from just the *Jehovah* batch of arguments:

Some scholars “thought” it “might” have been “more” accurate (the term “more accurate” is used when they cannot say “accurate” – *because they do not know*) if the two vowels from *hashem* had been inserted into YHWH rather than the three vowels from *Adonai*. *Hashem* means “the name,” and was sometimes used as part of a respectful reference to God – without using His name. For example, they’d say to each other: “Have you prayed to *the name* yet?” ...instead of saying, “Have you prayed to *our Lord* yet?” These scholars guessed inserting the two vowel sounds from *hashem* (rather than the three vowel sounds from *Adonai*) into Y^HW^H – which produced the two-syllabled YaHW^eH – “might be” more respectful and *hoped* it was closer to the pronunciation of one of the several ancient-era Hebrew dialects (that today we still don’t know how to pronounce) than the more common pronunciation of the three-syllabled YHWH / *Jehovah*. In order to be more “faithful” to the laughably-inaccurate term “original Hebrew language,” others thought it better to say “Jahveh” or Iohouah, or Iohoua, or Ihouah, or Iehoua, or Iehouah; or (instead of “Jesus”: Yeshua, or Y’shua, or Yehoshua, or Iesus, or Eashoa, or Jeshua, or...and on it goes because there are no answers, but you can sure have fun trying to make yourself sound smart by giving a short-but-impressive dissertation on “the original languages” in order to convince people they should speak common street Greek or Hebrew or Aramaic or pagan Babylonian Aramaic when properly and respectfully addressing our Lord by one of His many names.

There are, of course, problems with all of these theological wranglings. For example, no known Hebrew manuscript that has ever existed used Masoretic or any other kind of markings to indicate that YHWH should be spelled or pronounced as a two-syllabled *Yahweh*. The two-syllabled YHWH (*Yahweh*) was *invented* not by Masoretes, but by well-intentioned modern-era scholars who “thought” they “might” know more about Hebrew than the Masoretes did when they used the three-syllabled YHWH (*Yehowah/Jehovah*). (It was safe for them to “think” they knew more than the Masoretes...*because maybe they did – nobody knows!*) Some of the other renderings used today are borrowed from other-language spellings that were used by humble saints back in various eras who never intended for saints in later eras (who would speak and read different languages from them) *to always address God in their old, obsolete language*.

Bottom line: It is OK to refer to God in whatever language you want. The hotly-debated unanswerable question about whether or not the Masoretes did a good job coming up with the vowel markings for YHWH that resulted in our English *Jehovah* was finally settled when the Authorized 1611 King James Bible’s miraculous inerrancy made the “manuscript mess” (of both OT and NT manuscripts!) irrelevant by bringing God’s “here a little, and there a little” parable-like truths that were hidden in plain sight by the manuscript mess into the historically-unique Bible whose demonstrated inerrancy made the KJV *the only manuscript or version we’ve ever seen that perfectly fit God’s definition of His word*. The KJV’s inerrancy gave faithful last-days Christians the Rock-solid manuscript evidence, the irrefutable proof, and the Scripture-based confidence to focus on walking the walk instead of obsessing over how ancient dead-language words ought to be spelled and pronounced today, over whether it was David or Elhanan who killed Goliath, over whether the last 12 verses of Mark...and all the other nonsense that scholars and theologians spend their lives arguing about. The AV1611, by restoring the authority of *Thus saith the Lord*, has given us the ability to separate things that matter from things that don’t. Anyone today who still engages in theology’s dotting about questions and strifes of words is doing so *because he has no authoritative Bible to guide him*.

In these first five chapters, we’ve taken a quick peek at how knowledge guesswork used *unanswerable* questions, *baseless* theories, and *insignificant* trivia to attack the veracity of the written word of God. In some cases, you might have wondered why I went into so much detail – much of it boring. I did so because I wanted you to see with your own eyes how quickly and utterly the original-autograph epistles and manuscripts were irrecoverably lost in the hopeless quagmire of the “manuscript mess” ...even way back in 200 AD when the brilliant Origen lived in Alexandria with access to more manuscripts than any other person in history. I want you to understand how tragic it is for people to pay *any* attention to falsely-so-called scholars, theologians, and well-intentioned layman’s-aid-using Christians...because they aren’t having faith in God and His word, and they are insulting and blaspheming the Word of God Himself who will judge us by His word. Like Eve, we don’t have a chance in this spiritual war if we try to out-smart the Devil; he is *way* out of our league. Our only path to salvation is to do what Eve failed to do – stick with the literal words of our living God...and that includes believing His definition of His word.

In the next chapter we’ll get into some history to show how education’s falsely-so-called *knowledge* promoted philosophy’s Reason, used the love of money to cause people to move into cities, and how “progress” began its subtle process of making people dependent on the world for their very survival.

CHAPTER 6 (13 pages)

HOW THE END OF FEUDALISM HELPED ENSLAVE SOCIETY

CHARLEMAGNE, FEUDALISM, AND EDUCATION

The collapse of the Western Roman Empire in 476 AD allowed the peoples of Britain, Scandinavia, Germany, and France – including Celts, Anglo-Saxons, Lombards, Gauls, Franks, and Alemanni – to spread out and settle in areas of Europe they'd previously avoided. These mass-scale migrations by peoples with different cultures, combined with the absence of law enforcement, resulted in large waves of crime. But as the decades rolled by, a surprising trend was noticed: When these “barbarians” encountered Christians across Europe, they seemed to gravitate – to be *drawn* – to Christianity. (This widespread, peaceful, astonishingly-rapid mass conversion to Christianity by barbarian hordes is almost completely ignored by historians. Is that because these groups of barbarians were offspring of the “Lost Ten-Tribe” migration into Europe?) These various barbarian tribes so quickly became Christians, abandoned their previous religions, and adopted the Latin language throughout Europe that they lost all traces of their former cultures in less than three centuries – in about 750 AD their descendants were indistinguishable from the rest of Europeans.

One of these early notable European barbarians was **Clovis** (466-511 AD). He was an important king who united the Frankish tribes in the French region, married a Christian woman, and converted to her *western* Christianity – which helped make Europe's Christianity *western* rather than *Arian* or *eastern*. Interesting note about how much scholars don't know: Even though Clovis was a big and important ruler in European history, *we still don't really know what his name was*. There are lots of theories about what his name *might* have been – but nobody knows for sure. All we know is as a young (unidentified) man, he distinguished himself in battle, which caused people to combine two words in their language that had to do with *battle* and *bravery* into a nickname, *Clovis* – which he was called for the rest of his life. The point: Bible scholars and theologians are fond of saying various names of important figures and rulers in the Old Testament (hundreds of years before Christ) are erroneous...when they don't even know – and wouldn't recognize – Clovis' real name if they tripped over it...and Clovis lived hundreds of years after Christ.

Clovis was so important to French history that Paris was later made France's capital merely because he lived there and is buried there. (Note: Historians usually call early European Christians like Jerome and Clovis “Roman Catholics” because the church in Rome was the most influential congregation of that era. But historians don't know or care about doctrine, and the doctrines and practices that distinguish Roman Catholicism didn't begin to exist until centuries after Christians like Jerome and Clovis died.)

Charlemagne (742-814) was descended from two Latin-Vulgate-using Frankish kings who saved Europe from becoming Muslim. His grandfather was **Charles Martel** (688-741), who stopped invading Muslims – after they'd conquered all of Spain – from getting any further than halfway through France; and then Charlemagne's father, **Pepin the Short** (714-768), about 35 years later drove the Muslims completely out of France back into Spain.

Charlemagne is called “the father of modern Europe” because he did much to unify and educate the peoples of Europe, and because he was crowned by Pope Leo III in the year 800 – which showed the Roman church was well on its way to establishing a denominational identity because it had begun to accumulate enough political power to enforce its doctrinal stances. Because he was crowned by the Roman church, Charlemagne is often called a forerunner of the Holy Roman Empire (that would last for about 1,000 years). He is also credited with helping develop the informal societal framework called *feudalism* that existed throughout Europe from about 800-1453 AD.

Feudalism (800-1450)

European kings, like Charlemagne, needed to control vast territories. Therefore, they divided their kingdoms into large sections of land, called *manors* or *fiefs*, that were ruled by *lairds* – also called *lords*. These lords were wealthy and powerful, and they owed allegiance to the king...they owed a feud to the king, which is the origin of the word *fee* (which was the origin of the modern *property tax*). Everybody who lived on a manor owed allegiance and a feud (usually services and/or barter) to their lord. This vertical-hierarchy system of king, lords, clergy, knights, and several ranks of serfs came to be called *feudalism*.

The lord of the manor/fief was the boss, and his job was to make sure everyone on his manor contributed to the welfare of the whole manor. Most people by 800 AD were Christians, and each manor had a building – formal or not – that served as a worship center presided over by one or more preachers. With no law enforcement, each manor had to protect itself. Therefore, soldiers, called knights, lived on manors in return for their protective services. At the bottom of the social structure were serfs, also called peasants.

Serfs were taken care of from birth to burial; they were provided with homes, food, and protection, and in return they did all the manual labor on these vast tracts of land. Manors could not survive without serfs, and everybody up the social hierarchy understood that fact and appreciated their service. Serfs planted, tended, and harvested crops; cared for livestock, managed forests, roads and trails, and provided food, firewood, and labor for the entire manor.

Feudal communities were communal; all people unselfishly did their respective jobs, spent their whole lives together, and had the kind of tightknit, fulfilling lives that come from a combination of an authoritative social hierarchy, an emphasis on religion, and the kind of work ethic that breeds respect, humility, and confidence across all levels of society. Feudalism was a blend of the mostly-agrarian way life had *always* been...with the newly-added fear of the unknown caused by the disappearance of the authority, societal order, and enforcement of the powerful Roman Empire. (Feudalism had long existed in many cultures around the world besides Europe and the Roman Empire, including China, Japan, India, and Russia. In fact, Moses was a type of king who ruled over the “lords” of the twelve tribes.

2 Chapter 6: END OF FEUDALISM

The War on the Word

Threats faced by European feudal communities ranged from small roving bands of “robbin’ hoods,” to invading groups such as Vikings who raped, murdered, kidnapped, burned, and plundered.

Modern historians, because feudalistic societies were not “free,” tend to portray feudal life in mostly negative ways. But, again, feudal life was very similar to the way life had always been – mostly agrarian lifestyles in which people lived hand-to-mouth. Life back then had the advantage of necessity; in order to survive, people had to work (Gen 3:17-19,23). God has decreed that we must work to eat, therefore *working* (physical labor) is a good thing.

Because the anti-Bible values of the pagan Greek-philosophy-based Enlightenment (such as equality) were spread throughout Western society by Catholicism and Protestantism, it was necessary for modernists to begin badmouthing feudalism. The very idea that people in positions of authority could be respectfully referred to as “lord,” and “sir” like they are in the Bible was abhorrent to the Greek-philosophy-based idea that “all men are created equal” adopted by Western societies and religions. This ancient social rank-based obligation to be respectfully faithful to all authorities was a duty called “fealty,” but anti-authority equality-based events such as the Enlightenment, the American Revolution, and democratic governments subverted vertical, fealty-based societies...as did the rise of money-based societies, “progress,” and the Industrial Revolutions. Let’s look at ancient life to see how it compares with modern life.

Family life: Rural families tended to be large because children are supposed to be servants (Gal 4:1), and there was a lot of work that needed to be done. Younger children did easier chores like collecting eggs, older children helped with plowing, planting, harvesting, cutting firewood...everything. If chores weren’t done, or weren’t done properly, it negatively affected the entire family. Therefore, being punished was an important part of growing up (Heb 5:8). Growing up back then – because of life’s necessities – required obedience...and obedience, in turn, resulted in the formation of many traits of good character, including respect for and submission to authority, self-control, humility, charity (defined as *outward-directed works*, as in *doing things for others rather than for Self*), dependability, responsibility, patience, and endurance. When a child did his chores responsibly, he wasn’t doing anything above-and-beyond his duty; he was just doing his job (Lk 17:7-10). But when a child didn’t do his job, or did it sloppily, he was being an unnecessary burden to everybody else, and everybody recognized that not properly doing your job was wrong in principle, burdensome, and possibly harmful to the family – and therefore deserving of corrective punishment for the good of the child, the family, and society. In families and communities in which children were properly trained up, therefore, *peer pressure* became a good force that frowned on dereliction of duty, and that appreciated the value of jobs well done.

Life in feudal communities, therefore, was good: Everybody had duties and responsibilities that benefitted the whole community, and everybody understood that. Lords who were good managers were respected by serfs, and dependable serfs were respected by nobles. In other words, in communities in which everybody was good at his job, lords, clergy, knights, and serfs all respected each other and got along well (1 Cor 12:14-26). When a serf was walking home after a hard day’s work, and he passed a small group of knights on patrol (who had fought off a marauding band of hoods the week before), they waved and chit-chatted with each other. And when the serf rounded the bend in the chilly, quiet twilight air and saw his daughter locking the chickens into the coop for the night, and saw smoke rising from his cabin’s chimney, he knew his wife had supper going, and he experienced one of those quiet, joyful feelings that enrichen life...so he stopped, bowed his head, and thanked God for His blessings, for his family, for his community, and for the good people in it. That’s why the feudal period is called the age of **chivalry**, when society was known for generosity, fidelity, and courtesy – which is all based on an outward-directed (charitable) *respect for others*. The foundation of this chivalrous respect was the feudal family-like community in which necessity forced people to pull together in their daily lives, and this kind of lifestyle fostered the development of social relationships that, because they were built on authority, were respectful, cordial, and symbiotic. But in later centuries when agrarian lifestyles became more and more untenable, the effects “modernity” had on the bonds of family and community began to turn the authority-based outward-directed sense of *belonging* that was part of working together, into a more inward-directed sense of *independence* and *selfishness* that subverted authority. The importance of doing your job for the welfare of the whole family and community that contributed to good character and good relationships began to fade from social culture as outward-directed *charity* (which is the bond of perfectness – Col 3:14) was replaced by selfishness.

Summary of why life was good in humble, agrarian lifestyles: Those lifestyles were filled with round-peg submissions to authority...and the issue is authority. Our authoritative God told us to work to eat/grow, therefore when people submitted to various authorities in life they grew in character. Working/submitting to authorities is doing your duty...it’s *being a servant* – which is our God-given purpose in life. Servants serve *others*; their work is unselfish, it is outward-directed, it is *charity*, which is the bond of perfectness. All of that goes into *why* there is no nobler deed than the performance of *duty*. The opposite of unselfish charity is selfishness/covetousness...which means Self is your god, which is why covetousness is idolatry (Col 3:5). In hard-working communities of good character children are taught to be obedient servants by spanking. Children then apply that learned characteristic as they mature into functioning parts of their communities; every time they obey the sign that says KEEP OFF THE GRASS, every time they help somebody with his workload, every time they resist the temptation to lie *they are submitting to some form of authority* – they are conforming to God’s way. When “progress” makes life easier we work less and develop less character...because servants need to work/submit to things like laws, rules, and people that are outside of self. That takes *Romans 7 character*, and that is the Pilgrim’s Progress journey God built into life. We are here to demonstrate that we are *servants*...and everything in our modern lives is trying to prevent that by making us selfish, self-centered, pride-filled, uncharitable, and carnal.

When a Christian has an authority over him he doesn’t like, or when he has a duty he doesn’t like, or any similar situations, he is always required to wholeheartedly do his duty *because of his selfless, submissive, outward-directed love for the Lord* – and that is how we train our carnal selves into becoming servants fit for God’s kingdom:

Eph 6:5,6 Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

Some examples of Christians who were the kind of Scriptural servants who demonstrated their love for God by fully pleasing their earthly authorities include Abraham's wife Sarah, who selflessly obeyed his awful orders; and Joseph and Daniel, who greatly pleased their pagan masters in Egypt and Babylon.

However, if we do not monitor ourselves from our inner sanctums in order to exercise self-discipline, we run the risk of idolatry. For example, if a man's boss wants him to do a certain task, but the man takes quality-reducing shortcuts because he would rather go watch TV and he thinks his boss won't notice the reduction in quality – he is committing the sin of idolatry. How? By letting his covetousness, his wants, lusts, and preferences make him think his only concern is his earthly boss...when in reality he is supposed to be demonstrating via his singleness of heart that he is serving Christ. I say again, we shouldn't obey worldly laws and authorities because we like them and/or think they are good; we should obey them because our inner-sanctum love for Christ, enforced by our self-discipline, forces the things we covet, want, and prefer into second place...rather than letting our Natural carnality make us idolize Self by putting Christ into second place behind the things we want.

The rise of education

In the old days, children were educated by both the family and the community. Older siblings and kids, parents, and relatives and neighbors all contributed to the education of children...*because they were true communities*. Children learned how to be respectful, how to endure punishment, how to handle an axe, how to milk a goat, how to butcher a pig, how to knit clothing, how to hunt animals, how to help each other...in short, how to contribute to life and survival. They were proud of their strength and abilities when they were young, and they were generous with their wisdom when they were old. They were families and communities and they knew how they fit in, and they were happy to contribute.

Several factors caused Charlemagne, beginning in 787 AD, to stress education among his lords, especially reading and writing. First, he discovered that many clergy members couldn't read their Latin Vulgate Bibles to their congregations. The original purpose of education, therefore, was *Bible instruction*. Second, for everyone in his empire to have the confidence-inspiring universal sameness that is the result of order and unity, he wanted written copies of his wishes, rules, and orders to be available at each of his feudal manors, and he wanted his lords to be able to read them so he could hold them accountable. He had schools, book-copying centers, and even lending libraries established throughout his realm. Subjects that were taught included reading, writing, religion, grammar, music, history, poetry, literature, law, art, architecture, and cultural practices from other regions such as Spain, England, and Italy. These educational programs were only for adults, not children. Children were taught informally every day by the adults with whom they interacted in the community...and therefore *character* was typically a byproduct of children's growing up process, and *education* was only intended for adults who were already supposed to have developed the character and values needed to *properly evaluate what they were being taught*.

Life on feudal estates was serene, predictable, inwardly rewarding, and good. But over the centuries as society became more and more educated, education – which tended in a few good men to become an added responsibility (Lk 12:48) that made men more charitable, reflective, and humble – became for most men a shallow badge of prestige, which caused their charitable sense of responsibility to rot and became the kind of selfish pride and greed that too often are characteristics of modern society. Yes, education *can* be a good tool that helps society...but if society isn't careful, knowledge can blind the majority into thinking progress, because it reduces work/makes life easier, is good (such as the Industrial Revolution) – but it isn't, as we shall see. The Pilgrims' Progress school of work, hard knocks, and the narrow way that is full of stumblingstones and rocks of offense is good for us. But making that journey through life easier by turning it into a smoothly-paved road tends to blind us to the goodness and benefits of the "old-fashioned hard lives" our ancestors lived.

A Heartfelt Reminder

Perhaps, because in the narrower context of the subject we're getting into in this chapter, as well as the broader context of the overall war on the word, and because it's on my heart, this is a good time for a reminder that our Christian walk *must* be not just cerebral, but *circumspectly cerebral*. Our modern, Enlightened society brainwashed us into thinking right and wrong is the issue – not authority. That seems easy enough to abide by, but the complexities of life, customs, and laws of society, combined with our natural carnal minds and our wants, likes, preferences, and opinions tend to get us sidetracked. It is important that we submit to the earthly authorities over us whether they are right or wrong. We are not to follow the local laws because we like and agree with them; we are to obey them because we are disciplined soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ...and we are going to always glorify Him by submitting to His Headship. No matter what we like or want or are afraid of, the only thing in our lives that is of the utmost importance is our humble, disciplined service to our Lord. He deliberately put us on Earth under rulers whose laws we will sometimes find objectionable. *That is the test of our Pilgrim's-Progress journey!* We must *always* keep the Lord in mind, and obey and glorify Him by dying to the lusts of our flesh. I say again: Our walk on Earth is designed to teach us how to be *servants*...and we are serving Christ when we submit to the imperfect human authorities over us. If we do that, Christ will show His approval of us by saying, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

I hope, as you read this *WOW*, that it reinforces the necessity that having cautiously-suspicious, narrow-minded, literal-reading-of-the-Bible-based discernment is a *necessity* as we go through life because our Natural carnality, combined with the fact that the Devil is *way ahead of us*, means we are casualties of war waiting to happen. The Bible and the facts of history don't make human beings look very good. It doesn't matter if we look at God's people in the OT, or at modern Christianity, or at modern unsaved society – from a Biblical perspective and a personal perspective it is horrifying because the battlefield all around us is piled high with casualties living and dead...*and none of them* (like Matt Seven) had any idea they had been leavened along the way. Our only salvation is in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, but only if we develop a *proper-and-real Christ-honoring relationship* by walking with Him with self-examining humility and self-controlling discipline in strict accordance with His written word. The Devil's goal in this spiritual war is to separate us from the Word by making the word have none effect. Our lives are individual tests to see if our society, our family, friends, and all of the distractions and enticements of modern life are going to make us casualties...or if we will remain focused on the Lord and the authority of His word.

With that mini sermon/reminder out of the way, I'm ready to jump back into the flow of history.

4 Chapter 6: END OF FEUDALISM

The War on the Word

In Charlemagne's western Europe, the Latin Vulgate (in handwritten manuscripts) was pretty much the only reading material because the Latin-speaking churches weren't interested in the writings of Greek philosophers. But over in the Byzantine Empire (Eastern Roman Empire), because the Greek language was used by the Eastern Catholic Church to unify its members – just as Latin was used by the Western Catholic Church to unify its members – the writings/leaven of the Greek philosophers were more readily available. For that reason, some believe the Christianity in the Byzantine Empire was affected by the Reason of the Greek philosophers earlier than the Christianity in the Latin-speaking West. They also think the abundance of poor Greek translations of both the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament (the Alexandrian manuscripts so detested by Origen and Jerome) may have affected doctrine in the eastern regions. They also think interactions with Christ-rejecting, NT-rejecting Masoretes and Muslims who were all over North Africa, Babylon, the Holy Land, Antioch, Syria...and eventually all the way to the doorstep of Constantinople itself, may have influenced (in minor ways) some doctrines of the Eastern Church and caused Arianism to be popular in the eastern regions. (Arianism denied the Trinity and said Christ was neither one with – nor equal to – the Father.)

As travel and trade slowly began to increase in the century before the Crusades, scholars in western Europe began to learn more about the Reason of the Greek philosophers. Although Reason is contrary to what the Bible says – and therefore contrary to many things in Christian societal culture – “education” was increasingly taken over by the “self-evidence” of Reason. And it didn't take long for “uneducated,” hard-working, Christians with good character in local communities to find out about this new kind of “education” being taught in their homes, churches, and one-room schoolhouses – and they were upset. When teachers were confronted about their Scripture-eroding teachings, they tried unsuccessfully to defend themselves by explaining that Reason was good because it was exposing Bible-based faith as old-fashioned superstition.

At first, when Charlemagne started requiring education across his realm, teachers had been humble Christians who merely used homes, churches, and one-room schoolhouses in the community to teach their adult students to read – by using the Latin Vulgate Bible. But when heated Reason-vs.-faith debates caused Bible believers to expel Reason-believing educators from the local homes and churches traditionally used as informal classrooms, these unpopular educators, to isolate and protect themselves, gradually decided to rent (and later construct) “formal” schools, colleges, and universities as independent strongholds over which local communities had no control.

Oxford University was founded in 1100, and because its teachers were required to be “professing Christians,” it became customary to call these teachers “professors.” The classrooms and lecture halls were unheated and drafty, so teachers and their adult students wore black gowns over their clothes for warmth...and these gowns quickly came to symbolize academics, which became a source of pride among the educated. But the townspeople who lived near Oxford, when they learned about the “rational, independent,” anti-Bible teachings, came to despise the black gowns...and a cultural division developed that came to be known as “town vs. gown.” Over time, “educated” people began espousing a “Christianity” based on manmade morality and Reason, and those who continued to believe in *Thus saith the Lord* were despised as “uneducated” and “superstitious.” Colleges and universities were largely responsible for spreading the insidious subtlety of Reason...and this “legitimizing” of Self unleashed the deceptive power of carnality that would produce science, political science, and all sorts of “knowledge”-based “progress” that would *radically change society and make people completely dependent upon the world system for survival* (Job 2:4). Notables from Oxford University include Roger Bacon, William of Ockham, and John Wycliffe.

University of Paris was founded in 1200. Notables include Peter Abelard (yes, even though he died over 50 years before the U of Paris officially came into being), Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, and Erasmus. The U of Paris became so influential, it overshadowed Athens, Alexandria, and Rome – which made Paris a favorite destination for liberals, and is one of the reasons I call the University of Paris the Temple of Reason. Abelard (AOR p.H7-3) is a prime example of what education often does to men, perhaps especially those who are exceptionally bright...and those others who are intellectually less than average; they become insufferable, argumentative assholes of low character who constantly rebel against authority.

Cambridge University was founded in 1209. Notables include Francis Bacon, Sir Edward Coke, Isaac Newton, and Charles Darwin.

An interesting historical statistic is the fact that even though education was for *adults*, by the year 1338, almost half of what we think of as “school-age” children were attending schools along with adults – especially in many Italian city-states including Florence, Genoa, Venice, and Milan. What, then, had happened to the “town vs. gown” / faith vs. Reason controversy that made schools unpopular and controversial? And what made many parents “reevaluate” their age-old parenting methods and the pros and cons of schools...and decide to stop “homeschooling” their kids in the necessary fundamentals of life and character, and to begin sending their young children to schools with teachings they knew to be subversive to Biblical faith? Why had making children “literate” become so important to parents that they decided *Thus saith the Lord* was unnecessarily strict? And why were cities in *Italy* so popular? It was because of “progress” ...as we shall see shortly.

The men from the universities of Paris, Cambridge, and Oxford taught and influenced many, many other men, who all contributed to the dawn of the Age of Reason. For example, one of the many factors that led to the demise of the feudalistic lifestyle was the **Magna Carta of 1215**, which attempted to take away some of the King's prerogatives and give them to his lairds/barons. The Magna Carta was drawn up by a controversial, Enlightened, rebellious archbishop, Stephen Langton, who studied at the Temple of Reason...and his Magna Carta started the centuries-long process of taking authority away from kings and other governmental authorities...by giving it to “laws” written and approved by “the people.”

THE CRUSADES HASTEN THE RISE OF TRADE, MONEY-BASED SOCIETY, AND THE END OF FEUDALISM

Charlemagne began educating adults in about 800 AD. European scholars began using Reason to “improve” education in about 1000 AD. The main Crusades were fought between about 1100 and 1300 AD. Parents began sending their young children to schools in about 1200. Let's look at what happened.

In 1095 the fortress city of Constantinople was in imminent danger of falling to the Muslims, who had ruled – for three hundred years – Spain, north Africa, Arabia, the Middle East as far as India, and the entire Holy Land right up to Constantinople. The Eastern Orthodox Catholic emperor of Byzantine asked the Roman pope to save Constantinople. The pope

called on the European “faithful” to serve God and receive spiritual rewards by going to Constantinople to defeat the Muslim army.

The first crusade, called the People’s Crusade, which was also the *largest* crusade at 100,000 men, women, and children, was a haphazard collection of mostly poor people from Germany, France, and Italy who had no idea what warfare involved. As this huge undisciplined army walked through Europe, it massacred Jewish communities (“they crucified our Saviour!”), and looted and burned a number of other communities that had goods the crusaders wanted, leaving a trail of death, destruction, and ill will. When this huge “army” of amateurs got to Constantinople it quickly attacked the Muslim army...and was annihilated, exterminated, wiped out...*gone*.

After the disaster of that first crusade, the following crusades were better planned, better led, better financed, and manned by more knights and nobles. And instead of walking the whole way, they began sailing on ships from Italian ports to and from the Holy Land.

The crusader armies were financed in part by manor lords who mortgaged their vast estates. The armies were manned by manor lords, knights, and serfs...which left the manors in the care of a fraction of the number of people needed. *Millions* of crusaders were killed in the Holy Land. Diseases killed many of those who stayed behind on the manors. Feudal life, which had always been hard, became a real struggle.

The biggest beneficiaries of the Crusades were the Roman Catholic Church and the Italian ports of commerce.

The Catholic Church, because of the Europe-wide enthusiastic response to its call for crusades, became generally accepted as the supreme authority. It also became the wealthiest and largest landowner in history – in large part because of the Crusades. When kings and lords needed money to finance their crusades (weapons, food, transportation), they often made deals with the extremely-wealthy Vatican. If they died during the crusades, or safely returned but couldn’t pay their debt, the Church got their land. The Church ended up with more land, power, influence, and money than it knew what to do with.

During the eventful centuries of the Crusades there was a constant stream of men and supplies going back and forth between Europe and the Holy Land. The port cities in northern Italy, such as Venice, Genoa, and Pisa, were convenient because they had easy overland access to and from all of Europe, and they became thriving commercial hubs for the carts and wagons serving Europe, and for the merchant ships serving northern Africa, Arabia, the Holy Land, and the Orient. When European crusaders, who often came from rude living conditions on feudal manors, arrived in the Middle East they were amazed at the dazzling variety of goods for sale in markets and bazaars – such as spices, silks, ivory, dates, tapestries, precious stones, pearls, and perfumes. When these goods were shipped to Europe they took with them plague-infested fleas.

The number of available ships couldn’t keep up with the growing demand for goods and troop transport, so ports like Venice quickly started ship-building businesses. These wealthy Italian cities were teeming with merchant seamen, investors, shipyard workers, prostitutes, and vendors of all kinds. Merchants and investors, wanting to profit from the flourishing commerce, poured money into these cities, which quickly gave rise to the new, flourishing banking industry. More ships were built, more goods were shipped, more money was made. Wealthy, powerful Catholic bishops and cardinals formed political and business alliances with wealthy, powerful merchants, bankers, and government officials. Corruption was rampant and unchecked. Businesses such as shipbuilders, hotels, bars, banks, markets, tailors, etc., all needed employees – often employees who were literate – and business owners, who couldn’t find enough workers, began paying high wages to attract applicants.

People in Europe quickly found out that long-distance trade (as opposed to local trade) required *money* (as opposed to *barter*) to buy merchandise. And people on feudal manors usually had little or no money – and that was becoming a problem because it was hindering their lust for material things.

Word spread across Europe’s struggling undermanned feudal manors that *good-paying* jobs were available for *illiterate* workers in Italy, and *better-paying* jobs were available for *literate* workers. Many illiterates quickly left their manors and went to Italy. Many other illiterate young adults began attending schools, learned to read and write, and then went to Italy. Many parents, who, because of the “town vs. gown,” Reason vs. Bible controversy, had been dead-set against sending their young children to schools, decided with their carnal minds it was financially worth it for them to ignore their consciences and send their children to school...*so they could get jobs that paid wages – money!* That money would make life *easier* and would allow more and more people to buy the eye-candy merchandise from the Middle East. This created even more demand for merchandise, and the Italian city-states happily tried to expand their businesses to meet the demand. They became so wealthy, and they needed so many workers that people on feudal manors *flocked* to these urban money-making centers...and that marked the beginning of a huge and historically-important (in a bad way) societal transition from an agrarian-based economy in which people were largely self-sufficient – to a money-based one in which people who had no money would die. History, because it only views life through today’s lenses, labels people on feudal manors as “poverty stricken” because they had little or no money...which completely ignores the fact that they led charmingly-serene lives of contentment in the slow lane, had good character, and were successfully self-sufficient – until money and “progress” shattered their idyllic pastoral existence.

The Crusades killed so many lords that the people trying to survive on manors found themselves increasingly dependent upon their kings, with whom they’d previously had little contact. As a result, common people became more important to kings, and kings became more important to commoners. The few remaining nobles (knights and lords) found themselves increasingly marginalized by a changing societal structure.

When youngsters who’d left the manors to work in Italy sent money back home to their parents, those parents became *consumers*, and consumers attracted investors, and investors financed the establishment of businesses, and businesses attracted employees...and little communities became towns, and towns became cities throughout Europe. When merchandise from the Orient made its way west to a ship at a port in the Holy Land, then transferred in Venice to an animal-drawn wagon for the road trip to a town in France, and then to the shelves in a store, the owner of the store could no longer accept bartering from his local customers because none of the businessmen involved in transporting the merchandise from the Orient to France had any use for a couple of pigs and two sacks of fresh peaches; they wanted *money* because it was easy to carry, didn’t need to be fed, and wouldn’t spoil and go rotten. Yes, bartering with pigs and peaches in a *small* community was useful and practical, but as trade, commerce, and various modes of transportation became international and involved more and more people, only money was useful and practical. **The Crusades increased travel**, transportation, and trade...and thereby hastened the demise

of bartering and the rise of money. I say again: feudalism, bartering, labor-based self-sufficiency, a true communal symbiotic bond among people, and, to a lesser degree, widespread good character, are dependent upon *limited travel*. (If today's frenetic travel via trains, planes, ships, and cars were to be significantly restricted, it would cripple the flow of material goods, put many people out of work, and topple today's commerce-dependent financial system.) The Crusades greatly changed the world largely because they kick-started mass long-distance travel. The Crusades enticed people into leaving the slow-lane quiet of their "Inner Sanctums" in which they communed with God all day, into spending much valuable time focusing on money, material goods, science falsely so called, sports, movies, fashion, technology, smart phones, etc.

Because of the increased variety of material goods from faraway places for sale in local stores, lords who survived the crusades and retained possession of their manors, increasingly found they, too, had less use for bartering. In the past, their serfs paid their feuds/fees to their lords with labor and barter (sheep, milk, eggs). But now, lords began wanting *money* from their serfs (as *rent/property taxes* replaced the *feud*)...and society in general began the erratic and often tumultuous transition from the age-old, familiar, predictable, consistent agrarian society in which physical labor, bartering, family, community, and church members ensured survival and formed the basis for communal bonds among people – to a money-based society that was new, unfamiliar, unpredictable, increasingly urban, and ever-changing based on the latest technological inventions and improvements...and the new money-based society began weakening communal bonds and making neighbors strangers.

All of the good that was part of feudal life would, when Reason and equality were made part of Western civilization, be called "evil," "authoritarian," "oppressive," "demeaning," and "antiquated" by clueless people like scholars, theologians, and Karl Marx (even though God ordered them not to think that way in **1 Cor 12:14-26**). Western leaders had clueless, unscriptural outlooks and wanted to make sure none of the above words in quotation marks would apply to the new civilizations created by their American and French Revolutions. Indeed, during the French Revolution, the French *specifically* outlawed any kind of feudalism (admittedly, a lot of that had to do with trying to curb the corruption and power of the Catholic Church), and Western democratic capitalists began to teach that any form of socialism/communism (in which dictatorial authorities control everything and outlaw private property ownership) is anti-Christian. But the Bible makes it clear that those ways are not anti-Christian. In fact, God Himself killed Christians who failed to wholeheartedly get with the socialistic/communitistic program (**Ac 2:44,45; 4:32-5:11; Mt 20:1-16**).

While the Crusades were going on, the "Christianity-professing" professors in universities were continuing to use Reason to turn people away from the Bible and to end feudalism. Indeed, it was professors at the Temple of Reason itself in Paris that taught a young man from England, **Stephen Langton** (1150-1228) to apply Reason to everything. Langton became a Catholic priest and worked his way up to England's Archbishop of Canterbury. He then used his influence among manor lords to undermine the authority of the king of England (a king who was, even though it's irrelevant, a real jerk). The Enlightened Langton authored the **Magna Carta** in 1215 that restricted the authority of the king. Following Langton's lead, the lords signed it. The Magna Carta itself went nowhere, but the Reasonable self-evidence of anti-authority *equality* continued to spread until it brought feudalism to an end and chopped off the head of Britain's king in 1649.

After the Crusades killed a mere three million Europeans, the **Black Death of 1346-1353** killed fifty million more Europeans (almost two out of every three people, or about 65% of all Europeans), which left many manors no longer able to properly function. The resulting shortage of labor made merchants and employers – who were desperate for workers – pay highly-attractive wages, which caused more serfs to leave their manors to get jobs...which made those serfs money-dependent for survival.

The spread of Reason also caused scholars to start using "senseless deaths" from plagues and accidents to deny the existence of God and become "humanists" because "no God would be that cruel." Then, the Hundred Years War in Europe killed three million more people and brought even more changes to European society.

The Hundred Years' War (1337-1453). In 1066 William the Conqueror from France conquered and ruled England and began making French the language of England. Over the next several centuries a dispute arose between England and France over whether English kings (who were descended/related to William the Conqueror) in London had dominion over both England and France like William did. This led to a series of bloody wars that historians lump together and call the **Hundred Years' War**. Some of the results of the war: 1) England and France became independent, semi-permanent rivals. 2) Large professional standing armies in which serfs were foot soldiers who, armed with newly-invented cannons and armor-piercing longbows, were militarily more effective than noble-led armies of mounted armor-wearing knights. Armor-wearing knights on horses used to be semi-impervious to crossbow-using archers because of the slower speed and shorter range of crossbow arrows. But longbow arrows went *much* faster, farther, and put an end to the era of armor-wearing knights. That caused knights to vanish and nobles (lords) to become relatively powerless aristocrats who adopted "coats of arms" as symbols of their faded glory days. 3) The feudal system died, and the nobles' old chivalry was replaced by a shallow, pretentious image of what a "gentleman" was. For example, instead of raising armies of mounted knights for serious life-saving, manor-protecting reasons, aristocrats invited other aristocrats to participate in fox hunts...and fox hunts replaced battles, and fox hunters replaced warriors. 4) Charlemagne and the Holy Roman Empire had tried to unify Europe and bring it under the rule of a single authority, thus threatening to undo the Lord's good work in **Gen 10:32-11:9**. The Hundred Years' War, however, ended that harmful-to-Christianity striving for international unity by promoting national sovereignty and giving countries strong national identities. It would be 500 years before other attempts to conquer and *unify* Europe were made by Napoleon and Hitler. 5) The Hundred Years' War prevented French from becoming the language of Britain, the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Australia...and therefore the universal language of the world. 6) The Hundred Years' War helped Britain escape the clutches of the Vatican, become Protestant, and ensure that the KJV rather than the corrupt Catholic Douay-Rheims Bible version would become the Authorized Bible and the God-given inerrant "crutch" that would preserve faith in God's word for centuries. 7) The Hundred Years' War made Britons painfully aware they were a vulnerable island nation apart from continental Europe, so they built themselves into a maritime power, which helped them discover, explore, and conquer vast areas around the world that became the Protestant, KJV-using British Empire...and, alas, the foundation of Enlightened Western civilization. Yes, even as the KJV spread Christianity around the world, the seeds of Christianity's downfall – Greek Reason – were also spread.

THE PRINTING PRESS: THE MOST INFLUENTIAL INVENTION IN HISTORY

In 1450 a German printer, Johannes Gutenberg (1400-1468), produced a revolutionary, versatile printing press that had *movable type*. The first book he printed was the Latin Vulgate Bible Version. Almost overnight the price of books began to drop, and everybody wanted a printed Bible. Massive handwritten Bible manuscripts were suddenly old fashioned. And what better place to have a printing business back then than in the northern Italian cities that collectively were the commercial hub of the Western world.

Most printers decided to establish their businesses in Venice, and by the late 1400s it had dozens of printing businesses equipped with the newest printing presses. Two good examples are Aldus Manutius and Daniel Bomberg.

Aldus Manutius (1449-1515) was born in Rome. In 1494 he moved to Venice and started his own printing business, the Aldine Press. There were so many competing printers in Venice it was difficult to get established. Manutius decided not to try to compete in the crowded full-sized Bible market, but would instead publish the Greek and Latin classics in smaller, cheaper “pocket sized” books to supply the growing interest among scholars in pagan philosophical works. But because scholars wanted to read the classics in the “original languages” (a harbinger of a coming destructive trend among Bible scholars and theologians), Manutius also published Greek and Latin grammar books as quick-reference “cheat sheets” for all of these pseudo scholars in “the languages.” In 1495 he published the first printed volume of Aristotle’s works, which was very popular. (If you need to refresh your memory about how popular the pagan classics were over the next 300 years, read the bottom paragraph on AOR p.H11-3.) Note: Many of today’s evangelical Christians have become so convinced that pagan philosophy’s Reason is so critically-important to understanding Christianity and government, they are offering courses that exalt the pagan philosophers (!), Enlightened equality-based government, and deeply-involved political activism...*in order to defend “American political ideals.”*

Daniel Bomberg (1483-1549) also moved to Venice to start a printing business. Lots of people were already supplying the always-popular Bible, and Manutius had already found a profitable niche for himself printing the classics on pagan philosophy and his Hebrew-and-Greek-dictionary forerunners of modern layman’s aids. Bomberg found that nobody in Venice was printing Hebrew-language religious books, so he became the first by hiring a Hebrew scholar, **Jacob ben Chayyim** (1470-1538), to produce in four volumes in 1525 *The Standard Printed Edition of the Masoretic Text*. It was a layman’s aid that included the Masoretic text with the Masoretic markings for vowels, pronunciation, and punctuation; Masoretic notes on the text; and extensive commentaries by Hebrew scholars. Bomberg, knowing many Jews liked the convenient way the Latin Vulgate Old Testament had been divided into numbered chapters two centuries previously, had the same thing done with his publication of the Masoretic Old Testament. It was a runaway bestseller, had multiple printings over the centuries, became the standard Rabbinical Bible, the standard Masoretic Hebrew OT text, and it was used, unchallenged, by everybody everywhere for over 500 years.

The effects of the printing press on society and history were massive. Printed books *sped up history* by causing rapid, unprecedented changes. Literacy became widespread, even among the lower classes. Only 32 years after the printing press appeared, there were over 100 printing businesses in western Europe. Only 50 years after the printing press came out, there were almost 20 million copies of 35,000 different book titles printed. Most people learned – to some degree – about Greek theories about how beneficial Reason and equality are.

Human knowledge spread like wildfire beyond the printed word: during the Renaissance color painted pictures (art) captured the imaginations of everybody (illocutionary effect) by effectively conveying messages and emotions by *bypassing words*. (In a universe created by God’s words, we do *not* want to get away from our dependency on words.)

Before the printing press, people had to believe their preachers, but when they were able to read the Bible, they found that Church teachings were often different from *Thus saith the Lord*. Catholics, both priests and laymen, began to ask questions, and the Vatican reacted by trying to silence them. Martin Luther was a master at using printed pamphlets, and the Protestant Reformation would not have happened without the printing press.

Previously, school educational curriculums had been leavened in general ways by Reason. But the religious wars between Catholics and Protestants began to influence school curriculums in specific ways. This caused four “religious denominations” to form: 1) those who went by the Catholic Church; 2) those who went by their Protestant church – or their newly founded cult starting in the 1800s; 3) those who became humanists and turned to science for answers; 4) and those who stuck with *Thus saith the Lord*.

Books were so effective at teaching – even on their own – that all previous methods of educating people became obsolete; everything now revolved around books. Information in books – and pamphlets, such as Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* (AOR p.H13-3,4) – sparked the Protestant Reformation, the English Civil War, the American and French Revolutions, and the American Civil War. Scientific discoveries, along with scientific and unscientific theories caused society (including Christians) to become more and more secular.

The printing press changed the world, and it did so with astonishing rapidity. Without the printing press the Industrial Revolution and all the “progress” it triggered probably wouldn’t have happened...and we’d still be living in a pre-industrial slow-lane society with a vertical hierarchy.

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND THE RISE OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION

Western civilization is built on three pillars, **Alexander the Great** (325 BC), **Augustine** (400 AD), and **Thomas Aquinas** (1300 AD). Those three men were hugely responsible for the spread of the Greek philosophers’ ideology that said it is OK for mankind to depend on and be guided by his self-based Reason. Ideologies are the engines that determine the course of human history. The Greek ideology that said it was OK for a man to proceed independently without consulting the gods – as long as what he did was right and good in his own eyes – was a hugely radical deviation at a fundamental level from the way life had always been since God created angels and men. It was a fundamental square peg that corrupts God’s round-peg creation because it theorized that it is *good* for man to eat the forbidden fruit, to rely on his own knowledge of good and evil, and to presume that man’s *inventions* are good for him and for society – in spite of what the Bible teaches us about inventions in **Ps 99:8; 106:29,39; Ecc 7:29; Pvb 8:12**. To see the consistency of Pvb 8:12, pay attention to the pattern (good things are

followed by bad things) in Pvb 8:7,8,10,11,12,13. The work of the Three Pillars of Western civilization spread the carnality of square-peg Reason to God's people. At that point the curve of the graph of human "progress" began going up like a rocket, feudalism ended, and society rapidly became urban (Isa 5:8).

The Three Pillars spread their philosophical evil ideology, and most of mankind swallowed it hook, line, and sinker. Let's now watch society change as mankind uses his Reason to come up with many witty inventions that Enlightened history has lauded as helping mankind raise his standard of living by escaping *poverty* (having little or no money, for which there was almost no need) and *tyranny* (living contentedly in a mutually-beneficial community with a benevolent vertical hierarchy) and by using technology to make life on a superficial level seem better, more productive, and more efficient.

Britain's **Industrial Revolution** began with the 1765 invention of the "spinning jenny," which mechanized the making of thread and yarn so it could be used to weave huge sheets of fabric. (The results of the Industrial Revolution in the United States were, for our purposes here, very similar to those in Great Britain.) At first the spinning jenny did the work of 8 people in textile factories, but with improvements it soon replaced 120 people. The new machinery eliminated the need for skilled spinners and weavers, and unskilled workers were hired instead. The following figures will give you an idea of why the Industrial Revolution truly was a *revolution*: Before the spinning jenny, Britain needed to import 2.5 million pounds of raw cotton each year to be spun manually. By 1787, only twenty-two years after the jenny was invented, Britain needed to import 22 million pounds a year, then 58 million pounds in 1800, and 588 million pounds in 1850.

In 1781, improvements in the design and efficiency of steam engines made them suitable for use inside factories – not just for ships and locomotives. Innovations in mass production, factory assembly lines, steel making, advanced machine tool production, and widespread distribution of electrical power for factories caused unimaginable increases in production. Newly efficient locomotives, large steamships, and small steamboats all but eliminated the need for people to continue distributing merchandise by leading trains of heavily-laden pack horses along winding bridle paths.

When farm machinery was invented, one or two horses pulling a harvester made it no longer necessary for farmers to find and hire seasonal workers for the crops. Crop prices dropped, and small farmers found themselves unable to make enough money to keep farming, they simply couldn't compete against farm machinery on larger-acreage farms. Unsavory decisions had to be made, so the farmer, his wife and two children sold their little farm, packed their bags, and moved to the city to get jobs to earn enough money to survive. In the city they rented a squalid tenement they could afford, and got in job lines with hundreds of other displaced Britons. Their 10-year-old son was hired to work at low wages in a factory, nobody else in the family was hired, and they continued waiting for a job opening. Their savings were used up. They got hungry...and frightened. Unsavory decisions *had* to be made again. The wife and the 14-year-old daughter became prostitutes. Eventually, all of them were able to get factory jobs, but there were no celebrations; they were deflated and discouraged. Yes, in terms of labor it was easier working long hours in the factory than it often had been on the farm, but factory work was repetitive, boring, and tedious. The long hours of manual labor back on their small farm was often hard, but they were all pulling together, appreciated each other, felt a sense of accomplishment, satisfaction, contentment, and pride...and they all missed the clean, fresh air, rural countryside...and their good lifestyles. In the city, the boy's character development, without the constant oversight and direction of his parents, suffered. Six years later he got involved with other ne'er-do-wells, did some horrible things he shouldn't have, was properly hanged...and dumped into a pauper's grave.

Before the Industrial Revolution, people helped their churches and neighbors by supplying them with material goods, crops, livestock, and labor. When society became money-based, however, and when farmers could not compete with the new farm machinery, donations of all kinds to churches were greatly reduced, and churches no longer had the means to support congregants. I say again: In the old days when the harvest was larger than you needed, when the livestock multiplied more rapidly than needed, people often donated food, animals, and labor to their churches for struggling church members. But as society became "more advanced and modern," and success was measured by monetary profits that weren't really needed, that extra money quickly went into the purchase of unnecessary luxury items...and therefore there was nothing left over to donate to the church for the poor. Indeed, rural churches often found themselves struggling to stay afloat. Lacking understanding of the larger forces affecting society (progress and greed), people in financial straits began to wrongly blame and despise their churches and stopped attending. Neighbors could no longer afford charitable contributions to each other, and the increasingly old-fashioned sense of community began to vanish.

The Irish potato famine

In the 1840s, international trade introduced a potato blight (a crop disease) to Europe. Most farms were only slightly affected because they had a diversity of crops and livestock. But in Ireland many farmers grew potatoes almost exclusively.

Most people in Britain ate cereal grains, so most larger farms – including those in Ireland – grew grains. A high percentage of farms in Ireland were too small to grow enough grain to get their large families (which kept getting bigger) through the winter. Therefore, many small farms grew potatoes because they were cheap (and worth very little in the marketplace), easy to grow, and could adequately feed the families and their pigs. When the potato blight hit, tens of thousands of farm families in Ireland were starving; but because grain prices were now very high in other countries, Ireland's large farms decided to make more money shipping their grain overseas instead of feeding their own starving neighbors. During the potato famine a million Irish died, and a million more moved to other countries hoping to get jobs.

The fact that Ireland and England decided to ignore their starving masses by making more money shipping foods overseas has made some people claim that the love of money should be blamed – not technology. It's a fair point, but the fact is, if it weren't for modern technology (rapid locomotives and oceangoing steamships), many perishable foods would not have been able to survive the journeys to foreign markets...and would have stayed in Britain and fed the poor. Also, it is the love of money that encourages more technological inventions that make it easier to make more money. That means, people being what we are, you cannot eliminate our love of money...but we can get rid of technology and live without it like most people throughout human history did.

Technology goes international

It was Britain's large-acre farms in the late 1700s and early 1800s that put small-farm families out of business and forced them to make unsavory decisions about how they could survive. But after the 1860s Civil War in America the vast mid-western prairies in America became mega grain farms with modern farm machinery that produced unprecedented quantities of grain. Russia was also producing lots of grain – not with technology, but with lots of very cheap labor. The cheap grain from America and Russia flooded British markets and drove Britain's fat-cat large-acreage farmers (who had destroyed small-farm families) into bankruptcy. Technology had made the world small, and businesses suddenly found themselves forced by economics into competing with market forces on the other side of the globe. In order to compete, businesses realized they either needed improved technology or cheaper labor...or both.

The 6-inch ruler/graph that illustrates the rise of technological progress

Take a horizontal 6-inch ruler and let each inch represent 1,000 years of mankind's history (a day is as a thousand years) from Adam to today. The last inch (representing the Biblical 6th day of history that goes from the end of the 5th inch to the end of the ruler at the 6-inch mark) represents the period from 1000 AD to 2000 AD (today). The end of the ruler represents the beginning of the Tribulation. Everything we've talked about in this chapter, beginning with the demise of feudalism, has taken place in our last-inch modern era. If you were to draw a graph that represents both 1) agrarian life in the slow lane, and 2) the rise of Western civilization's "progress," the first 5 inches of the graph would be a flat horizontal line down along the ruler representing feudalism. And then, shortly after the end of the 5-inch mark, right at the beginning of the 6th day, the line would start going uphill faster and faster to represent how astonishingly far away we've gotten from the **study to be quiet** (1 The 4:11) lifestyles that began way back with Adam. Progress is not a good thing, and the point where the graph begins to rapidly curve uphill may represent when, on the last day before the Tribulation, "He Who letteth" began to be taken out of the way (2 The 2:7).

In trying to take a bird's-eye Biblical view of history that (perhaps) runs the risk of oversimplifying things, I'll say this: I think God, knowing we'd get farther away from the good old days when He communicated with us *orally*, planned ahead by giving us the phonetic alphabet and His written word. Then, later, He used the manuscript mess as a stumblingstone that those with little faith could use as an excuse to incorrectly think His inerrant word no longer exists on Earth, and therefore to say, "He has His inerrant word with Him *up in heaven*" (where it doesn't do us any good). During this same time His faithful followers trusted that His word did actually exist, even if hidden parable-like in plain sight among the various manuscripts. When education, knowledge, and "progress" began blinding more and more of His church as the above curve on our "ruler/graph" rose more and more steeply, God used the King James Bible translators to – unbeknownst to them – solve the manuscript mess "parable" by producing something Christians had never needed before: a hard copy, historically-unique Bible that was irrefutably inerrant...and the only Book with His name and rank on it. And He used the printing press, the British Empire, and the universal language of English to aid in the Great-Commission all-around-the-world publishing of His Book (Mk 13:10) in preparation for the dark last days (v.4). We live in a treacherous era in which we are perched at the top of the graph's "progress curve." All of the Devil's clever influences have successfully convinced most people there is no God, and caused many Christians to believe less and less of God's word. And there, but for the grace of God and His Bible, go we.

ATTEMPTS TO CURB THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF TECHNOLOGY

Britain obtained dominion over many colonies and became a wealthy world power because of technological progress. But because the Devil now has dominion over the world, wealth and worldly power are detrimental to spiritual and personal character and wellbeing. The harmful effects "progress" was having on both society and Christian charity and fellowship was noticed by many people, so, let's look at some of the men who protested the technological revolution. The first group to notice the harmfulness of technological progress was the Luddites.

The Luddites' anti-progress views

During the late 1700s in Britain a group of textile workers and weavers, for a variety of reasons, were unhappy with what progress was doing to society. This group came to be called "Luddites," and the first thing that got their attention was good family members having their lives disrupted to such an extent that they saw no viable alternatives but to become whores and criminals because the old-fashioned community- and church-based welfare system had broken down. Luddites realized the dwindling influence and prestige of churches in the community was very harmful for society. (History would later show that government-run anonymous welfare undermines character and leads to widespread welfare abuse and increases in crime.) Luddites were also afraid (correctly) progress was going to make them lose their jobs to unskilled workers (and robots and AI computers). Therefore, from 1811 to 1816 they protested by rioting, disrupting factory work, and vandalizing machinery. They believed the astonishing growth of profits had made the love of money more important than Christian brotherly love. Even though the Luddite fears were correct, they were wrong to riot. Governmental authorities correctly executed some Luddites and imprisoned others...and the rioting came to an abrupt halt. When a government *enforces* its laws and will, that is true and effective rule – even if it is froward. The head *must* rule, and the members *must* obey. All societies need authority-plus-enforcement if they are to survive. Authority without enforcement is no authority. When a froward ruler punishes a disobedient member, the member must *always* be blamed – because the issue is *authority*, not right and wrong.

Over the years, more and more examples of harmful effects of progress all over Western civilization have broadened the term "Luddite" and now these modern anti-progress groups are often called "neo-Luddites" who believe a goal of governments and societies should be a return to simple, close-to-the-land lifestyles (similar to the way a number of modern groups live such as the Amish) that fosters a sense of community...rather than the greedy pursuit of unrestrained profit-driven progress. Neo-Luddites oppose industrialization, automation, computerization, and all new technologies in general that encourage consumerism to increase profits. Also, because it causes people to lose existing jobs, neo-Luddites oppose the modern corporate practice of sending domestic jobs overseas to countries with lower wages simply because it will increase profits – saying it, too, subordinates brotherly love to the love of money.

As technology began spreading and entrenching itself in society, it gradually began to occur to business leaders that technology was revealing humans to be inefficient, unreliable, selfish complainers...and *wouldn't it be nice if technology could someday make humans unnecessary!*

In general, the unthinking masses who favor progress, predictably respond to the arguments of neo-Luddites by sneering that “they’re just technophobes and conspiracy theorists who are afraid of the mythical one-world utopian globalist movement.” Let’s examine some of these modern-day “technophobes” – whose writings often catch naysayers by surprise.

Jacques Ellul’s anti-progress views

Jacques Ellul (1912-1994) was a French philosopher, theologian, and professor. Some of Karl Marx’s writings got him thinking about how Western civilization has gone wrong, and he ultimately decided technology is a big cause of that.

Intelligent enough to discount Marx’s anti-Christianity stance, Ellul realized that the effect Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution had on unthinking society, together with unthinking society’s growing acceptance of all things having to do with science, together with the harmful effects that the Reason of the Enlightenment had on both theologians and on their “higher textual criticism” of the Bible, all combined to seriously undermine Western civilization’s belief in the sacredness of the Bible. Once the Bible was no longer perceived as God’s word, all economic theories – capitalism, communism, and socialism – began to increasingly bow to the god of profit by emphasizing the necessity and importance of efficient economic production to such a great extent that financial profit has itself become an unquestioned sacred belief and objective. (Notice that, unlike capitalism, communism, and socialism, *monarchy* is never associated with any specific type of monetary or governmental policy...because monetary policies are always up to the monarch, he is not bound by any system or rules – because the *head* is always in complete command.)

Ellul believed the secularizing influence of evolution, science, and theology, together with the waning influence of the Bible, rendered mankind unable to recognize how much of a threat technology is to society. Once technology demonstrated that *efficiency* produces *profit*, and once we quit being properly influenced by the Bible and its emphasis on brotherly love and the two greatest commandments, we became – collectively – a lower form of life. For example, without the guidance and instruction of the Bible (and books from bygone days that emphasized, described, and demonstrated the importance and necessity of *character*), people become shallow creatures who live their lives in the pursuit of entertainment, self-gratification, and the advancement of their materialistic and financial state. Indeed, modern education has decreased its emphasis on reading, writing, and arithmetic; on character development; and on learning how to absorb information in such a way that fosters *evaluating* the truth, relevance, and value of information – and instead teaches students to have baseless high opinions of themselves. Ellul also believed this secularized form of human cannot resist pursuing knowledge for its own sake (such as enthusiastically seeing if animal diseases can be genetically modified to infect humans, and seeing if we can grow genetically-modified embryos that are part-human-part-animal in human wombs...and in computer-nourished “robot wombs”), and pursuing continual increases in technologies of all kinds imaginable. In other words, he thought human beings, without the insights of the Bible, and without the limitations imposed by the Bible, are unable to resist the siren song of knowledge and technology for its own sake. He believed all religions that are not based solely on the Bible will all find ways to rationalize all forms of technology because *efficiency* is always “better” ...and therefore always “good” to the non-discerning carnal mind. He was afraid mankind would become a slave to technology for the simple reason that technology is “progress.”

Ellul was reluctant to uncompromisingly condemn technology, modernity, and progress because neither he nor anybody else knows how to undo history and take a largely-ignorant, selfish society back to Amish-like living – and therefore his wimpy “solution” was people should “understand that technology is just a tool mankind should use for good; it is not our master that should always be accepted and submitted to.”

The Unabomber’s anti-progress views

Dr. Ted Kaczynski (1942-2023) was an American math-genius professor with a high IQ and a PhD from MIT who, losing a painful battle with rectal cancer, hanged himself in prison close to his 82nd birthday. During the 1960s he became increasingly concerned about the future of humanity because of the harmful effects of technology. He read and agreed with some of Jacques Ellul’s works, but he was correctly convinced Ellul’s quiet plea for people to pay attention to what technology has been and is doing to the planet and its people was going to reach *very few* people. Believing that the situation is too dire for halfway measures, Kaczynski began blowing stuff up to get his message into the public eye in a big way, eventually unintentionally killing three people. It took the FBI decades to finally catch him in 1996, and it was the FBI that nicknamed him “the Unabomber.” For that reason, Kaczynski, before he was captured, wrote a thesis about technology entitled, *The Unabomber Manifesto: Industrial Society and Its Future*. The opening sentence of his manifesto proclaims, “The Industrial Revolution and its consequences have been a disaster for the human race.” All hands agree his manifesto was impressively written...and most readers are shocked by how right he was about so many things.

Kaczynski believed technological “progress” is anything but progress. In fact, he believed “civilization” is a near-incurable disease because [ignoring the inexorable role carnality plays in the downfall of societies] it was technology that transformed normal, traditional, feudal “society” into what we call “civilization” – which is a blinded state of enslavement. *Blinded* because one of the effects of technology (especially in this digital age) is its ability to convince people that technology-based civilization is somehow some kind of good-deal blessing – in spite of the obvious historical and everyday evidence to the contrary. Kaczynski also said technology cannot exist and do its job unless man creates vast “systems” that support and allow technology to properly function. For example, cars are worthless without extensive networks that provide fuel, gas stations, fuel-delivery ships, pipelines, trains, and trucks, roads, maintenance, trained drivers, rules of the road, etc. Indeed, wars have been fought over petroleum resources. Also, when technology is first invented and offered to the public as “completely optional,” *it often later forces people to use it!* For example, a man who uses a horse to get around and therefore shuns cars, later finds that roads and highways are everywhere and “progress” has made horses unusable as routine modes of transportation. Another example: When the Internet was invented, only a very few people used it. Today it has so wormed its way into daily life and become such a “necessity” that people now say, “Internet access is a human right.” Another example:

Banks and insurance companies are trying to get their customers to voluntarily install their “convenient apps” on smart phones so customers can quickly and easily do routine transactions. Those apps utilize incredibly-precise GPS-aided monitoring technology (that federal law requires manufacturers to build into all smart and dumb phones) to monitor where you go; how fast you drive; how quickly you accelerate, brake, and corner; what spot you park in; whether you are the driver or a passenger; and if you text, talk, or check emails while driving. The apps are voluntary *now*, but soon the coming “corporatopian technocracy” will *require* everybody to have all kinds of apps.

Technology, said Kaczynski, does not and cannot regulate and modify itself in order to satisfy what people want; *people* are the ones who must modify their behavior in order to submit to the needs of *technology* – e.g., if you’re driving a car and you’re late, you are still required to comply with the speed limit, stop at the red light, etc. Also, because of all the pro and con rhetoric about capitalism, socialism, and communism, Kaczynski stressed the fact that it’s not capitalism, socialism, and communism that are making you buy cars, get insurance, download tracking apps, and stop at red lights – because those monetary and governmental systems are increasingly-archaic – it’s *technology* that is making us voluntarily or involuntarily conform to its dictates. Technology continually and inexorably gains more and more control over every aspect of our lives. Kaczynski was especially troubled at what society will be like once quantum computers with artificial intelligence using 5G technology become involved, and when genetic manipulation of humans (and many other “transhuman” technologies that *already exist today*) begin to go mainstream.

Kaczynski said technology destabilizes society and makes life so unfulfilling that people spend their lives pursuing the lusts of the flesh and of the mind (**Eph 2:3 on steroids**) – all of which are unnecessary, trivial, and ultimately unfulfilling wastes of time. We engage in so many of these trivial activities because technology has made it so we don’t have to *really work* toward meaningful goals; we get whatever we want with little effort, and therefore quickly turn to other diversions. He said liberal “leftists” are some of the best examples of the harmful effects technology has on people because of the nutty stuff they try to make big deals of, such as obsolete socialism, political correctness, feminism, homosexuals, animal rights, and other anti-common-sense causes that reveal leftists to be riddled with “feelings of insecurity” that are rapidly spreading to many other people because of today’s unsatisfying society. He didn’t spare conservatives: they reveal themselves to be dolish fools because, even though they whine incessantly about the decay of traditional moral values, they enthusiastically embrace technology without evaluating what’s going on in current events, such as: “**Hmm, I wonder if the rapid changes to society** [Kaczynski was mostly referring to the Nietzschean “God is dead” movement that made the cover of *Time* Magazine in 1966, and to the social and moral upheaval of the drug-addled, sex-crazed 1960s] **caused by technology** [cars, interstate highways, TVs, transistor radios, men on the moon] **have had anything to do with the rapid breakdown of society’s traditional values.**” (Perhaps one of the most undeniable proofs that society is full of lowlifes who lack character and self-discipline is the fact that American citizens cannot stay away from illegal booze and drugs. For example, during Prohibition in the 1920s in the city of Chicago alone, gangsters were fighting with each other for control of the illegal liquor trade *because Americans in Chicago alone were spending a billion dollars a year for booze*. And today Americans are spending over a trillion dollars a year for illegal, life-threatening drugs. Even the U.S. government forms secret partnerships with drug cartels to sell drugs to lowlife Americans so it can have billions of untraceable dollars to fund illegal activities at home and abroad.) Technology has and is harming society psychologically, it is destroying the environment, and it is using up Earth’s resources. (Unbelievable amounts of mining needs to be done just to produce one average-sized lithium car battery.) Kaczynski believed the disease of technology is so powerfully contagious that halfway measures to “control” it cannot work; like a cancer it will always continue to spread – unless it is *completely* eliminated and then banned from society.

One of his ideas is thought-provoking to Christians. He evaluated the history of technology and concluded technology is a menacing, evil presence that is more akin to an organism than to mere hardware. To wit: 1) It has had rapid, universal, and unprecedented acceptance by humans. 2) As the Luddites first observed two centuries ago, technological inventions have been detrimental to society and to Christianity. 3) The good that technology has done (efficient, consistent production and higher profits) is neither significant enough nor “good” enough to justify or excuse its harmful effects to society and Christianity. 4) Many people have, based on research, been convinced that technology is harmful, addictive, and so dominating that it *forces* us to alter our lives and routines to accommodate its needs and incorporate it into our lives. 5) Once people acknowledge the truth of points 1 through 4, they make zero lifestyle changes – as if either points 1 through 4 do not exist...or they are powerless to stop being swept along.

Now that we’ve looked at the Unabomber, let’s see if we can apply all of this to Satan’s attempt to take over the church: Technological inventions didn’t show up until the beginning of Day 6 of Biblical history (keeping in mind that the Bible has nothing good to say about inventions). Once technological inventions arrived, the 5-day-long flat curve of progress abruptly and dramatically began rising because the Lord began giving the Devil freer reign, and then shall the Wicked be revealed (when it is his time). Could the huge “advances” in “civilization” – as depicted by the dramatically-rising “progress curve” – be causing loss of faith, woe, and societal chaos because they are inspired by the Devil who knows he hath but a short time? If that is not correct, could it be that our modern-day woe-causing inventions are because we, like our OT carnal-mind-using brethren, are hoist on our own petard because we have lost, and continue to lose, more and more of the savor of our salt? No matter if one or both points are correct, we should be protecting ourselves by coming out from among them, by living quiet lives in the slow lane, and by obediently immersing ourselves in *Thus saith the Lord* so that we might better hear the Lord’s still small voice.

Chellis Glendinning’s anti-progress views

Chellis Glendinning (1947-) is a psychologist and environmental activist who published *Notes Towards a Neo-Luddite Manifesto* in 1990. She grew up in a wealthy, respected family in Cleveland, Ohio, was jailed for her illegal political activism during the 1960s while a student at UCal, Berkeley, and now lives in South America in a small city in Bolivia. Her father was reputed to be a good doctor, but he sexually abused his daughter to such an extent that she never married and is still trying to recover emotionally. In trying to understand what her father’s problem was, she concluded he was just another abused victim of evil Western civilization – a civilization that began when Caucasians from Europe began invading the Native Americans’ continent. She also decided it was Christian doctrinal insanity that had been causing wars and persecutions in Europe for 300

years. She compared the rates of mental illness, emotional problems, and depression among people in the technologically-frenzied pace of life in Western civilization with those in societies that live life in the slow lane closer to nature such as Amish, Eskimos, and Native Americans...and found that the higher up you are on the curve of the technological-progress graph the more problems you have. She recognized that most of our modern social and personal problems began about a thousand years ago when “progress” began to “civilize” Western societies. But she also decided mankind’s problems go back over 10,000 years to when hunter-gatherer primitive man built the first fence to cruelly domesticate animals so we could force them to carry burdens and plow fields back in the beginning of the age of agriculture. Today, mankind is using technology to bulldoze nature and replace it with endless shopping enterprises; clear-cuts; rioting, crime-ridden, graffiti-filled cities; crumbling pavement; drug-addicts who shit on sidewalks and in grocery store aisles; non-addicts who can’t get through a day without antidepressant drugs; eroded farms that raise crops with chemicals; toxic wastelands; pollution everywhere; and endless flocks of heads-bowed zombies entranced by glowing cellphone screens who have dead eyes and slack jaws and actually think our awful square-peg modern society is “normal.”

She has concluded that technology deserves most of the blame because it has put mankind out of sync with nature. Mankind evolved from an inhuman mucky primordial soup, and unless we get back to those evolutionary roots we are doomed to shallows and to miseries – because when we abuse Mother nature, she punishes us. Therefore, we must holistically restore our health by ending pollution, animal extinctions, the squandering of Earth’s resources, and we must restore our evolutionary connection with the seas and the stars. If we can reconnect with whatever we haven’t yet destroyed of our evolutionary heritage from Mother Earth, we can re-tap into the intelligent presence of the Earth’s lifeforce matrix and find our individual true selves.

Her rabid feminism contributed to her theory that the Judeo-Christian blind acceptance of the Bible’s arrogant stupidity when it tells us we are *superior* to Mother Earth, and are therefore supposed to exercise “stewardship” over her by subduing and having dominion over her, is a major reason society has gotten so far off track. She is an example of how nutty and rabidly radical well-intentioned Godless liberals can be – even if they get some things right.

What these neo-Luddites propose mankind should do

Since technological progress has made society full of people who are unhappy, unfulfilled, insecure, restless, and even suicidal, neo-Luddites want to eliminate *all* technology. If we compromise by keeping *some* technology, it will inevitably lead to more compromises in the future. Some of the things on the following list are there because modern Luddites believe the Earth’s resources that are needed to support a technology-enabled world population would eventually run out. Some of the steps that need to be taken include:

- Eliminate all electromagnetic technologies such as cellphones, computers, TVs.
- Eliminate electricity and everything that cannot function without it.
- Eliminate chemical technologies such as all non-natural medicines, all synthetic fabrics and materials, and chemical pesticides and fertilizers.
- Eliminate nuclear technologies such as weapons, electrical power generation, cancer treatments, smoke detectors.
- Eliminate genetic engineering such as farm crops, diabetic insulin, transhuman robotic body parts and implants.
- Eliminate technology-producing occupations such as scientists, engineers, and profit-driven businesses.
- Eliminate mechanically-driven power tools, but keep simple hand-powered tools.
- Eliminate politicians who believe “bigger-is-better,” and who think governments should have the high-tech ability to monitor and control all people with biological engineering, pharmacological and psychological control measures, electronic surveillance and location tracking, and economic-reward “inducements.”
- Practice moderation in all things, eradicate materialism and private property, and emphasize community-based self-sufficiency because it requires people’s cooperation to survive, which enhances satisfaction and contentment.
- Orient our lives around ideology, values, modesty, and reality – not technology, possessions, status, and appearance.
- Some of the technological inventions they would eliminate that would certainly have the biggest negative impact on modern society – including mass human die-offs – if they were to suddenly (rather than gradually) disappear include electricity, fossil fuel, diesel engines, and hydraulics.

Even if modern technological advances do not result in mass loss of jobs on scales equal to or greater than they were back in the Luddites’ era, modern neo-Luddites believe technology will inexorably, gradually bring about societal collapse of a kind that will not gently return mankind to Amish-like quiet lifestyles in the slow lane, but will instead either quickly destroy mankind with a nuclear holocaust, or gradually render Earth environmentally incapable of sustaining human populations larger than small groups living in isolated pockets. They believe people in modern civilization can be successfully coerced into a gradual (but grudging) transition that will enable them to live like modern groups such as the Amish.

Putting the above historical events into Biblical perspective, it becomes obvious that walking away from the self-sufficient agrarian lifestyles of feudalism was a huge mistake; it put society at the mercy of money because society began to need money to survive. This chapter has looked at several things related to “progress” that have been detrimental to both society and Christianity, but leaving feudalism in order to work for money can be seen as the point in history when Christians’ bondage and actual enslavement to the Devil’s world accelerated.

And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand... (Job 2:4-6). We don’t know what kind of pressures we may face. But our love-based relationship with the Lord *must* cause us to jealously adhere to *Thus saith the Lord no matter what happens*...even if our dying breath is *not my will, but thine, be done* (Lk 22:42).

The purpose of this chapter is not to convince you to become a neo-Luddite and shun everything associated with progress. It is to make you aware that, because of our carnal tendency to be selfish, materialistic, and to “know” right and wrong, we are all “Eves” who are *way out of our depth* trying to discourse with the Devil. I’ve been advised, for example, to read a bunch of books by “Christian” authors and write detailed critiques of them in order to help Christians know how and why so much of modern “Christianity” is unscriptural. But the Lord has told me to come out from among them – not to read

their bullshit so I can discourse in detail with them: **But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself (Titus 3:9-11).** Our duty isn't to answer their foolish questions, to endlessly wrangle about doctrine, and to research everything outside of our slow-lane lives hoping we're smart enough to figure everything out and avoid the things that are evil and subversive; our duty is to stick with the Lord by walking circumspectly with Him via His literal word. Our duty isn't to read other books – it's to stick with the Bible.

Looking at progress through a glass, darkly

If the latest findings about the universe are correct, and a bunch of inert, lifeless atoms are *not* the fundamental building blocks of the universe as previously believed (which was reviewed on chapter 1 page 4 under **The universal wave-force and intelligent energy of the living word of God**), and if the latest evidence that suggests all atoms everywhere throughout the universe consist of, or are controlled by, a force of *living intelligence* that is instantaneously aware of everything that happens all over the universe, then it might be profitable for us Bible believers to think about what may be going on during these dark last days we find ourselves in...and we'll do so by looking at similarities that may be types or evidence of what's going on:

God is almighty, all-knowing, and ever-present. When something happens anywhere in or outside of this universe, He instantaneously knows about it – because everything, living or inert, consists of Him. He can heal us or make us sick. He knows our thoughts, words, and every move we make. Take a minute to think about the fact that **by him all things consist**.

The Devil wants to exalt himself above the Most High...but he's not all-knowing. However, he is **the prince of the power of the air**, and his "cross" is an electricity-carrying power pole. Transmitted communications, Internet info, and all other forms of electricity-powered transmissions are limited to the speed of light. The world of the dark last days is different from the world of all previous ages; our modern-progress-driven world is a world illuminated by electric light. But 24-hour illumination is by no means the biggest change brought about by electricity. The biggest and most far-reaching change is the Digital Age.

God is the alpha and the omega. Digital things are governed by ones and zeroes, and our lives are being increasingly monitored and governed by digital devices. Anything you can imagine can be programmed – *created*, if you will – by arranging ones and zeroes. Indeed, many people are now losing their jobs to things run by ones and zeroes. Everything in "modern" life is being taken over and controlled by ones and zeroes: digital money, pocket phones that can do pretty much anything, automobiles that drive themselves and monitor everywhere you go and everything you say and do, TVs and computers that are collecting so much information about you that AI programs know more about you and how to manipulate you than you know about yourself. If electricity suddenly quit existing, the world would have a mass die off. But a long-term worldwide power failure probably isn't going to happen because the prince of the power of the air – without electricity – loses a large segment of his ability to monitor and control as a false alpha and omega. Ones and zeroes allow him to use modern means of digital identification to control every aspect of our lives. He won't know that information instantaneously, but he can know it at the speed of light. All of the world's currencies are being converted to digital currency. How did we become powerless to resist being part of the modern digital society? It became inevitable when we inherited carnality by being lured away from a strict belief in *Thus saith the Lord*. As a result, we live in a world *obsessed* with, driven, and guided by the love of money.

The Digital Age of electricity-powered ones and zeroes becoming ubiquitous all over the world is one of the Devil's ways of trying to imitate God's all-knowing, ever-present power. It will have much to do with bringing the Antichrist to power, and the image of the Beast may be transmitted to hand-held, glowing screens by ones and zeroes.

Our lives will not be "ours" anymore. But remember, it's OK for Bible believers to have digital IDs, phones that track *everything* we do, and to no longer be allowed to *clamour* against whatever the government says – even if the government is wrong and froward. It's OK for Bible believers to be surrounded by a modern form of "Christianity" we know is horrifyingly unscriptural and blatantly anti-Christ. But if we find ourselves asked, pressured, or coerced into doing something that requires us to turn our backs on Christ, we must realize and accept the fact that the time has come for us to glorify our Saviour by walking together with Him as a lamb to the slaughter.

The Devil's control over the world is growing every day at a frightening pace...and *there is nothing we can do about that*. Our job is to believe the Bible by being doers of what it says. In that way we preserve our individual salt, which contributes to the welfare of the church, and helps our Lord win the War – *over our dead bodies if necessary*. But remember, if we find ourselves terrified, all alone with no surviving Christian fellowship, and seemingly without God (**Deut 8:2; 2 Chron 32:31**), we must draw upon our love for Him that has, over time and experiences, proven to be more meaningful, more rewarding, and more *wonderful* than the awful glimpses of ourselves (as in **Lk 22:61,62**) we've had along our Pilgrim's Progress journeys that have made verses like **2 Chron 4:16 – 5:4** take on a real and deeply-personal meaning.

In short, my brothers and sisters, the key to Christ, the key to life, is His word. And no matter what people say about "love," "Christianity," "tolerance," and "getting along," **our relationship with Christ** has become *our lives*, it has become *who we are* as we've fed on His miraculously-inerrant word. And we won't have it any other way.

...in nothing I shall be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether *it be* by life, or by death. For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain. (Phil 1:20,21)

CHAPTER 7 (14 pages)

THE ADVENT OF MERE BIBLE VERSIONS

Born again Christians have a spiritual need to feed on the word of God. Therefore, from the beginning of the New Testament era until about 1500, Christians thanked God whenever they got a chance to feed on His sacred words in handwritten manuscripts that consisted usually of one of the books of the Bible or portions thereof. Their spiritual eyes and ears worked properly, and their hearts hadn't been hardened by worldly knowledge. That gradually changed between 1000 AD and 1500 AD when events like the Crusades, the rise of Christian rationalist scholars like Peter Abelard (AOR p.H7-3), the rise of trade, the increased use of money, the destruction of the slow-lane feudalistic lifestyle, and the printing press, all combined to begin the unprecedented sixth-day catapulting of society into the fast lane of civilized sophistication in which we began to walk by sight rather than by faith – *in every way*.

In 600 AD the head bishop of the fledgling church congregation in Rome, to compete with the Greek-speaking church system centered around Constantinople, banned all Bibles that weren't in Latin. Lots of Christians who spoke different languages, when they finally heard about the decree weeks and months later, correctly reacted to it by looking at one another and saying, "I know who Christ is, and I know who the apostles are that He used to write His NT...*but who does this guy in Rome think he is?!*" And they kept right on translating whatever portions of the Bible they could get their hands on.

In 670 AD in the northern part of Scotland a tattered handwritten portion of the Latin Vulgate was translated into the old Anglo-Saxon English (also called Old English). Then an Anglo-Saxon-language copy of the Psalms was made in about 700 AD, and another Anglo-Saxon portion of the NT was copied in 735 for the Angles in northeastern England. In the 900s a couple of Old English translations of the four gospels are known to have been made. It is believed that these Anglo-Saxon Bible manuscripts later kept many local congregations (predominately in the northern reaches of the British Isles, but scattered around all areas) from being brought under the growing doctrinal control of the Catholic Church. For example, these local congregations are known to have rejected the celibacy of the priesthood, transubstantiation, the Catholic inventions about Mary, etc. – and they kept producing vernacular copies of the Bible. Over the centuries, even as the power and reach of the Roman Church grew, vernacular copies of the Bible were still produced – albeit quietly – by humble, unEnlightened men who just wanted to read and share the word of God. But denominationalism (Catholicism) was becoming more influential, as was Enlightened education.

1381 and 1384: John Wycliffe's handwritten NEW TESTAMENT and BIBLE

John Wycliffe (1330-1384) was a Roman Catholic priest who lived at a time when most people had given up trying to speak the sophisticated French and Latin of the upper classes. They were content with English, which had morphed from Anglo-Saxon Old English into Middle English. One of the reasons most people were no longer interested in speaking French and Latin was the egalitarianism of Greek philosophy had, since about 1000 AD when universities began being built, easily spread from the educated classes to the masses. I said *easily* because it's not complicated for a Naturally-carnal human being to grasp and quickly agree with the idea of equality. Equality is related to independence – which makes independence automatically contrary to *authority*...and therefore independence is related to *rebellion*. The spreading ideology of equality-based rebellion is ably demonstrated by the Magna Carta rebellion of 1215 and the Peasants' Revolt of 1381.

John Wycliffe was bright and principled...but he was also affected by the growing social culture of egalitarianism and by his education at Oxford University. (Oxford was a real hotspot for "town vs. gown" acrimony, including fatalities during riots. Wycliffe's heart was with the townies.) In the mid-1300s Wycliffe noted that copies of the Psalms in English that included *biased religious comments that told people what the Scriptures "really" said* were becoming popular among the people. Wycliffe also thought the masses had a right to speak English *no matter what the authorities wanted them to do*. And he thought the masses had a right to read the Bible in English no matter what his religious authorities to whom he'd sworn respect and obedience decreed. Therefore, Naturally enough, Father Wycliffe became a rebel. By doing that which was right in his own eyes, he became a casualty of Satan's Self-based, well-intentioned war on the word of God, and was swept along by the strong currents of Enlightened, anti-authority egalitarianism, which is the broad way that leadeth to destruction. He should have come out from his Roman masters by simply resigning from the priesthood, but Satan's alluring battle plan of go-by-the-god-of-your-belly rather than by what God says made him decide to use his Reason to fight for what he thought was right and good.

Wycliffe's life is an early indication that *a major change was happening within the Christian world*. And this change wasn't produced by one or two shockingly-horrible things; it was the result of a very subtle tidal wave of ideologically-driven conditions and events whose subtlety belied its power to affect society as a whole. Christianity was only 300 years into the sixth day of the War, and it was proudly, boldly, confidently, and defiantly energized by its well-intentioned carnal belief in the rightness and goodness of Enlightened principles – and the powerful influences of the Industrial Revolution, the Corporate Revolution, and *especially the Digital Age* were still several centuries away. Remember, Wycliffe wasn't alone: Reason was commonly used by scholars (such as Albertus Magnus) before Thomas Aquinas formally blended Reason with Christianity...and Aquinas was made a saint about the time Wycliffe was born...and William of Ockham (AOR p.H8-4) was a fellow Oxford alumnus. *What was it that was going on within Christianity that was proving to be way beyond the capabilities of intellectual giants to comprehend and resist?* It was the spiritual war on the word that was subtly weakening our abilities to walk by faith by using the forbidden fruit of equality to insolently ask – as did Satan – *Yea, hath God said?* The growing acceptance of Reason was sidetracking us from the reality, the truth, and the life-giving and life-saving literal *Thus saith the Lord*.

Ideology is what determines the course of human events. The Three Pillars of Western civilization – Alexander, Augustine, and Aquinas – established pagan Greek philosophy (of all things!) as the foundation of, well, *everything*...and brilliant men like Augustine and Aquinas who studied and taught the Bible, were *blinded* by Greek equality-based ideology. They were casualties in this spiritual war...and they didn't have to contend – like we do – with the modern two-fisted knockout power of ideology and the love of money thrust upon every facet of our lives.

One of the many minor things that affected Wycliffe was his English resentment of the fact that his Pope supported the French in the Hundred Years' War – *therefore, Wycliffe concluded, the Pope wasn't infallible*. But that was a minor

influence compared with the rising tide of the Age of Reason that was quietly but powerfully liberating priests and pewsters alike from all Godly authority by making their Self-based opinions just as good or better than the opinions, wishes, and decrees of their authorities good or bad, right or wrong. *The issue is authority!* And back in the early days of the Age of Reason that defiant independence was still unusual, shocking, and offensive to many people in society – which made Wycliffe (and other priests like Martin Luther) more bellicose: he had a chip on his shoulder, he had an axe to grind, he had a point to prove...and that point was *he was right!* He fought an eleven-year, very public fight with the Pope.

The Bible of his time was the Latin Vulgate. Wycliffe accepted it as it was – it would be another 200 years before Father Erasmus showed everybody that the Catholic Church had quietly changed Bible passages in order to “prove” some of its false doctrinal teachings. Wycliffe just wanted to make the Bible available to his fellow Englishmen in their own language (which would prove to be a good thing – see the paragraph on AOR H8-6 that contains Gen 11:1-9). So Wycliffe translated the Latin Vulgate’s NT into English (1381), and then three years later with the help of several men including his fellow priest, Father John Purvey, translated the Latin Vulgate’s OT into the first complete, handwritten manuscript of the Bible in English. It proved to be very popular.

However, scholarship was beginning to rear its ugly, ever-learning-and-never-able-to-come-to-the-knowledge-of-the-truth head: Fathers Wycliffe and Purvey became convinced that neither Wycliffe’s 1381 NT nor their 1384 whole Bible were good enough. So a revision was begun in 1388 several years after Wycliffe died. Purvey finished the revision...which contributed to the beginning of the modern Reason-based belief that *nothing* is the word of God – which is a result of the manuscript mess, the quagmire of myriad textual choices, and obvious textual errors that proved these well-intentioned efforts by scholars *had not produced the word of God*. In 1395 Purvey did *another* “new, improved” revision.

Wycliffe is important mostly because his complete Bible in English was a first. But because it was handwritten and was completed shortly before his death, it had little immediate impact outside of England. But within England it caused many people to ignore the Catholic Church’s 600 AD decree that Latin was the only language allowed for the Bible. The growing use of the vernacular language caused by Wycliffe’s English Bible resulted in panicked hysteria and paranoia in the Vatican. For example, in 1517 alone, Foxe’s *Book on Christian Martyrs* (which is not a complete record) documents the burning at the stake of seven people by the Catholic Church for teaching their children to say the Lord’s Prayer in English rather than in Latin. (How should we weigh the parents’ rebellion against their Church against the Vatican’s frowardness?)

Wycliffe’s main reason for translating the Latin Vulgate into English wasn’t for religious reasons as much as it was for social reasons; his carnality coupled with his ignorance of proper doctrine made him hope the Bible would reveal the fallibility of his Church, undermine his Church’s authority (!), and *promote social equality* (like we in the United States have – and regret). After he died, some of his followers built on his foundation by adding radical, controversial, anti-Catholic commentaries and prologues to English-language Scripture manuscripts, and these began to bear so much fruit in society that in 1408 the threatened Catholic hierarchy added to the ban on translating the Bible into English by making it a crime to even *read* it in English. The anti-Catholic, anti-authority propaganda being added to Scriptural manuscripts was an early proof of society’s growing belief in social egalitarianism; Wycliffe and his men were, for the first time in history, appealing *directly to the masses* rather than to their rulers – something Martin Luther would later emulate. With their mostly-social crusade for egalitarianism, Wycliffe and his followers didn’t really *create* a rift within the Catholic Church; they merely *participated* in a growing ideological tidal wave caused by the Enlightenment that would eventually result in the Protestant Reformation and its Greek-philosophy-based body-rules-head democratic denominations. If Wycliffe and his fellow Catholic priests wanted to avoid becoming casualties of Satan’s brilliant war on the word, they just needed to *stick with the word* by using *Thus saith the Lord* to examine themselves to see whether they were in the faith...or if they were well-intentioned-but-rebellious reprobates (2 Cor 13:5). Their actions show that Greek philosophy was turning Christianity into an equality-based humanistic crusade rather than a Christ-oriented disciplined lifestyle of walking after the Spirit by submitting to the Bible – which is why the Catholic Church was transitioning from an Augustine-based religion ruled (supposedly) by Scripture into an Aquinas-based religion ruled by Reason.

1514 and 1522: Francisco Jimenez de Cisneros’ first-printed COMPLUTENSIAN POLYGLOT BIBLE (OT & NT)

A little over a century after Wycliffe died, two major simultaneous historical events greatly affected all Bible scholars and theologians. The first event was the fall of Constantinople to the Muslims in 1453. (I tend to ignore the Muslims because their history is so predictably savage and murderous that I find it boring. But much in southern and eastern European history concerns the desperate struggles to keep them from fulfilling their religious intent to conquer and rule the world.) Because of the Muslim’s ruthless onslaught, many refugees fled west to Europe – taking their Greek Bible and their Greek philosophy manuscripts with them. The second event was the universal adoption of Gutenberg’s printing press, which did more to reveal the Bible manuscript mess and to spread Greek philosophy than anything else in history.

Some of the more popular early printing projects included Gutenberg’s Latin Vulgate Bible in 1454, a German Bible printed in 1466, the Psalms printed in Hebrew in 1477, a French Bible printed in 1478, and another French Bible printed in 1487. The complete Old Testament was printed in 1488, and a Spanish Pentateuch was printed in 1497. With the availability of different Bibles like these – and others being printed all the time – Europeans couldn’t help noticing textual differences...and arguing over them, which served to shift the historical emphasis from the Bible’s *message* to the new-and-growing scholarly interest in *textual differences*...thus diluting faith in the veracity of God’s word by changing us from faithful servants ensuring that our *deeds* conform to God’s word, into skeptical authorities whose critical *opinions* sit in judgment on God’s word. Finding “errors” to proclaim this verse or that manuscript “better” was all the rage...which brings us to Catholic Cardinal Jimenez.

Cardinal Jimenez (1436-1517) was a Catholic archbishop in Spain who began work in 1502 on his “Complutensian Polyglot.” It was named “Complutensian” because it was printed in the town of Alcala, which was called *Complutum* in ancient Roman times; and “Polyglot” because it had parallel columns of Hebrew, Aramaic (where applicable), Greek, and Latin text. The text was divided into numbered chapters that proved convenient and popular, but nobody thought to number verses yet. The very wealthy and influential Jimenez (he rubbed elbows with the Pope and the king and queen of Spain) spent a lot of his own money acquiring many of the best manuscripts and scholars for his project. Even though Jimenez had easy access to the

Vaticanus manuscript (which had been in the Vatican library since 1475), like Origen and Jerome centuries before, he and his team of Catholic scholars rejected all Alexandrian manuscripts as inferior. One of the texts we know the Polyglot scholars used was the Codex Complutensis I – so named because Jimenez purchased it. Even though the Complutensis I manuscript included parts of the Apocrypha, Jimenez and his scholars, after much deliberation, made the somewhat risky decision in the Catholic world that the Apocrypha shouldn't be part of the Bible. The Complutensis I manuscript was 500 years old when Jimenez purchased it (made in 927 AD), and its textual ancestry seems to go way back to some of the Old Latin manuscripts before Jerome's Latin Vulgate. To the disgust of modern, Alexandrian-promoting scholars, its text contained both the woman caught in adultery in John 8, and the Trinity in 1 John 5:7,8.

The Polyglot team either didn't record all of the textual sources they used, or that information has been lost, and therefore *most of the manuscripts selected for the Complutensian Polyglot and why the scholars chose them over the many other available manuscripts remains unknown*. The Polyglot scholars did record their enthusiasm about their manuscript choices, which they called "ancient and valuable." Other records show that Jimenez did consult and compare a number of manuscripts from the Vatican Library, but no details have survived. We just don't know much about many of the manuscripts sources he chose to use. For emphasis, I call these now-missing manuscript sources, "The Distinguished Lost Elite of the Manuscript Mess: The Chosen Few whose Quality caused them to be Hand-picked because they Stood Out from the Rest." My intention is to remind you that these manuscripts that are unknown to modern scholars (who deceptively speak as though these manuscripts never existed) were so impressive and pure they were deliberately chosen by Jimenez and his Polyglot team of scholars who, don't forget, had the knowledge, integrity, and strength of character to – after discussing the political fallout that might occur – unanimously agreed to *reject* the Vaticanus Alexandrian manuscript even though it was a prized possession of the Pope's Vatican Library. We'll soon see, as we continue documenting the manuscript ancestry of the King James Bible, that this now-unknown group of select Bible manuscripts (and other textual sources such as letters written by early Christian scholars and leaders) will grow larger and larger. This Complutensian Polyglot was the first of several scholar-compiled Greek New Testaments over the next 100 years that would collectively contribute to 1) the King James Bible in 1611, and then later to 2) the Greek NT texts of 1633 and 1881 that would collectively be called the "Textus Receptus."

Just to emphasize a point: There is a reason modern scholars wistfully daydream about going back to Origen's era of 200 AD and to the hundred years leading up to the King James Bible. It's because back then they realize The Distinguished Lost Elite of the Manuscript Mess were not yet lost! Modernists wish they had Origen's manuscript resources that would show them how futile textual criticism is; they wish they had the manuscript resources Cardinal Jimenez and his team of scholars had that would give them the confidence they need today to be minority voices speaking out against the Alexandrian manuscripts; and they wish they had the manuscript resources – together with God's guiding light – to be able to produce an inerrant Bible that could withstand four hundred years of irrelevant and nonsensical criticism. But they don't; they know the manuscripts existed, and they know manuscripts are sometimes lost for various reasons over the centuries. So they inwardly whine that – if only they had those lost manuscripts – they would become strong enough to speak out. But if they had faith they'd have eyes that see that the KJV isn't lost...and it's better than the Lost Elite.

Knowing the text of the Latin Vulgate had been corrupted over the centuries by his Church, Jimenez hoped his Polyglot would restore some of its credibility among scholars – and perhaps even cause a much-needed revision of the Vulgate. His Polyglot Bible did not include a Spanish-language column because he had no intention of making the Polyglot available to the general Spanish-speaking public...and because he believed using only the three "sacred languages" used on the cross of Christ – Latin, Greek, and Hebrew – would help keep the sacred text from falling into the corrupting hands of the ignorant, bumbling masses. The Polyglot turned out to be an impressive work, so much so that even Erasmus would use it to correct some of the readings in his own published Latin-Greek NT.

1514-1535: Desiderius Erasmus' first-published LATIN/GREEK NEW TESTAMENT

Erasmus (1466-1536) was a Dutch Catholic priest who was the preeminent scholar of his time. Even Cardinal Jimenez tried unsuccessfully – twice – to recruit Erasmus to work on the Complutensian Polyglot Bible in the hope of restoring the original text of the increasingly-corrupt Latin Vulgate. One of the men who greatly influenced Erasmus was **Thomas Linacre** (1460-1524), a humanist professor at Oxford who taught Erasmus. Because of the growing enthusiasm for the "original Greek" manuscripts flooding Europe from regions around Constantinople, Linacre went to Italy, studied Greek, and then established a Greek-teaching curriculum at Oxford. When he compared the Greek Bible manuscripts with the Catholic-Church-ravaged text of the Latin Vulgate, he commented about the sometimes-shocking differences by recording in his diary, "Either this [Greek Bible manuscript] is not the Gospel...or we [Latin Vulgate users] are not Christians." (I'll have an example of this when we get to William Tyndale.)

When Erasmus examined the Latin Vulgate, he, too, saw that its text had accumulated many flaws over the centuries of Catholic "improvements." He had long been an expert on the Scripture-quoting writings of ancient church scholars and leaders, whose Scripture quotations were so numerous and extensive they could be used to reconstruct *most of the New Testament from scratch*. Adding to that wealth of knowledge, he studied Greek and Latin Bible manuscripts. Then he was contacted by Cardinal Jimenez and asked to help with the Complutensian Polyglot project. That request energized Erasmus: He turned Jimenez down and began (rather hastily) his own Latin/Greek NT so readers could compare his corrected version of the Vulgate's NT with the Greek text.

He spoke with a close friend of his, **Johann Froben** (1460-1527), who was a prominent printer, publisher, and admirer of the original Latin Vulgate's **Eusebius Hieronymus** – also known as **Jerome** in English. Froben, who named his son Hieronymus after Jerome, was enthusiastic about Erasmus' project...not because Erasmus wanted it to spur corrections to the Vulgate's text, but because – since the advent of the printing press – there hadn't been any Greek New Testaments published – and being the first to do so would mean big sales now that Greek-language manuscripts were soaring in popularity among scholars. He encouraged Erasmus to complete the project as quickly as possible in order to get it published before Cardinal Jimenez finished and published his Polyglot Bible. (Jimenez had already *printed* the NT portion in 1514, but his completed Bible wasn't quite ready yet, and therefore wasn't *published* – and therefore couldn't be sold.)

At Froben's urging, Erasmus did rush. In less than a year he finished his Latin/Greek side-by-side NT and submitted it to Froben...who printed and published it right away (1516) with little or no proofreading beforehand – and none during the typesetting. Erasmus also used his fame and political clout to secure from both Emperor Maximilian and Pope Leo X a guarantee that no other Greek NT could be published for four years, during which *only* Erasmus' NT would be available to purchase. Therefore, Jimenez wouldn't be allowed to publish his work until at least 1520. However, he died a year after Erasmus published his inferior first edition, and his death delayed the full publication of the Complutensian Polyglot until 1522. Its sales never approached those of Erasmus' works.

Erasmus' **first edition** was poorly received because it had too many errors of scholarship and way too many typesetting errors. Historians try to make this first edition a big deal by stating that it was published in 1516 and the Protestant Reformation began in 1517. But the first edition didn't start the Reformation, and neither did the Ninety-five Theses Luther nailed to the church door; it was started by the growing Enlightenment equality-based ideology of anti-authority and pro-self.

Embarrassed by his first edition, Erasmus decided to try again, and his **second edition** was published in 1519 without the Trinity in 1 John 5:7,8, which contributed to this second edition, like the first, being panned by scholars. (But that didn't stop Martin Luther – who was never accused of being a first-rate scholar – from using Erasmus' second edition for his German-language NT of 1522. But in all fairness, Luther's NT wasn't intended for scholars; it was for the German masses who couldn't read the Latin Vulgate.) Erasmus tried to defend the absence of 1 John 5:7,8 by saying the Greek manuscripts he consulted didn't have it – but the evidence forced him to agree his second edition needed to be redone.

His **third edition** was published in 1522, met the expectations of scholars – including restoring 1 John 5:7,8 to its rightful place – and sales were strong. Two scholars who were impressed with his 1522 third edition included **William Tyndale** (who used it as one of the sources for his 1526 NT in English) and **Robert Stephanus** (who used it as a source for his 1550 Greek NT...which impressed the translators of both the 1560 Geneva Bible and the 1611 King James Bible).

Erasmus' **fourth edition** of 1527, which added the text of the Latin Vulgate Bible as a column that could be compared with Erasmus' corrected Latin column, was unremarkable except for the last six verses of Revelation. He only had one Greek handwritten manuscript of Revelation, and its last page (called a "leaf" in ancient manuscript language) was missing – having fallen off years before from use and age. That missing leaf contained the last six verses of Revelation. Erasmus knew from other ancient sources the missing verses belonged there, but not having a Greek manuscript that contained it, he simply translated those six known-to-be-correct verses from the Latin Vulgate Bible into Greek for his first three editions. But for this fourth edition he decided to use Cardinal Jimenez's Complutensian Polyglot, which had been published posthumously in 1522 – to rave reviews by scholars. Erasmus got a copy, found it to be as outstanding as its reputation, and copied the six Revelation verses from the Polyglot's Greek column into his fourth edition. The verses didn't change any because the Vulgate had them right all along...but since the Vulgate was losing favor with scholars, those verses now came from Cardinal Jimenez's unimpeachable source.

In 1535 Erasmus published his **fifth edition**. All it did was drop the superfluous Latin Vulgate column.

Modern scholars have had fun wasting everybody's time arguing about where Erasmus got 1 John 5:7,8. At one point, he claimed he got it from Codex Britannicus, which dates from the mid-1400s to about 1500. Scholars disdain Britannicus because its wording of 1 John 5:7,8 makes it look like it didn't come from an old Greek manuscript – it seems to have come from an Old Latin manuscript, possibly by way of Jimenez's Latin column in his 1514 printing of the NT portion of his unpublished Polyglot. It is therefore *conjectured* that Erasmus *may* have lied about Britannicus as his source because he didn't want to give Jimenez's as-yet-unpublished Polyglot any publicity or his unofficial endorsement. Other scholars' research suggests Erasmus got 1 John 5:7,8 from the ancient (200 AD) writings of early Christian scholars, with which he was so eminently familiar. The truth of 1 John 5:7,8 no longer mattered to scholars; what manuscript it came from did.

Modern scholars are also disdainful of anything they don't know and anything that isn't Hebrew or Greek. For example, one of the Greek manuscripts we already know Erasmus had, did not contain the last 6 verses in Revelation because they had flaked off and that flake was lost. But Erasmus' Greek NT not only contained the last 6 verses of Revelation, it said "book of life" (rather than *tree* of life). Scholars were unaware of any *Greek* manuscripts available to Erasmus from which he got *book of life*. The reading *book of life* does appear in Jerome's much-older Latin Vulgate Bible, so scholars therefore *guessed* Erasmus took the Latin and deceitfully translated it into Greek to make it look like he had a Greek source...when they *guess* he had none. Fact 1: They don't know all of Erasmus' manuscript and ancient Christian writings sources, but they don't like to admit that he had sources about which they know nothing. Fact 2: They don't know any of Jerome's manuscript sources, either, but they do grudgingly admit he had access to *many more ancient manuscripts* than we have today. Fact 3: Scholars have become aware in recent years of the humanly insurmountable challenge presented by the Manuscript Mess, but they rarely acknowledge it unless forced to. Fact 4: They know perfectly well that at least some of the manuscripts used by Jerome, Jimenez, and Erasmus were among "The Distinguished Lost Elite of the Manuscript Mess: The Chosen Few whose Quality caused them to be Hand-picked because they Stood Out from the Rest" ...which they try to obscure by wasting everybody's time talking about unknown sources for readings like "book of life" and "the brother of" [Goliath]. Fact 5: In the last 6 verses of Revelation in the Latin Vulgate there is a commonly-used, known-to-everybody word, *come*, that Erasmus would have back-translated into Greek by using *the normal spelling*. But that's not what happened. Erasmus' Greek text uses an uncommon Greek spelling of *come*. If Erasmus really did not have a genuine Greek manuscript with the last 6 verses of Revelation, as scholars charge, how did he know 1) about *book of life* and 2) about the rare spelling of *come*? The common Greek spelling is used the vast majority of times throughout the NT, including 4 out of 5 times in the last 6 verses of Revelation. I say again, only one time does the uncommon spelling of *come* appear in the last 6 verses of Revelation. Verse 17 uses the common spelling twice and the uncommon once, and verse 20 uses the common spelling both times. If Erasmus only had the Latin Vulgate, he could not have known about that single instance of the uncommon spelling in verse 17, because there is only one Latin spelling. That means Erasmus *did* have a genuine Greek manuscript that contained the last 6 verses. But how did he know to use *book of life* instead of *tree of life*, since *book* appears in "only" a few of the almost 6,000 Greek NT manuscripts we know about? Scholars think the *gambling odds* of the few times *book of life* appears in existing Greek manuscripts should convince (democratically speaking) us that *book* isn't valid. But *book* is used the *vast majority* of times in the 10,000 Old Latin

and Latin Vulgate manuscripts; *book* is also used in ancient other-language Bible versions; and *book* is used a number of times in the ancient writings of Christian leaders. (Note: I'm only using these examples to show how ignorant or deceitful modern scholars are; I'm not trying to make you think you should spend your valuable dark-last-days' time wading through a bunch of bullshit. *I have learned nothing important doing my research for this book*, and I pray that you'll not waste your time like I've done. Gird your loins with *Thus saith the Lord...and stick with it!*)

Frederick Nolan (1784-1864) was a British theologian, Greek and Latin scholar, and historian who spent 28 years researching liberal scholars' whinings about trivial matters about the manuscript origins of the Textus Receptus. His detailed findings made him conclude that it is foolish to suggest men like Jimenez and Erasmus, who had well-deserved and long-standing reputations as top-tier scholars, were suddenly afflicted with rare mental conditions that made them abandon their characteristic mental discipline and intellectual clarity when searching for and selecting manuscript sources and textual readings. He said these noble men of proven character had already discovered that only two classes of manuscripts exist, those that generally agree with the Byzantine Majority text, and those that agree with the Alexandrian Minority text...and based on tangible evidence, Jimenez and Erasmus consistently and logically accepted the former and rejected the latter – and they did so not because they were ignorant of the Alexandrian readings, but *because they went with better readings*. For them to have done otherwise would have been hugely and suspiciously out of character.

By their fruits ye shall know them: When we look back at the hundred years during which a number of top scholars researched and put together a collection of Greek manuscripts that would later be termed “the Textus Receptus,” it becomes evident that all of those manuscripts have textual agreements that link them to the works of Jimenez and Erasmus. Liberal Alexandrian-manuscript advocates try to avoid the amazingly-consistent texts produced over a century by men whose source manuscripts varied. The textual consistency is obviously not the product of low-life dullards who mindlessly “copied” those who went before. On the contrary, their works are indicative of men whose scholarship was laudable, and whose different manuscript sources were *obviously and notably superior* to those used by modern scholars for modern Bible versions. How can we say that? By examining their fruits. The works of the scholars who produced the Textus Receptus have the kind of enduring consistency and quality modern Bible versions lack. Indeed, *modern versions are proof that the manuscripts and methods of textual criticism so favored today are incapable of turning the manuscript mess into any semblance of enduring quality – which is why an unsatisfied marketplace calls for new, revised, better, improved Bible versions every other month*. The more you look into the manuscript mess and the Bible versions that have emerged from it, the more you conclude that the difference between the quality and consistency of the manuscripts and versions that have emerged from the Textus Receptus, and the lack of quality and consistency of those that have emerged from the Alexandrian manuscripts *isn't so much the people who worked on them as it is the manuscript sources they used*.

The sad reality is that Jimenez and Erasmus undertook their projects solely because the veracity of the word of God was being questioned among scholars. What happened to cause that? It was a simple matter of *Yea, hath God said?* The message conveyed to us from God has always been paramount. It didn't matter if it was conveyed by Adam, by Job, by Moses, by Jeremiah, or by Peter and Paul. It didn't matter what language they used...as long as the message got across. But the *Yea, hath God said* effect of the manuscript mess allowed scholars to shift their attention from the *message*, to whether or not the text should say supersubstantial bread or daily bread; tree of life or book of life; and even thee or you. And then when we wannabe scholars decided we had the prerogative to decide if this word or that word was “correct” or “better” than some other similar word, we had transformed ourselves from subserviently-obedient *servants* glorifying God – into independent *authorities* sitting in judgment on whether or not God really used a word or not. And in this way we subverted our humble faith in God and His word.

Yes, I am aware that the thousand-year reign of the Latin Vulgate had to come to an end because of the deliberate corruption it suffered at the hands of agenda-driven “revisors.” And, yes, I can see how God used the manuscript mess and the well-intentioned men who produced the Bible versions prior to the King James Bible to test our faith...and patience. But I'm focusing on the fact that when the KJV came out the manuscript mess no longer mattered, because the old ERROR manuscripts became irrelevant. And yet way too many Christians are having their attention diverted from the inerrant purity of both the words and the message of the KJV by the Satanic *Yea, hath God said* tactics of theology.

For now, all I want to establish is the (perhaps somewhat nit-picking) fact that Wycliffe, Jimenez, and Erasmus were *scholars* who swallowed the hook of *knowledge*, and they were reeled in by the Devil and fooled into not trusting the word of God. They were like many (not all) scholars **who depended on scholarship**. And they were unlike most humble non-scholars whose slow-lane lives kept them “out from among them” – thereby helping them preserve their salt-savored **faith in God and His written word**.

The Complutensian Polyglot *alone* testifies to the fact that 500 years ago all Catholic and Protestant scholars who examined the Alexandrian text *completely rejected it*. If it had been halfway decent, some of history's brightest minds wouldn't have rejected it. When the Polyglot is put *together* with the Erasmus Greek/Latin NT, we see that even though they were very similar in the messages they had in all of their editions, they all also had minor *word* differences. Over the next hundred years we'll see that pattern continue as the different manuscripts put together by different men become *collectively* named “THE Textus Receptus” – even though they all had (relatively few) differences from one another. In other words, what we know as *The Textus Receptus* is a myth no matter how you look at it. To wit:

1. No manuscript in the Textus Receptus grouping is inerrant.
2. No two Textus Receptus manuscripts completely agree with each other.
3. The KJV did *not* come from the Textus Receptus – which we'll get to.
4. Those who reject the KJV and “prefer” the Textus Receptus because it represents the “Majority” or “Byzantine” textual family, are just as aware of the errors in the Textus Receptus as are those who “prefer” the error-ridden Alexandrian “Minority” manuscript family...but it doesn't bother them because they do not believe God's word – as He defines it – exists, and they warn people against “worshipping” any Bible version...even though none of us knows anybody who actually does worship a Bible version. (Note: Online there are seeming KJV-only websites. But some of them promote a

“2016 King James Bible” over the AV1611. They claim their translation is faithful to the Greek-language Textus Receptus/Majority/Byzantine “textual tradition” because it only updates the “vocabulary and spelling” of those Greek-language manuscripts...as if you and I care about Greek spelling and vocabulary! But they have quietly changed English words in the 1611 KJV text they believe to be errors. For example, they have removed *Jesus* from Act 7:45 and inserted *Joshua* – just like many of the modern versions do, as covered in AOR p.D22-8; D23-4.)

Neither Erasmus nor Luther was the root of the Protestant Reformation. Luther was a catalyst, but he wasn’t the root cause. The seeds of the Protestant Reformation were sown long before either of these men showed up. The main force behind the Reformation was a social one – the growing agreement with Greek Reason’s belief in the sovereignty of the individual, which is the mortal enemy of authority. People were losing their *ability* to submit to anything – including religious and Scriptural authority. *Faith* itself was beginning to be subverted by Logic and Reason. There had been voices gently advocating reform within the Roman Church for many years prior to Luther, but it took the Enlightenment two centuries to begin having widespread success subverting the supremely-important Scripture-based ideology that had held Christianity and society together since the beginning of time – authority. One of the subtle effects Reason was having within Christianity since about 1300 AD was a quietly-growing movement among Christian scholars to question the authority of Scripture – no matter what Bible version or old manuscript was being read. For example, today theologians are quibbling over “went into the temple” vs “went into the temple of the LORD,” which *never* would have bothered rank and file Christians centuries ago. Why? *Because they say the exact same thing; God’s message is clear to those with eyes that see and ears that hear.* But to those who have lost faith in the authority of God and His word, they have the independent arrogance to pompously whip out their layman’s aid to decide what *they think* God really said – which means they are independent heads, carnal enemies of the Headship of God and the authority of His word.

Sixty-one years passed between the advent of the printing press (1455) and the publication of Erasmus’ Greek text of the New Testament in 1516. During those sixty-one years, at least one hundred printings of Jerome’s Vulgate were published. It was a war between what the Bible *says*, and mankind’s Natural inclination to believe the Enlightenment’s gospel of *self-evidence*. During these 61 years the flood of Greek-language manuscripts that were brought to Europe by Christians fleeing Muslims who were attacking Constantinople caused scholars to have a Natural Mars’-Hill attraction and fascination with *something new*: The Latin-language Vulgate had been the Bible for 1,100 years, and Latin had been accepted as the language of religion and scholarship the whole time...which made them “old” – as in, *familiarity breeds contempt*. The fascination with these “new” Greek-language manuscripts slowly made the Greek language begin its rise to dominance over Latin among more and more scholars, who then began to study Greek so they could read it. When Erasmus (and, to a lesser degree, Jimenez) used Greek-language texts to show what corruption the Catholic Church had “revised” into the Vulgate, they unknowingly began a subtle process of establishing Greek-language NT manuscripts as *somehow superior to NT manuscripts in all other languages*. Because of this specious-but-growing emphasis on “original Greek” manuscripts, we shall see in centuries to come liberal scholars devalue ancient Latin and Syrian Bible manuscripts, as well as early Christian correspondences that quote Scripture verses, as “untrustworthy” *if they did not appear in the few extant Greek-language, Apocrypha-containing Alexandrian manuscripts*. This Mars’-Hill infatuation with Greek manuscripts would grow into an irrational obsession that would produce two interesting results:

1. The intentions of both Jimenez and Erasmus were drowned out by the new obsession with Greek: They both wanted their manuscripts to result in a proper, accurate revision of the Vulgate, thus restoring its faded luster. The *only* purpose of their Greek columns was to add credence to their *Latin* columns...but everybody ignored the *Latin*, lost interest in the *Vulgate*, and began referring to Erasmus’ *Latin/Greek* manuscript as his “*Greek* manuscript.”
2. Modern scholars, while hypocritically praising men like Origen, Jerome, Jimenez, and Erasmus, would *completely ignore* the fact that those brilliant men valued and used *all* of the various sources of Scripture...with a *single* exception: those brilliant men of old *universally scorned the Greek Alexandrian manuscripts*. Modern apostasy has appallingly and inexcusably taken the sensible-and-consistent methods, conclusions, and results of 1,700 years of scholars...and turned them upside down.

1522-1534: MARTIN LUTHER’S GERMAN BIBLE

Just as Father Wycliffe used his Bible to show Catholic pewsters he was right in his fight with the Pope and other authorities in the Catholic Church, so, too, did Father **Martin Luther** (1483-1546). Father Luther used Erasmus’ 1519 second edition Latin/Greek NT as the basis of his 1522 German NT...followed by the complete Bible in 1534. His German Bible was a huge commercial success among the general population, but it was a different story with scholars; Luther’s *OT* portion (which was translated by others, not by Luther) achieving *some acceptance* among scholars...but the *NT* was scorned. Nevertheless, people did learn from Luther’s Bible. For example, when previously-celibate German bishops who couldn’t read Latin, read Luther’s German Bible, they began marrying.

Most historical sources say, *without specificity*, Luther used Erasmus’ *Greek* NT when making his German NT. But they may say that only because most people sloppily refer to Erasmus’ two-columned Latin/Greek NT as “Erasmus’ *Greek* NT” ...they either ignore or don’t know Erasmus’ NT was also in Latin, which Luther *could* read. A few sources do specifically say Luther used Erasmus’ *Latin* column for his German NT. Combine that with the fact that, while Luther could have done most of his NT translating because of Erasmus’ *Latin* column, the fact that Erasmus made *no Latin column of the OT*, and the fact that Luther needed other men to translate his German OT, suggest that Luther – the man who was so fond of talking about “the languages” – may have lacked translator proficiency in both of the very languages, Greek and Hebrew, he referred to.

Luther was opposed to the Catholic doctrine of salvation by works. Combine that with his failure to understand the Biblical difference between *works* and *works of the law* (see AOR chapter D20) and you’ll see 1) why he rejected as Scripture the books of Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation (as exemplified by **KJV Jam 2:24** *Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only*), and 2) why he preached salvation by *faith alone*. In fact, he was so zealous about faith alone that where the Bible says “faith without,” he changed it to say “faith alone without.” No other Bible translation committee in history found any justification to add the word *alone* to the words already existing in Romans 3:28. That’s but one of the

reasons scholars gave “some acceptance” to the committee work on Luther’s OT – but not to Luther’s work on the NT. No matter what Luther thought, he shouldn’t have added to the word of God.

KJV Rom 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

MLV Ro 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith alone without the deeds of the law.

1526-1534: William Tyndale’s first printed ENGLISH NEW TESTAMENT

Father William Tyndale (1494-1536) was educated at Oxford, and, like Wycliffe, believed society needed some liberating from the rule of the Catholic Church. He thought Wycliffe’s English NT had been a good start at showing how wrong Catholicism was, so Father Tyndale decided to produce the whole Bible in English. His first-edition NT was completed in 1526. Then he revised his NT, and only completed half of the OT in his planned second edition of 1534 (which in 1537 became the basis of the Matthew’s Bible). Tyndale, in keeping with his desire to level society, spread social egalitarianism, and attack the Catholic Church, put liberal activist comments/notes in his Bible that were considered heretical to unEnlightened Christians. (Half of Tyndale’s notes were copied directly from Luther’s radical notes in the German Bible. Interestingly enough, the always-Catholic Tyndale rejected the Catholic doctrine that at communion you were literally eating the body of Christ – and Luther, who quit Catholicism, continued to believe the Catholic communion doctrine.) When John Calvin used much of the accurate and eloquent textual wording in Tyndale’s Bible for the Geneva Bible, he also realized Tyndale’s/Luther’s notes were an effective way of telling Christians what to believe, so Enlightened notes and explanations were included in the Geneva Bible.

Tyndale spent much of his 42-year life hiding from and fighting his Church superiors. Before he was able to finish the second half of the OT in his 1534 edition, he was caught hiding in Belgium, excommunicated for producing a Bible in English, tied to a stake, strangled to death, and then burned. (Miles Coverdale and John Rogers finished Tyndale’s OT, so calling it “Tyndale’s Bible” is not technically accurate.) A few months before Tyndale was executed by the Catholic Church, England’s King Henry VIII split from Catholicism and legalized previously-outlawed Bibles in English. That one-two punch by King Henry produced an impotent rage among authorities in the Roman Church...and may have caused Tyndale’s “double” execution. Catholic officials did not let their prisoner, Tyndale, know about King Henry’s actions, which is why Tyndale’s last words were, “Lord, open the King of England’s eyes.”

Tyndale mostly used Erasmus’ excellent 1522 third edition Latin/Greek NT for his NT. His secondary sources included Jimenez’ Complutensian Polyglot and Luther’s German Bible. The combination of Erasmus’ superb scholarship and Tyndale’s gifted ability to eloquently word phrases in English (ignoring some of his wordings known to be incorrect translations) made Tyndale’s Bible an absolute must for all subsequent Bible translation committees – including modern Alexandrian-text-based versions. Remember: 1) Most of the readings in the Alexandrian Minority text and the Byzantine Majority text are in agreement. 2) Therefore, Erasmus’ excellent third edition was and is as close to a go-to reference as you could get for both KJV-era and modern-era translation committees. 3) Erasmus’ third edition was the basis for most of Tyndale’s work, which meant he was using an excellent and accurate source. 4) Tyndale had an obvious talent for English wording. 5) Therefore, when translating committees past and present finish figuring out the meaning and message of Greek passages, they often decide to use Tyndale’s wording *because it combines accuracy with eloquence*. Sadly, you will find modern scholars wrongly saying the KJV translators did very little translating because – modernists claim – the translators did so much “copying” from Tyndale’s Bible...and then these deceitful men will recommend a modern version *without telling you it also uses many of Tyndale’s accurate and eloquent readings*.

Father Tyndale was a scholar, and he was fluent in eight languages. When he was translating the OT Hebrew into English, he noted that Hebrew and English share an interesting quality: they both easily, clearly, and efficiently impart a clear understanding of the intended information, and the reverse is true in that thoughts and descriptions are easily put into appropriate words in those two languages. Because of this quality, Tyndale often said Hebrew is much easier to translate into English than into any other language.

Earlier, we noted that Erasmus’ Latin/Greek NT was necessary because, as his professor recorded in his diary, the wording of the Latin Vulgate had been so tailored to Catholic doctrine (which had intensified during the buildup to the Protestant Reformation) that it was doctrinally no longer Christian. That’s why Erasmus did his NT in both Latin and Greek; his emphasis was on using the correct Latin translation of the Greek to show *the corrupted Vulgate needed an overhaul*. Look at the different use of present and past tenses in the following examples of Hebrews 1:3:

Catholic/Latin Vulgate Heb 1:3 ...making purgation of sins, sitteth...

Tyndale NT Heb 1:3 ...hath in his own person purged our sins, and is sitten...

King James Heb 1:3 ...when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down...

The Catholic-revised Vulgate’s use of the present tense “making purgation,” together with the absence of a word like “after” to establish the proper past-tense context – such as saying “after making purgation” – allows the survival of the Catholic doctrine of Christ’s ongoing sacrificial death during every Catholic mass. *No verse wording like this exists in any Bible version – except in Catholic ones*. (The Catholic Douay-Rheims Version, for example, is incorrectly worded *exactly* as the Catholic/Vulgate above.) That is why men of integrity like Cardinal Jimenez, Father Erasmus, and Professor Linacre wanted the Latin Vulgate restored to the accuracy it had back in Jerome’s day.

The above Scripture examples demonstrate that the KJV translators sometimes came up with better ways to articulate the message of Scripture than did Tyndale, and if they couldn’t they were not averse to using Tyndale’s wording or something similar. In the final analysis, Tyndale’s Bible text can be called *very good* when it comes to accuracy – because of Erasmus’ ability; and it can be called *excellent* and *enduring* because of its memorable wording that is still used today. However, the fact that it included “teaching” prefaces, notes, and comments – many of them argumentative, was a distinct weakness it shared with Luther’s German Bible and many versions up to and including Calvin’s Geneva Bible. Remember, the Protestant Reformation of this era was a vicious and bloody war that often used the Bible as political, social, and religious propaganda.

1535, 1537, and 1539: Miles COVERDALE’S BIBLE, the MATTHEW’S BIBLE of John Rogers, and Coverdale’s GREAT BIBLE

Miles Coverdale (1488-1569) worked as an assistant to Father William Tyndale. Coverdale was weak-willed, unmanly, and drifted through life. He studied philosophy-based theology at Cambridge, became an Augustinian friar and a big

fan of Augustine...but because his personal Bible was John Calvin's Geneva version, he allowed Calvin's infamous Geneva Bible's copious "teaching" notes and comments to gradually convert him to Calvinism. He fled from England when King Henry VIII was a Catholic, returned when Henry became a Protestant, fled again when Catholic bloody Mary became queen, and returned after her death.

John Rogers (1505-1555) was an Englishman who quit Catholicism after meeting the anti-Catholic activist, Father William Tyndale – even though Tyndale never quit Catholicism (perhaps so he wouldn't lose his Catholic financial benefits for past services rendered). After Father Tyndale was strangled/burned by his church, Rogers helped Coverdale finish Tyndale's second edition and publish it as the Matthew's Bible in 1537. When bloody Mary became queen, Rogers publicly preached against Catholicism, was arrested, and in 1555 became the first of hundreds of Protestants burned at the stake by Queen Mary. These gruesome deaths caused many English Protestants to flee to places like Geneva, which helped prompt the creation of the Geneva Bible in 1560.

Coverdale Bible of 1535: When Tyndale was arrested, Coverdale and Rogers finished the last quarter of Tyndale's Bible and published it shortly before his execution. The Coverdale Bible, therefore, was the first complete Bible in English to be published. Its Enlightened comments and notes, although not as radical as Tyndale's, were offensive enough to keep his Bible from being sanctioned by the king.

Matthew's Bible of 1537 was mostly a compilation by John Rogers, because he was not a translator, and he did very little work on "his" Bible; he merely assembled the work of Tyndale, Erasmus, Luther, and Coverdale. Rogers named his compilation the Matthew's Bible because he didn't want to be arrested, and the anonymity emboldened him to add copious inflammatory notes. He added Job to Luther's list of illegitimate books of the Bible. After Bloody Mary became queen, it only took her two years to find, capture, and burn John Rogers at the stake.

The Great Bible of 1539: Neither the king nor his bishops were happy with the quality of the existing English Bibles and the notes they contained. King Henry VIII wanted all of England's churches to have a pulpit Bible. But the new Church of England was in disarray; it had new "Protestant" priests, many of whom still wanted to be Catholic, and it had no established hierarchy, which caused it to take the easy course and give the job of translating a new version to the weak-willed Miles Coverdale. Even though the resulting pulpit-sized Great Bible did look "official" in church, and even though it had all comments and notes removed, the final product used the same hodge-podge of sources, including the Catholic-corrupted Latin Vulgate that had been used for the Coverdale Bible and Matthew's Bible. It was a decent effort, but nobody was excited about it because the Greek and Hebrew manuscripts flooding Europe, and the new Bibles being published every other year were edging people closer to thinking the "Holy Bible" was but another "mere version" in an unending succession of different versions that attempted to improve the text...and try to clean up the usual, unending typesetting mistakes.

Coverdale knew little Hebrew and Greek, so he relied heavily on Latin renderings and on Luther and Tyndale's works. Coverdale established the precedent of separating the Apocrypha from the Old Testament by putting it in a non-Scripture section. Like his friend, Tyndale, he was gifted with English phraseology, and improved some of Tyndale's prose. Coverdale was also known for his interesting sermons, and his works contributed to the wording in both the Geneva and King James Bibles.

Several years after the Great Bible came out, the bloody conflict of the Protestant Reformation, together with activist bishops in England who wanted the Church of England more Catholicized, resulted in an effort to have a new English version created that was faithful to the Catholic-corrupted Latin Vulgate. King Henry VIII, who hated the social-activist notes in all the earlier English versions, reacted by ordering all Latin Vulgate Bibles to be collected and destroyed – which is why so few copies of them exist today. Also, because the Great Bible had no notes, a fairly-accurate text, and had restored the books of Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation to the Scripture part of the Bible, it was decided to leave the Great Bible in place. It lasted for less than thirty years.

1545: The Catholic "Counter-Reformation" to the Protestant Reformation's emphasis on the Bible

Anti-Catholicism activists such as Father Wycliffe, Father Tyndale, Miles Coverdale, and John Rogers; and pro-Catholicism loyalists who correctly recognized the need for an accurate Bible, such as Cardinal Jimenez and Father Erasmus, all contributed to an exodus from the Catholic Church. It got so bad the Vatican held a series of meetings to discuss ways to counteract the Protestant Reformation. The main problem as they saw it was the spreading of the word of God. They had already tried banning Bibles in the vernacular so their parishioners couldn't read Scripture, they had excommunicated anti-Catholic activists, and they had been burning Bibles and the people who promoted them. But nothing worked; the Bible continued to spread.

To deal with the growing problem, the Vatican convened the **Council of Trent** in 1545 to officially launch its Counter-Reformation. One of the more surprising actions it took that shows how panicked and angry the Vatican was, is what it did to one of its brightest minds, Father Erasmus. Both Cardinal Jimenez and Erasmus had been dead for over a decade, but it was Erasmus who was being continually lauded by Protestants for his Latin/Greek NT that revealed how much the Vatican had corrupted Jerome's Latin Vulgate over the centuries with "revisions" that supported false Catholic teachings. Yes, Jimenez's Complutensian Polyglot had also revealed the errors in the Vulgate, but his Polyglot got relatively little attention because Erasmus' NT was published first. Also, because of the high praise scholars had for Erasmus' NT, interest had grown for some of his other less-well-known writings. In them, Erasmus had been quietly trying to help Catholicism correct its corruption and incorrect doctrines such as Christ's repeated death at every mass, confession, the Pope's rule over every Catholic Church in the world, and the requirement that priests be celibate. Therefore, even though Erasmus was a favorite of Pope Leo X (1475-1521), and even though Erasmus had dedicated his NT to him, the new Pope, Paul IV, in one of his first actions at the Council of Trent, shockingly pronounced Erasmus a heretic and banned all of his writings.

Among the myriad mystical organizations and murderous methods Rome came up with to counter Protestantism's emphasis on Holy Scripture, those that were most lasting and most effective were related to Thomas Aquinas' mixing Reason and religion. Catholicism had already transitioned from an Augustine-based religion (using *Scripture* to formulate and defend Catholic doctrine) to an Aquinas-based religion (using *theology* to formulate and defend Catholic doctrine), but that was

primarily directed at scholars because they were the ones who debated issues. Now, however, it wasn't just scholars leaving the Church; it was all levels of society – *and their main reason for leaving was the Bible!* Therefore, the Catholic Jesuit organization and many other “orders” quickly began establishing educational schools and institutions all over the world to teach subsequent generations that using Reason and theology to subvert the plain wording of *Thus saith the Lord* was right and necessary to find the truth and to avoid Dark-Age ignorance and superstition. The irony of this – and the brilliance and subtility of Satan's war on the word – was the fact that all the Vatican was doing was more quickly and obviously spreading among Bible believers *the very same Reason that Protestant “reformers” were already spreading*. In other words, the Vatican realized its main enemy was/is *the literal word of God*, and the Vatican realized *its most effective weapon against Scripture was/is Reason*...so it set about deliberately and formally weaponizing Reason by promoting *theology* because:

1. The carnal mind is *enmity (violent hatred)* against God because *it is not and cannot be subject* to the law/word of God (Rom 8:7), and
2. If you take Reason out of theology you've abandoned carnality and have turned to the faith-building simplicity of *reading and believing* the word of God – which meant *Reason is theology's essential appeal*; it is what gives theology its *pride-building, humanistic self-evident “sophistication”* that blinds its adherents to the fact that it is undermining their *belief in Scripture*...which meant Rome *needed* theology in its war on the word of God.
3. Because Reason is the essence of theology, and because Reason/carnality is *by definition enmity against God*, and *is not and cannot be subject* to the law/word of God (Rom 8:7), theology makes its adherents independent heads who – rather than submit to what it *says* – exalt self above God by *deciding* what Scripture *really means* and whether or not it is valid and trustworthy. I say again: When Rome's burning people and Bibles changed nothing, it turned to *theology*, which is the tactic Satan used against Eve when he had her use her Reason to see if she thought the forbidden fruit would *really* be bad for her. Simply stated: theology's anti-Bible weapon is “*what-do-you-think*” *Reason*. Just take Reason out of theology and *you've become a Bible believer* whose faith-based read-it-and-believe-it literal interpretation makes the Bible clear and consistent.
4. By its fruits ye shall know *theology undermines faith in what God plainly says*, which is defined as *rebellion against God* (1 Sam 15:22,23; Jer 28:15,16; 29:31,32). Theology is a thinly-disguised wolf in sheep's clothing.

Aquinas' blending of Greek philosophy's Reason with Christianity, which caused Reason to spread to all of society, was and is the most effective and far-reaching tool of the Devil in this spiritual war. His other tactics, as bad as they are, can be overcome and/or avoided by sticking with *Thus saith the Lord*. Theology is designed to subvert the word of God, and, beginning in the 1500s, it was weaponized by the Catholic Church. Thomas Aquinas' teachings are still eminently important and *mandatory* today, as stated in a 1914 encyclical sent by the Pope to all bishops around the world: “The [teachings] in the philosophy of St. Thomas are *not to be placed in the category of opinions* capable of being debated one way or another, but *are to be considered as the foundations* upon which the whole science of natural and divine things is based.” The Catholic Counter-Reformation against the Bible is still going on...and it has caused Catholicism and society to become wackier and wackier. We'll get into more of this Catholic Counter-Reformation when we get to the Douay-Rheims Bible of 1582.

1546-1551: Robert Stephanus' editions of the Greek New Testament

Robert Stephanus (1503-1559) was a French Catholic scholar and printer who converted to Protestantism. His name is Stephanus in Latin, Stephens in English, and Estienne in French. His first and second Greek-language editions of the NT were published in 1546 and 1549. They were taken from Jimenez's highly-respected Complutensian Polyglot and the Erasmus NT. But it was his third and fourth editions that really put Stephanus on the map.

His third edition of 1550, in addition to the Complutensian Polyglot and the Erasmus NT, used as source texts 16 other *known* Greek manuscripts and two other manuscripts that are *lost* – the oldest that we know of (Codex Bezae) dates back to 1,100 years before Stephanus to the time of Jerome! In other words, Stephanus used some stellar manuscripts, which we know because for the first time in history, he enumerated the manuscripts he used...and he included some *alternate readings from them*. Because Stephanus' text and sources are so impressive, modernists despise it. For example, one of their favorite targets is the fact that *Luke 17:36* appears in Stephanus' text:

Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

Yes, the verse is in the ancient Codex Bezae Greek manuscript, and, yes, it's in *all* manuscripts that have *Mat 24:40* (which says the same thing), and it's in *all* 10,000 ancient Old Latin manuscripts as far back as the 300s, and it's in *all* Syriac manuscripts (between 300 to 400 of them) from the regions around Antioch, the oldest of which date back to about 400, and it's in *most* of the early Latin Vulgates. So, even though *everybody* knows Christ really did say it, it *might* not belong in *Luke* because it's *not* in a valued *Greek* fragment (P75, which has part of Luke and John) that some think might be older than Codex Bezae and therefore might be “more accurate” than Codex Bezae. It doesn't matter to modernists that many, many ancient manuscripts *from different geographic regions* include *Luke 17:36*...if those manuscripts aren't in *Greek*. I say again, the Dead Sea Scrolls proved that the “older is better” theory is Dead Wrong, and the Manuscript Mess has proven over and over that we don't have a clue what we're talking about. The hypocrisy and inconsistency of modern scholars is shown in the fact that they *love* the old Syriac manuscripts because it is believed most of the books of the NT were written in that region by the apostles, which means manuscripts from that area are generally considered more accurate than manuscripts from other regions. But the fact that *every* Syriac NT *does contain* *Luke 17:36* is *ignored* – because of a *single* ancient *Greek* manuscript fragment that doesn't have it.

You and I would probably like it if *Luke 17:36* appeared in the Complutensian Polyglot, Erasmus' NT, Wycliffe's NT, and the Tyndale, Coverdale, and Matthew's Bibles. But it doesn't. Interestingly enough, it *is* in Coverdale's 1539 Great Bible. I say *interesting* because the Codex Bezae manuscript with *Luke 17:36* that was used by Stephanus for his NT, didn't show up in history until 1545...so it looks like a manuscript that Coverdale did *not* have for his earlier two Bibles, he later found and used to include *Luke 17:36* in his Great Bible. And this manuscript contains the same *Luke 17:36* that was in Stephanus'

manuscript. That's all we know...and it testifies to the impenetrable nature of the Manuscript Mess and to the fact that there were so many manuscripts used prior to the AV1611 that have since vanished from history. From the Great Bible on, all Bibles either include Luke 17:36 or have a hugely-understated footnote that says "*many*" manuscripts (tens of thousands!) have it.

Manuscript Mess fact: If we closely examine Codex Bezae and the P75 fragment (and most manuscripts) we're going to find a few readings that, taken by themselves, could be used to "discredit" the manuscript. These readings are there because of things like human copying errors (a very common error that is often overlooked), human bias, and text taken from poor manuscripts. Both conservatives and liberals, therefore, have plenty of ammo to defend their favorite manuscripts – as long as they ignore the flaws in those manuscripts...and hope their opponents don't know about them. The Manuscript Mess is a mess because it has manuscripts with missing words, missing sections, different readings, missing manuscripts (that we know scholars actually used), and manuscripts that consist of a mixed bag of readings from different geographic regions, different original languages, and even different centuries. The reason all Bible versions (but one) have errors is they were put together by human beings, and even the smartest and well-intentioned editors and translators had to contend with the humanly-impossible task of trying to find conclusive textual finality and certainty in the Manuscript Mess. The fact that the Manuscript Mess is unfathomable, has – since the end of the 1900s – been recognized, proven by computer analysis, and quietly accepted by scholars and theologians...who continue to publicly pretend we're still in the golden age of theology of the mid-1900s by marketing new, known-to-be "mere" Bible versions. All of the above is why the historically unprecedented inerrancy of the King James Bible – the only Bible version or manuscript known to modern man to have a flawless text – is reassuring to Bible believers who have actionable faith in God and in the way He defines His word. *The King James Bible isn't humanly possible. It is unprecedented.* It is a *Godsend* in these dark last days to counteract the increasingly-overwhelming weapons Satan is using in his war on the word that have made so many Christians *afraid* to have the Scripture-based faith to believe in God's inerrancy.

Stephanus' fourth edition contained the same text as his famous third edition, but the fourth included verse numberings for the first time in history. It is believed that Stephen Langton (of Magna Carta infamy) was the first one to divide the NT into numbered chapters in about 1246. Then in 1445 a Jew, Mordecai Nathan, divided the OT into numbered chapters, and then later he and a friend added *verse* numbers to the OT. And Stephanus completed the Bible's numbering in 1551. The numberings were always very popular when they came out because they made "here a little, and there a little" study quicker and easier, and they made spoken and written references easier.

It is laudable that Stephanus made notations of his sources and of some available alternate readings. But his notes were rudimentary, incomplete, and therefore leave us wondering what other readings his now-lost manuscripts contained. Nevertheless, he is appreciated for starting a trend to record info about his sources.

His third and fourth editions were highly praised by scholars and greatly used for New Testament texts. For example, the 1557 NT of the Geneva Bible used Stephanus' Greek NT as a source...and it included his popular verse numbers.

Because of the source notations Stephanus made for his third edition, we can add two more manuscripts to "The Distinguished Lost Elite of the Manuscript Mess: The Chosen Few whose Quality caused them to be Hand-picked because they Stood Out from the Rest" that definitely existed at one time...may still exist...and are waiting for God's own timing for them to be "discovered" again...and that modern scholars ignore because those now-lost manuscripts are proof that when theologians make pompous decrees about...pretty much *everything* – they're just making ignorance-based guesses soaked in anti-KJV bias because the AV1611's inerrancy makes the Manuscript Mess irrelevant, makes all old manuscripts irrelevant, makes it obvious that theology has always been wrong and harmful to Christianity, and has sharply reduced the tremendous financial profits from the sale of mere Bible versions, layman's aids, and other harmful theological works.

1565: Theodore Beza's GREEK NEW TESTAMENT

Theodore Beza (1519-1605) was a French Catholic who converted to Protestantism, moved to Geneva, studied under the Enlightened John Calvin, and became Calvin's successor when he died. Beza's most important work was his 1565 Greek NT. Some of Beza's sources included Stephanus' 1551 Greek NT (which used some of the Distinguished Lost Elites of the Manuscript Mess) with verse numbers, Jimenez' Complutensian Polyglot, Erasmus' Latin/Greek NT (which used the Distinguished Lost Elites), and various other manuscripts, some of which were from the regions around Antioch, Syria. An interesting fact emerges with Beza's work: All of the varied manuscript sources (including the Lost Elites) used by those who preceded him, together with the fact that Beza's own sources included Syrian- and Arabic-language New Testaments, resulted in something previously unknown: they produced texts that had very few substantive differences from each other. The so-called "Greek" NT text of the Bible (so-called because of its many other-language contributions) – after so many scholars worked with so many varied manuscripts, and who then evaluated each other's finished works – had become essentially established, settled, finalized. No, it wasn't perfect, but it was as close to perfection as it could humanly get. (I say again, this underscores how deceitful it is for scholars to pretend manuscripts in languages other than Greek should be viewed as inferior.) From here on, there would only be occasional minor word changes. The text of all modern Bible versions, while not without flaws, is basically settled, and therefore each new version – for all of its marketing hype – merely uses different words to say essentially the same thing they've all said for centuries (ignoring the modern trend to use wacko renderings because *they can't be proven to be incorrect*). Back in Beza's day, the constant nit-picking and useless bickering by scholars and theologians about this word and that word (1 Tim 6:4) had become the status quo among most of the "educated elite" ...and it has continued.

The 1572 French Catholic massacre of French Huguenot Protestants affected Beza; it caused him to *decide*. That's right, he used his Reason to decide the Bible doctrine of submission to all rulers – even froward ones, was wrong. He began teaching it was Christian to resist froward rulers – even violently if you think it's necessary. It was Beza who taught rebellion to Andrew Melville (AOR p.H10-5), who became a pain in King James' royal posterior.

1560: THE GENEVA BIBLE

In England, King Henry VIII had destroyed all Bibles except for the Great Bible, which was the only one without subversive Enlightened notes. The Great Bible was only published in the huge lectern format because King Henry VIII didn't want the masses to have a Bible. And when Queen Elizabeth took over, she didn't care enough about religion to pay attention to what was going on in her kingdom. Therefore, the Enlightened Protestants in Geneva, including John Calvin, Theodore

Beza, John Knox, and Knox's protégé, William Whittingham, decided to produce a new Bible version to be used as a primer and proselytizer for Calvinism. The English scholar, **William Whittingham** (1524-1579) was responsible for the major part of the Geneva Bible. Miles Coverdale was also involved to an unknown degree. Sources used for it included a Hebrew OT...and then the text was chosen primarily from Tyndale's Bible and Coverdale's Great Bible. In fact, about 85% of the words in the Geneva Bible came from Tyndale and Coverdale's Bibles for the simple reason that those two men had a gift for phraseology, which has caused many translation committees – including modern ones – to borrow heavily from the wording in the versions those two men worked on. When the Geneva was published, in addition to the usual numerous, laughable typesetter errors, it contained a much-ballyhooed, *embarrassing* factual error of scholarship that did not and does not exist in any other Bible version: Every time Matthew chapter 2 has the word *child*, the Geneva translators inserted *babe*, *which does not appear in any known manuscript in any language, and that helped create a false tradition about Christ's age* (that persists to this day) *when the Wise Men visited Him*. They deliberately borrowed “babe” from Luke 2:12 and used it to replace “child” in Matthew 2. The translators knew they had no manuscript support for what they were doing, and it reflected poorly on their character. That shameful 1560 error wasn't corrected until the editions of 1576 and 1599! When the Geneva Version was first published in England in 1576, its low price, together with its carnal, flesh-feeding notes made it very popular.

The Geneva Bible eventually became the most widely-used Bible in England for several reasons. 1) It was published in a normal user-friendly size, which made it much easier to handle and afford than the Great Bible. 2) Most people were insecure about their understanding of the Bible, and the Geneva contained explanatory notes all the way through it – and most people, because they didn't know doctrine, didn't realize they were radical. 3) The Geneva used a newfangled Roman font (similar to what you are reading now) rather than the more formal, but harder to read bold blackletter font commonly used back then.

Because the Geneva Bible was intended to be a proselytizing book to “reform” Christianity, it had to be cheap enough for the masses. All of its early printings, therefore, were quick-print, low-quality books with poor proofreading and lots of typesetting errors. The Geneva did much to *Enlighten* Christians, which revolutionized societal culture, government, and the economy. The 1560 Geneva Bible did more in the short term to subvert Christian belief in *Thus saith the Lord* than the entire 1545 Catholic Counter-Reformation. Christianity is hard, because getting the carnal old man to submit to the rule of a Bible-based new man faces many challenges including the Romans 7 struggle. And yet, the dramatic increase and widespread popularity of political activism among English Christians who were “educated” by the Geneva Bible is still lauded by Enlightened modernist “Christians” as proof that the Enlightened radicalism of the Geneva Version was good and Christian. The Geneva caused a sudden rise in radical social activism (that would have made Wycliffe, Tyndale, and Luther envious) for the simple reason that it unleashed and legitimized the carnal beast within us that we find so appealing (**Rom 7:19,23**). The social activism was *not* (as is so often said) because English subjects had become “a people of the Book.” History, in fact, attributes a significant part of the rapid transition of the English people from Catholic to Protestant to the Geneva Bible's *notes* – not its text. Just before the Geneva was published, Catholic bloody Mary was succeeded by Protestant Elizabeth. The startling contrast between the murderously-rabid Catholicism of Mary and the lukewarm indifference of Elizabeth, combined with the murderous zeal of the Catholic Inquisition along with some of the European Catholic monarchs, produced a rapid, horrified rejection of Catholicism and a slower rejection of monarchy – even rejecting good and peaceful kings like Britain's Charles I. The Geneva Bible's anti-authority notes were also very popular in Scotland, partly because of the dominant influence of John Knox: Every Scottish household, beginning in 1579, was *required* to have a Geneva Bible – as enforced by mandatory inspections.

1568: Archbishop Parker's BISHOPS' BIBLE

The young Church of England was in a state of tension. The rabidly-Catholic Queen Bloody Mary had died and been replaced by the tepid Protestant Queen Elizabeth, and the bishops in the Church of England were a mix of pro-Catholics, pro-Protestants, and a bunch of “don't cares.” Coverdale's 1535 Bible and Roger's 1537 Matthew's Bible had been purged because of their rabble-rousing notes. The existing, officially-sanctioned Great Bible by Coverdale had no notes but was too large and expensive for people to buy and use at home. The Geneva Bible, even though it had been published for only a few years and had a few well-known errors and was cheaply-and-poorly printed, was selling throughout England and Scotland like hotcakes. Those bishops of the Church of England who were at least halfway decent, felt betrayed by the English translators in Geneva for two reasons: First, the Geneva Bible had the kind of radical notes those men in Geneva *already knew would be objectionable to Bible believers in England*, and second, their cheaply-made, low-quality Geneva Bible was very popular because it was cheap, conveniently sized, cheap, had notes that made people who were too lazy and unmotivated to study to shew themselves approved unto God *think* they knew the Bible, and it was cheap. Therefore, the bishops in England obviously weren't going to use Coverdale or any of the other English scholars who worked on the Geneva Bible for another Bible version, so the Archbishop of Canterbury, **Matthew Parker** (1504-1575), who oversaw the Bishops' Bible project (and paid for it himself because neither the Parliament nor the Queen cared about Christianity), appointed local bishops who knew Greek and Hebrew and who cared about “Christian doctrinal orthodoxy.” Archbishop Parker was offended by the growing undercurrent of *independence* in society (which he called “*mutinous*”), and wanted the Bible to be the foundation of social *order* (as in “*order over anarchy*”). He was horrified that the traditional Bible-based “religious enthusiasm” was being challenged by the growing swell of Self-based “popular enthusiasm” that said “the people” should be responsible for determining how the church should be “reformed.” He rejected the anti-authority radical notes of the Geneva Bible. Archbishop Parker was fighting an uphill battle for a Bible-based church and society because he had zero help from Parliament, from most bishops of the Church of England, and from the apathy and self-absorption of Queen Elizabeth I.

The problems with both the Great and the Geneva Bibles, which were just the latest in a series of “mere Bible versions,” were well known among scholars. In fact, the number of supposedly “new and improved” Greek NT texts and Bible versions that all ended up being neither significantly different nor better than their predecessors, was beginning to dampen the excitement, the enthusiasm, and even the *interest* in yet another mere Bible version.

The bishops on the Bishops' Bible committee did a good job. Their work was made easier by the fact that the Greek NTs, the Masoretic Hebrew OT, and the last several Bible versions were all generally reliable and consistent. There is, after all, only one word of God, and therefore no matter how many "original-language" texts, and no matter how many new Bible versions are marketed as "improved and more reliable," they are all supposed to be pretty much the same thing that preaches the same message from God – but the advent of "mere versions" was subverting faith in the veracity of God's word to such a great extent that "pick-and-choose" layman's aids would eventually command even more respect than the inerrant King James Bible among a huge segment of Christians.

The Great Bible sources were the same quality sources everybody used, and – not surprisingly – the bishops on the committee ended up liking the Tyndale/Coverdale English phraseology to express the Bible's message for many readings – just like everybody has ever since. The Bishops' Bible has not been judged as "scholarly" as the Geneva it was hoping to replace, but that's just a fairly-picky matter of degree because the message of the Geneva and Bishops' mere versions was the same, and the Tyndale/Coverdale phraseology was the same. The Bishops' Bible did include a few mild notes that emphasized Biblical submission to authority, but, because the Bishops' Bible was a higher quality commercial product than the Geneva, it was unable to compete with the rock-bottom price of the Geneva. People back then were no different from people today: They had a choice of buying a domestic, quality-papered, higher-priced Bishops' Bible...or a foreign-made, cheap-papered, lower-priced Geneva Bible...and the overwhelming majority went with the cheaper one *because all the mere versions had no real differences from each other*.

The Bishops' Bible was the official Bible from 1568 until 1611, but it failed to slow down the rapidly-spreading leaven contained in the Greek-philosophy-based anti-authority ideological notes in the Geneva Bible – as evidenced by a brief look at the Archbishop of Canterbury who succeeded Archbishop Parker:

Seven years after the publication of the Bishops' Bible, Archbishop Parker died and was succeeded by **Archbishop Edmund Grindal** (1519-1583). Grindal was a supporter of Calvinistic Puritanism, and was an adherent of the new liberal democracy-loving "reformed" movement. One of the first things Grindal did was to allow the Geneva Bible to be printed in England. He had despised Archbishop Parker's belief in the Scriptural imperative that the populace submit to the rule of government. Historians have said Grindal, who could not have gotten away with openly supporting public anti-authority outcries, temporized by always giving the anti-authority activists as much leeway as possible...and he always dealt with them as slowly as possible.

1582-1610: The Catholic Counter-Reformation's DOUAI-RHEIMS BIBLE

As previously noted, the Catholic Counter-Reformation was formally launched in 1545 by the Council of Trent. The Douay-Rheims Bible was but a small part of the Counter-Reformation. A quick summary of events the Douay-Rheims Bible was part of:

King Phillip II (1527-1598) of Spain had inherited a worldwide empire, was very wealthy and powerful, and hoped, with the active help of the Vatican and the **Catholic League** to establish a Catholic Europe whose rule went around the world. The first big opportunity for Phillip and the Vatican was in 1553 when Queen Bloody Mary became the Catholic ruler of Protestant England. Both Phillip and Mary were devout, activist Catholics, and it didn't take much for them, with the approval of the Vatican, to realize how powerful their royal marriage would be. Two days after they met, they wed. Phillip continued to live in Spain, Mary in England...even though they were now joint rulers over Spain and England. However, Bloody Mary died 5 years later, and the "Grand Plan" died with her. In 1558, Queen Elizabeth, who'd been in jail during Bloody Mary's Catholic reign of terror, decided to stick with Protestantism. In 1568 the Bishops' Bible was published. In 1569 an insurrection attempt by English Catholic nobles and an army of about 700 knights began capturing English castles with the aim of eventually executing Queen Elizabeth. In 1570, hoping to inspire English Catholics to aid the insurrection, the Vatican stupidly "excommunicated" the *Protestant* Elizabeth and "deposed" her (legally declaring her rule invalid and therefore she was supposedly no longer the queen). Although the Vatican's decrees were stupidly invalid, they did inspire several English Catholic plots to assassinate her. Elizabeth raised a huge army, crushed the rebels, executed hundreds of them, which caused hundreds more to flee the country. In 1572 in France, the apex of the religious war in France between Catholics and Protestants was the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of about 20,000 Protestants, which guaranteed that Protestants would always be a minority in France. In 1580, English Catholic **Cardinal William Allen** (1532-1594), who was in France as an exile/escapee from Elizabeth, established a Jesuit "seminary" in the French town of Douay – and then in Rheims. This "seminary's" primary purpose was to kill French Protestants, send Catholic spies, saboteurs, and assassins into England (about 130 of whom were caught and executed); and its secondary purpose was to produce a Catholic note-filled Bible version to counteract the exodus from Catholicism caused by English Bible versions. In 1582 the NT portion of the Catholic Douay-Rheims Bible was published and was smuggled into England. In 1584, King Phillip signed the **Treaty of Joinville** to 1) finance the increasingly-effective work of the Catholic League's anti-Protestant war; 2) make it clear that the anti-Protestant activities launched by the Council of Trent's Counter-Reformation would be continued and enforced; and 3) Catholicism would be the *only* religion allowed in France – and those who refused to convert would be executed. In 1585, Elizabeth responded to the Joinville Treaty by sending troops and money to aid a rebel uprising in the Netherlands against their Spanish rulers. In 1587, having gotten wind of plots to put Scotland's former queen, Mary (King James' Catholic mother, who was now a political prisoner of Elizabeth's) on the throne of England, Elizabeth executed her in a botched, very messy beheading. In 1588, King Phillip, with guidance from Cardinal William Allen of Douay-Rheims, launched the *huge Spanish Armada* to defeat the English fleet, land an army, kill Elizabeth, take over England, and make it Catholic. It (and two more armada attempts) failed miserably...and brought the Phillip/Vatican/Catholic League machinations to an end. (But the Counter-Reformation continues today.)

The **Douay-Rheims Bible** was one of the Catholic Counter-Reformation projects under the direct supervision of Cardinal William Allen. It is so-named because the Bible committee was chased out of one town into the other by irate French Protestants. The decision to produce the Douay-Rheims Bible was a tacit admission that the Catholic ban on all Bibles in languages other than Latin had failed. It was also an admission that trying to keep the Bible out of the hands of commoners had failed.

There was a growing public realization/suspicion that the Catholic Church was anti-Bible. After all, Wyclif produced a NT...and his bones were dug up after his death and burned; Tyndale produced a Bible...and he was burned at the stake; Coverdale's Bible and the Great Bible couldn't be produced in England under Catholic King Henry VIII...for fear of execution; the Geneva Bible was produced by English refugees in Geneva...because it was well known Catholic Queen Bloody Mary would kill them, and the Bishops' Bible could not be produced in England...until after the newly-Protestant Elizabeth had been ridiculously excommunicated and deposed by the Vatican. Also, why were the manuscripts of Jimenez and Erasmus proving the Catholic corruption of the Latin Vulgate being suppressed and ignored? It was these well-known, undeniable, damning truths that made the Vatican decide it had to somehow persuade people that the Catholic Church wasn't against the Bible, and it wasn't against Catholics having the Bible in a language they understood...it was always only against *incorrect* versions. But the Vatican could no longer pretend the Latin Vulgate was accurate; the Vulgate's reputation had already suffered irreparable damage, so a new version was needed with a different name.

Some say the King James Bible translators used some words from the Latin Vulgate, and others say they used words from the 1582 Douay-Rheims NT. The purpose of these statements is usually to exalt a Catholic version or to badmouth the KJV translators. The fact is the KJV translators were confronted with the difficulty of trying to properly express the meaning of "informal soldiers' street Greek" verses that had no direct English representative. In some cases they decided using Latin-originated words that had become widely-used by English speakers because of the long dominance of the Latin Vulgate, would be more accurate, more effective, and less clumsy than purely English words. An example from **Romans 11:14** was **emulation**, a well-known Latin word used for a thousand years in the Vulgate...and then in the Douay-Rheims...and then made an "official" English word by the KJV:

Latin Vulgate If, by any means, I may provoke to **emulation** them who are my flesh and may save some of them.

Douay-Rheims If, by any means, I may provoke to **emulation** them who are my flesh and may save some of them.

Wycliffe If in any manner I stir my flesh for to follow, and that I make some of them safe.

Tyndale That might provoke them which are my flesh: and might save some of them.

Coverdale If I mighte provoke them unto zeal, which are my fleshe, and save some of them.

Geneva To try if by any means I might provoke them of my flesh to follow them, and might save some of them.

KJV If by any means I may provoke to **emulation** them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.

Another example from **Titus 3:5** using *regeneration*:

Latin Vulgate Not by the works of justice which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us, by the laver of **regeneration** and renovation of the Holy Ghost.

Douay Rheims Not by the works of justice, which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us, by the laver of **regeneration**, and renovation of the Holy Ghost;

Wycliffe not of works of rightwiseness that we did, but by his mercy [but after his mercy] he made us safe, by [the] washing of again-begetting, and again-newing of the Holy Ghost,

Tyndale not of the deeds of righteousness which we wrought, but of his mercy, he saved us, by the fountain of the new birth, and with the renewing of the holy ghost,

Coverdale not for ye dedes of righteousness which we wroughte, but after his mercy he saved vs by the fountaine of the new birth, and renuinge of the holy goost,

Geneva Not by the works of righteousness, which we had done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of the new birth, and the renewing of the holy Ghost,

KJV Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of **regeneration**, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

The Douay-Rheims anti-Protestant notes were copious and aggressively ugly. And its preface says the Douay-Rheims was made necessary because the Protestant Bibles were guilty of "casting the holy to dogs and pearls to hogs." The complete Douay-Rheims Bible (both testaments) was published in 1610. It was a big flop, and the Catholic Church's backing failed to make it popular...so the Douay-Rheims languished for a century. During that century the newly-published King James Bible went from 1) just another "mere version," 2) to being increasingly recognized and lauded as *inerrant*, 3) to becoming "the Bible." In fact, it became so popular the Catholic Church decided to revise the Douay-Rheims, a revision that was completed in 1750. In many places the "new, improved" Douay-Rheims used the KJV's wording, hoping that would be enough to slow the ever-increasing sales of the King James among Catholics. It wasn't.

The Catholic Church later decided it had been an error to make its 1750 Douay-Rheims emulate the KJV (I'm using another word the KJV got from Jerome's Latin Vulgate), so in 1810 it published another "new, improved" revision of the Douay-Rheims. The Vatican ordered that this new revision undergo a massive rewording to get as far away from the KJV's wording as possible, hoping that giving the Douay-Rheims its own distinctive "truly Catholic" wording rather than continue to look like a "KJV wannabe" would improve sales. It was a colossal failure, and the Douay-Rheims – for all of its "new, improved" revisions that spanned 228 years (!) was recognized as – and relegated to being – but another mere version.

1624-1641: The Elzevir brothers' Greek "TEXTUS RECEPTUS"

Abraham and Bonaventure Elzevir were Dutch printers who reprinted already-existing Greek New Testaments produced by Erasmus, Stephanus, and Beza. They were not scholars; they did no translating – all they did was print stuff. In **1633** they printed their most famous work – one of Beza's Greek NTs. Because they were human, they made a number of typesetting errors; and because they were printers, they made a few small changes/corrections (like proofreaders do for publishing houses today before books are published) that would improve the finished product. The 1633 Elzevir NT is famous merely because its preface contains a grandiose statement in Latin saying, "What you have here, is the text which is now

received by all, in which we give nothing changed or corrupted.” And over time the Latin phrase “Textus Receptus” came to mean any of the Greek-language NTs produced by Erasmus, Stephanus, and Beza. Collectively calling these three Greek NTs the Textus Receptus and saying the KJV came from it is problematic because they all differ from each other (in relatively minor ways because they all contain the Bible’s message) and they differ from the KJV in almost 300 instances. And in 1881 another member of the “Textus Receptus family” would be produced by F.H.A. Scrivener. In short, none of these TR texts is without errors, there is no single Textus Receptus text, and when you say “Textus Receptus” you are using words a printer came up with when trying to market the texts of three men long dead. Technically, when the Elzevir brothers claimed they were publishing the “text we all received,” they were saying it – not the text of the KJV – was God’s word. I say *technically*, and I only bring it up for two reasons: 1) Most scholars back then had been suckered by the war on the word into thinking *nothing* was the word of God – not any of the Greek texts, not the Hebrew Masoretic OT, and not any mere Bible version. 2) The Elzevir brothers were just trying to make money in the same way modern scholars and publishers do – keep printing more and more stuff that is either “new and improved,” or – in this case – *“the”* text received by all.” The Elzevir brothers published their Greek text in 1633, which was 22 years after the KJV was published. During those 22 years, all other Bible versions were increasingly recognized as “mere” Bible versions – but not the King James. Scholars and informed pewsters alike were *amazed* at what they were finding out about the KJV’s text as they continued examining it...and that unprecedented, rising excitement caused the Elzevir printers to advertise the Greek text that was as close as they could get to the actual text of the KJV as “the text received by all” – rather than just another short-lived also-ran text rejected by all.

Reviewing what truths have emerged over these 250 years from Wycliffe to the Elzevir brothers

Until the Authorized 1611 King James Bible was published, the Manuscript Mess – whether you are referring to any of the Greek-language NTs, the Hebrew-language Masoretic OT, the Greek-language Septuagint OTs, or any of the other-language manuscripts – had prevented any scholar or collection of scholars from producing an inerrant Bible; all of those manuscripts – in any combination – have never produced anything but short-lived mere versions. Then F.H.A. Scrivener in 1881 compared the King James Bible’s readings with all existing Bible manuscripts...and found that in the 270 years since the AV1611 was published, *more manuscripts had vanished from history*. There were several KJV readings that Scrivener could not find in any existing Greek or Hebrew manuscripts. But the amazing and unprecedented fact that the KJV is irrefutably and uniquely inerrant, means either God used the KJV translators without their knowledge, or He made sure they selected “questionable readings” that originated in “*The Distinguished Lost Elite of the Manuscript Mess: The Chosen Few whose Quality caused them to be Hand-picked because they Stood Out from the Rest.*” I said “questionable readings” because scholars claim if a word in a manuscript can’t be traced to another “valued” manuscript it was “probably” added by some “possibly” unscrupulous scholars a thousand years ago. (*Valued* no longer has any meaning: It *used* to refer to manuscripts that were “older” and therefore “better.” But as more old manuscripts, such as the Dead Sea Scrolls, are found, they have become continual embarrassments to scholars because they *prove* older and younger mean *nothing*...and some of the *worst* manuscripts with the *most* errors are the oldest! Most scholars during the 150-year run of the “older is better” scam ignored those intrepid scholars along the way who had the integrity and backbone to proclaim the evidence-based conclusion that older means nothing. They also ignore the proven fact that “*The Distinguished Lost Elite*” manuscripts were selected and used by many brilliant scholars over and above many readings from the used-to-be-“valued” manuscripts. But to those with faith in God, those lost readings *are no longer lost*: they have been recovered in the miraculously-unique text of the KJV – as validated by its inerrancy. To faithful saints the KJV appears to be some of *the evidence of things not seen*.

The many revisions the Douay-Rheims Bible underwent – including switching back and forth between KJV readings and Alexandrian readings – in vain efforts by various teams of scholars to make it appear to be more than just another mere version, succeeded only in putting the spotlight on the *difference* between the centuries-long acknowledgement that the KJV is a unique original the likes of which nobody has ever seen...and all of the mere versions that, whether they came from the Textus Receptus or the Alexandrian or the Byzantine or some combination, have proven to be – in a very short time – mere Bible versions whose commonplace, unexceptional, run-of-the-mill mediocrity has prompted – indeed, *guaranteed* – the production of many, many more mere Bible versions...and has actually caused scholars to disingenuously recommend that Christians use *several* mere versions along with one or more layman’s aids. None of this theological ever-changing uncertainty has gone unnoticed, and it, compared with the KJV’s unique inerrancy and stability, made people wake up to a few things:

- The continual production of “new, improved” mere Bible versions – because of the existence of the KJV – is not needed, will add nothing, and are going to be short-lived at best. (The life expectancy of modern mere Bible versions before they are superseded by another mere “improved” version is close to 6 months!)
- All of the daisy-chain Bible versions have been essentially the same; their differences were small and their shortcomings undeniable. But the KJV has been different; it is unique, it is perfect – and its arrival made new Bible versions so unnecessary that the King James came to be called “the translation to end all translations.”
- The KJV, in exposing six centuries of mere Bible versions, has shown that the Greek Textus Receptus, the Hebrew Masoretic text, and the Alexandrian Greek text all have the same thing in common – they have produced nothing but mere Bible versions that are, eh, *decent*...but are as forgettable and uninspiring as Matthew’s Bible and the Douay-Rheims. Indeed, the miraculous, unprecedented text of the KJV has made the Greek and Hebrew texts *obsolete*, no longer needed, because the KJV is the recognized and accepted word of God. It is the God-given crutch to carry us through these dark last days. It is a *necessity*.
- All of the bickering among modern liberal scholars over the flawed readings of their “new, improved” mere versions *that make another “even better” mere version needed*, has revealed a huge secret scholars wish they’d been able to keep hidden: the Manuscript Mess has allowed scholars to use their useless wranglings about its *impenetrable mysteries* to create a huge money-making mere-version scheme based on the old short-lived Mars’-Hill allure of “some new thing” (Act 17:21,22).

CHAPTER 8 (11 pages)

THE AUTHORIZED 1611 KING JAMES BIBLE**The Living Word of Our Living God**

The War on the Word had gotten quite serious and deadly by the time James became the king of Britain:

- 1) The Vatican's deliberate multiple corruptions of Jerome's Latin Vulgate Bible Version hoping to hide unscriptural Catholic doctrine ended up hoisting the Vatican on its own petard when two of its own brightest scholars (who had integrity and strength), Father Erasmus and Cardinal Jimenez, in the early 1500s published Latin/Greek manuscripts that proved 1) the Catholic Church tampered with Jerome's Latin Vulgate text over the centuries, and 2) there was an urgent need for a reformed Bible that was good enough to restore faith in God's word that was being eroded by Reason, mere versions, and the Vatican's machinations.
- 2) The 1500s produced eleven major Bible versions that were causing Catholics to leave their church when they saw how different *Thus saith the Lord* was from Catholic theology.
- 3) Several Catholic students at the radical University of Paris, including Ignatius de Loyola, formed an informal religious "society" of civilians dedicated to carrying out the Pope's orders – no matter how egregious they were. As a reward, in 1540 the Pope made them all paid priests and formally began the secret, militant Jesuit organization. One of the Jesuits' primary responsibilities was to establish educational institutions to spread Greek Reason and Reason-based theology that were proving very effective at eroding belief in the literal truth of the word of God. Even if the Vatican couldn't keep people from reading the Bible, they now knew theology would undermine belief in what people read in the Bible.
- 4) In 1545 the Council of Trent launched the "Catholic Counter Reformation" in a deadly-serious campaign to diminish the Bible's impact, and to eradicate the spreading Bible-promoting Protestant denominations. As a result the Vatican formed an alliance with France's King Phillip II, the Catholic League, Jesuit Cardinal William Allen, and many institutions of "education" such as the two "seminaries" in Douay and Rheims. This unholy alliance began aggressively warring against the Bible and Protestant denominations. A review of a few examples, followed by a conclusion:
 - In 1553 when Catholic Queen "Bloody" Mary became queen of England, she and King Phillip II of Spain were to marry and begin the process of creating a Vatican-run Catholic European empire, hoping to regain the kind of complete control over society that existed before people learned to read and got their hands on a Bible. But a few years after they married, Queen Mary died unexpectedly...and the new queen, Elizabeth, made England Protestant.
 - A few years later, in 1570, the Vatican began using insurrection and murder to eliminate Queen Elizabeth. The vast network of Catholic insurrectionist priests and pewsters in Britain alone numbered in the thousands. Elizabeth was only able to capture and execute hundreds of them – many went into hiding, and many fled to Catholic France.
 - In 1572, having failed to kill Queen Elizabeth, well-funded armies of Catholic activists in France launched surprise attacks on their Protestant neighbors and massacred 20,000 of them.
 - In 1580, while continuing insurrectionist activities in England, the Douay-Rheims "seminary" began work on its own version of the Geneva Version's subversive Bible: The Douay-Rheims Bible Version was published a few years later...complete with notes so liberal and unprecedentedly ugly that even many Catholics were offended by them.
 - Spain, too, wanted to be part of this planned Catholic European empire: In 1588 the huge Spanish Armada (assisted by Portuguese warships), followed by two more armadas a few years later, attempted to overwhelm the smaller English fleet, kill Elizabeth, conquer England, and outlaw Protestantism. All three armadas were defeated by sudden, violent storms. The unprecedented cost in lives and in money was the beginning of the end of Spain's grand visions of empire. Natural disasters, such as storms, are frequently called "acts of God." But this history-affecting series of "coincidences" deserves a bit more detail: In 1588 when the huge Spanish Armada attempted to conquer and rule England, a huge storm came up, scattered and badly damaged the fleet, and saved England. A medal was struck in England to commemorate this "Protestant wind" as "an act of God." Its inscription said, "Jehovah blew with His winds, and they were scattered." That one storm was a Godsend, but what really got people's attention was the fact that, when Spain launched another armada with the same objective in 1596, another sudden, savage storm again saved the English fleet and inflicted big losses on Spain in ships, expenses, and lives. Spain reacted by launching *another* armada the next year, 1597, but was shocked when *another* sudden storm ravaged its fleet, bankrupted the kingdom, ended its golden era, and contributed to the rise of Great Britain and to the historically-unique peaceful reigns of Kings James and Charles – called by historians the "**Pax Britannia.**"
 - When Elizabeth died in 1603, Catholics had high hopes about the new king, James. His mother had been a Catholic, and it was thought/hoped he'd be susceptible to relaxing Elizabeth's enmity towards anti-Protestant Catholic spies and insurrectionists in England. Therefore, the Pope sent an expensive rosary to King James' wife, hoping its acceptance would signal James' lingering fondness for his mother's religion. But when he reacted by exiling as many Jesuits and Catholic activists as he could find, and when the Vatican learned he was planning to exalt God's word with a new Bible version, the Catholic Counter Reformation was given the go-ahead to resume its war on the word and on England.
 - Two years after James ascended to the throne, the 1605 "Gunpowder Plot" intended to use gunpowder to blow up the House of Lords during a ceremony, killing King James, his wife, and all the nobles of Parliament. The Catholic conspirators were led by a Douay "seminary"-trained, Jesuit-supported-and-funded radical, Robert Catesby (1572-

1605), who had already been imprisoned twice for insurrection. *At the last minute*, a mysterious, anonymous note warned the British authorities (several Catholics objected to the shocking Plot)...and shortly thereafter, a man who turned out to be the low-life, lying Guy Fawkes (1570-1606), whose brother was a Jesuit priest, was caught sneaking out of the basement of the House of Lords with an extra, unneeded fuse in his pocket, which caused authorities to search the basement. They found it to be packed with 36 devastating barrels of gunpowder. After Fawkes realized his lies were getting him nowhere, he spilled his guts...and scores of his Catholic co-conspirators were captured. Their leader, Robert Catesby, was mortally wounded while resisting arrest. Guy Fawkes was hanged a couple of months later after a quick trial.

- **Conclusion:** If Bloody Mary hadn't died early (age 42); if any of the many Catholic plots to kill Queen Elizabeth had succeeded; if sudden storms hadn't inflicted the heavy losses in lives, ships, and expenses that allowed England to repulse the invasion of the *first* Spanish armada in 1588; if sudden storms hadn't allowed England to repulse the invasion of the *second* Spanish armada in 1596; if sudden storms hadn't allowed England to repulse the invasion of the *third* Spanish armada in 1597; and if the Gunpowder Plot hadn't been mysteriously exposed in 1605: there would not have been a King James Bible that "just happened" to have God's name and rank on it; Britain would not have spread the KJV around the world; English would not have become the universal language of the world; scholars and theologians – with no inerrant word of God in existence to expose their Reason-based unbelief – would have, during the 1800s, turned Christianity into the shallow, pathetic joke it is today; there may have been no Bible believers around because of the oh-so-revised mere Bible versions they were using, and because so many were using their layman's aids to "correct" God's word; and perhaps apostasy-revealing, literal-word-of-God-based Bible studies that reveal how un- and anti-Scriptural modern Christianity and society are might not have been written. If all of that bad stuff had happened, the church's salt would have lost its savor centuries ago, and the Devil would have already won the War. We must, by trusting and accepting God's definition of His word, actively believe in the truth, the authority, and the necessity of the Bible by using it to stay on the strait and narrow way which leadeth unto life (Mt 7:14).

MAKING THE KING JAMES BIBLE

The Translation Committee

King James appointed to the committee 54 of the best scholars of his realm. They were of various political and religious backgrounds, donated their time and effort for no pay, and ranged in age from their late 20s to their mid-70s. A notable scholar who was excluded from the committee was **Hugh Broughton** (1549-1612).

Broughton was recognized as the foremost scholar of the "sacred languages" of the Cross: Greek, Hebrew, and Latin – he could speak them as if they were his mother tongue. Broughton despised both the official Bishop's Bible and the popular Geneva Version. He was openly critical of Catholic doctrine and superstition, believed monarchs rule by Divine Right, despised the Calvinist/Puritan belief in democratic rulers over churches rather than bishops, and published, in Greek, a refutation of several popular Calvinist teachings of Theodore Beza – including the Enlightened belief in democratic churches, societies, and governments. Broughton also wrote to Queen Elizabeth, pointing out the urgent need for the creation of a new Bible version. Christianity was not important to her, however, and she ignored his letter. Broughton later advised the new king, James, to create a new Bible version, and when James promptly agreed, Broughton was delighted because he assumed he would be on the translation committee.

Broughton's knowledge of Hebrew alone (he was an effective apologist for Christianity when speaking with Jews who were learned in the Old Testament) was enough to justify appointing him to a translation committee for a new Bible version. His depth of historical knowledge about the changes the Hebrew language went through over the centuries before and after the Crucifixion, made him acutely aware of the ignorance-based Hebrew translation mistakes many modern scholars were making. He realized that both the *radical* changes and the *nuanced* changes Hebrew underwent during the Babylonian Captivity when the Hebrew language switched to the pagan alphabet required a depth of understanding that merely "speaking Hebrew" could not recognize. Broughton also understood that many of the Greek NT manuscripts have a blend/mix of four main types of Greek in them: the common soldiers' (Koine) Greek, the regional Greek used by the Apostles in their writings, the Septuagint Greek used by later scholars who translated the Hebrew OT and Greek NT into Greek-language Bibles, and the scholarly Greek of the Talmud's traditional teachings. It was this history-shaped blended complexity of the Biblical languages that were used when initially writing Scripture's living-language manuscripts that tended to be obscured over the centuries after the original manuscripts and copies of the originals had been *translated many times* into other languages that had been affected by linguistic trends over many centuries by various unknown men of unknown language skills from unknown regions that, Broughton thought, made it folly for modern scholars to attempt to use their shallow knowledge and understanding when "unskillfully altering," evaluating, sorting, and "correcting" Bible manuscripts. All of these well-intentioned attempts to "correct" Scripture and produce and defend "better" Bible manuscripts and versions against "lesser" Bible manuscripts and versions were, to varying degrees, subverting Christians' faith in the truth and authority of God's holy word. Broughton was convinced his expertise was needed – nay, *necessary* – for any committee making a new Bible translation so it could avoid the same mistakes that had resulted in a long series of "mere" short-lived, ho-hum Bible versions.

Despite his unsurpassed academic credentials, Broughton was not appointed to the committee. Why? *Because nobody wanted to work with him.* He was pompous, disagreeable, impatient, sarcastic, argumentative, condescending, and insulting. When he learned he'd been passed over, he reacted with characteristic aggressive anger – he said and wrote that the King James Bible would be like all the other mere versions – a horrible version unworthy of anybody's attention.

To the credit of the King James translators, however, their unwillingness to work with Broughton did not mean they didn't hold his knowledge and scholarly works in high esteem. Broughton had already published translations of several books of the Hebrew OT, and the translation committee not only consulted and used them as references, but several of our well-known phrases in the KJV came from Hugh Broughton. (Note: I think one of my historical sources said Broughton, who died shortly after the KJV was published, when he had a chance to closely examine it, was so impressed that he swallowed his pride

and anger and publicly praised it. But that's not in my notes; I don't know where I may have read it...but Broughton's integrity was so impressed on my memory that I'm willing to give him credit here – while also letting you know I'm not absolutely sure.)

To close this section on the translation committee: I am aware of the fact that fallible humans worked on the KJV – just as fallible, well-intentioned humans have worked on all Bible translations. But the inerrancy of the KJV, combined with the fact that it alone meets God's definition of His word, together with numerous amazing-and-unique details about the KJV and its history, made me realize the KJV is supernaturally different from all other Bible versions and old dead-language manuscripts: It is God's word; it is not the translators' word. Its unique inerrancy is God's proof that the AV1611 is His word. I am thankful for what it says, for what it teaches me, for how it corrects me, and for what it does inside me. I am humbly thankful that it has been helping me get to know my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Jer 9:23,24 Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty *man* glory in his might, let not the rich *man* glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD.

MAKING AND PRINTING THE KING JAMES BIBLE

In 1605 the 54 scholars on King James' translation committee were divided into six companies: two of the companies were to work at Westminster, two were to work at Oxford, and two at Cambridge. Each of the six companies was assigned a different section of the Bible. The companies worked on their sections for the first two years, and when they were finished they swapped sections and carefully went over each other's work for the next three years. When the KJV translation companies finished reviewing the works of the other sections and were finished with the whole Bible, two men from each company (12 men in all) were assigned to carefully review the entire work and make changes when necessary. Then the finished, reviewed Bible went to a final review group made up of a small number of senior translators who had to painstakingly go over *everything* one last time.

Several **Master Original Copies** (MOCs) of the finalized KJV were made, and some of these MOCs were delivered to the printers in 1610 so they could make the necessary preparations and begin work. Two different printers were to produce two first editions of the KJV that were to be replacements for all of the existing Bishops' Bibles in churches. For that reason, the two first print runs created the huge lectern-format Bibles with the traditional, formal, heavy Gothic blackletter type. Those two editions were the only KJVs printed in 1611. Then, beginning in 1612 when the printers switched to the newer, more reader-friendly Roman-style type, smaller-sized editions were printed for the general public. From then on, there were many, many editions (print runs) of the KJV...and because of the manual, boring-but-detail-demanding job of the typesetters, there were a lot of typesetter mistakes.

No one knows what the Master Original Copies looked like. One reason for that is the fact that, after the first print runs were made, it was common for succeeding printings to be made from already-printed KJVs – the MOCs weren't considered necessary. When the KJV's inerrant text gradually began to attract attention in the late 1600s, people wondered what the "original" text of the MOCs said...but the MOCs had vanished in the 1666 Great Fire of London that destroyed most of the city, which had grown into a helter-skelter, overcrowded, stinking, flea-infested, plague-causing rats' nest. In fact, the plagues ended when the city burned down.

The translators' manuscript sources included many of those covered in chapter 7 on Bible versions. Modern scholars object to several sources for the KJV because some readings in the KJV either are not in any Greek manuscript we know about, or are not in *any* manuscript we know about today – the apparent hope of modern anti-KJVers is that you'll assume the elite scholars appointed by King James to his translation committee, as well as earlier top manuscript experts like Beza, Jimenez, Erasmus, Jerome, and Stephanus *all invented readings!* Modernists also try to soil the KJV translator's reputations by claiming they took readings from the poorly-done, recently published Catholic Douay-Rheims Version...*when they know the same readings appear in Jerome's pre-Catholic Latin Vulgate and/or in respected other-language (not Greek) manuscripts.* For example, modernists zealously point out that some KJV readings do not appear in any of the almost 6,000 Greek manuscripts we have today...and they act like that's relevant and important – when they know those readings are in the vast majority of 10,000 Latin Vulgate manuscripts and Old Latin manuscripts, *and* in the vast majority of Syrian manuscripts from the regions around Antioch, *and* from the writings of early Christians who quote directly from Scripture! In other words, they deliberately prey on the perfectly-normal ignorance of faithful Bible believers. Anti-KJVers hope you won't know that famous, well-respected men like Jerome, Jimenez, Erasmus, and Beza did not invent the readings – they simply got them from one or more of *"The Distinguished Lost Elite of the Manuscript Mess: The Chosen Few whose Quality caused them to be Hand-picked because they Stood Out from the Rest"* that we all *know* existed...*and that may surface again at any time!* Modern scholars don't want to admit those top scholars of yesteryear probably did use the Distinguished Lost Elite manuscripts...because Alexandrian-text-loving modernists don't want to put themselves in the uncomfortable position of admitting that those top scholars of old are very well known for having carefully examined the Alexandrian texts...*and then unanimously rejecting them.* Today's Bible believers, however, do not need to know the revealing details about the Manuscript Mess or about the men who produced earlier Bible versions, because they have a necessity that is more important than knowledge – their faith in God...which causes them to compare the inerrant text of the AV1611 with the obvious corruption of modern versions *and bow their heads in humble acceptance of the KJV as God's holy word.* As for why so many modern scholars prefer, recommend, and use versions whose corruption indisputably proves they are not God's holy word, we cannot know for sure, and it's not for us to judge. Is their apparent *enmity* against the obvious authority of the Authorized 1611 King James Bible caused by their *Natural carnality*, which is *violent enmity against the supreme authority of God?* Or are they merely mediocre wimps who cannot stand up and resist the obvious-and-unscholarly wrongs of the majority? We don't know. But we do know *to run with the majority during the race of life is to be mediocre all of the time, and wrong most of the time.* Without faith it is impossible to please him (Heb 11:6).

Printing the King James Bible: The text of the KJV has 774,746 words that are made up of *millions* of individual letters...and that doesn't count the words that go into headings, or the many punctuation marks, or the many numbers, or the many space holders (blank spacers) that go between words, and upper cases for all letters, and all of the upper- and lower-case letters for italicized words. (The Gothic blackface KJVs had to substitute Roman type in place of italics because blackface didn't have an italic type.)

When a print run was complete, the inky metal letters, numbers, and spacers (that were all backwards so they'd print frontwards) were scooped up and then individually returned to their little upper- and lower-case wooden compartments in the large wooden type boxes. Letter similarities sometimes caused letters to be put into compartments for other letters. It's easy to see, for example, how backwards, inky letters like b, d, and p could end up in each other's compartments – as could u and n – and typesetters, when working on a print job, often trusted that the letters they grabbed from type compartment were the correct letters...and didn't realize they'd inserted an incorrect letter because they often did it by feel.

When a typesetter read the first part of a verse from the Master Original Copy he was using (or from an already-printed KJV), he quickly plucked the appropriate upper- and lower-case inky letters, punctuation marks, and word spacers from their inky compartments, and placed them by feel in the grooves that held pieces of type for a page's text. He was supposed to make the end of the text row get as close to the page margin as possible so the page of text would look uniform – like today's justified text does. If the text row was too short, he'd improvise to make it longer. For example, he'd add an *e* to the word *be*, making it *bee*; or he'd put two spacers between words instead of one; he'd add an *e* to *mind* to make it *minde*, etc. If a line of text was just a bit too long, it was quicker and easier to remove a letter from a word or to remove punctuation marks than to remove the entire last word in the line and then insert several spacers to make the line of words reach the page margin.

Proofreaders were supposed to catch it when a typesetter absentmindedly skipped a verse; repeated part of an already-inserted verse; used numbers in the wrong order; spelled the word *and* with a *u* (that came from the *n* compartment), which made it say *aud*; or see that instead of grabbing two of the letter *n* for the old spelling of *sonne* (son), the typesetter took two type pieces from the lower-case *n* compartment and didn't realize one of them was a misplaced *u*, and then set the two letters by feel into the groove without paying attention to what they really were, thus making the word *soune*. These and many, many other human errors plagued all of the old books produced by manual typesetting. For example, here are two typesetter errors not caught by a proofreader in the Geneva Bible:

Mat 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers incorrectly said Blessed are the placemakers

John 6:67 Then said Jesus to the twelve incorrectly said Then said Judas to the twelve

Here are some print-run errors in various editions of the KJV:

The first two editions of the KJV, done by two different printers became known as the "she Bible" and the "he Bible" because in Ruth 3:15 one correctly said, and she went into the city, and the other incorrectly said, and he went into the city.

Philemon 20 refresh my bowels incorrectly said refresh my bowles

Luke 10:36 unto him that fell among thieves incorrectly said unto himt hat fell among thieves

1 Sam 12:21 was incorrectly numbered as verse 20, giving the chapter two verse 20s and no verse 21.

Psalms 35:27 deliberately omitted the period at the end because there was no room for it.

Micah 2:7 are these his doings? incorrectly said are these his dongs?

The second use of members in 1 Cor 12:12 was spelled membrs because of space.

Zec 6:7 walked to and fro incorrectly said walked to and for

1 Cor 6:9 the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God incorrectly said the unrighteous shall inherit the kingdom of God

Isa 28:17 the waters shall overflow incorrectly said the waters shall overthrow

John 3:17 God sent not his Son incorrectly said God sent not his Sou

John 18:36 if my kingdom were of this world incorrectly said if my kingdom were of this word

John 8:11 go, and sin no more incorrectly said go, and sin on more

Exodus 20:14 Thou shalt not commit adultery incorrectly said Thou shalt commit adultery, which nicknamed this edition "The Adulterous Bible."

Psalms 119:161 Princes have persecuted me without a cause was changed by a disgruntled typesetter to Printers have persecuted me without cause, which nicknamed this print run "The Printer's Bible."

Gen 24:61 Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels incorrectly said Rebekah arose, and her camels, and they rode upon the camels

Galatians 4:29 has a comma. A typesetter had asked if the comma belonged there. After checking on it, the proofreader later wrote for the typesetter on the copy sheet by the comma "to remain" ...and when a *different* typesetter who didn't know about the question resumed work, that edition was printed with But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit to remain, even so it is now.

As mentioned earlier, the first two editions of the KJV – the only two print runs done in the year 1611 – used the old-fashioned bold black Gothic print because, even though it was harder to read than the new Roman-style print, the Gothic was

considered more “reverent.” Like most Bibles, the KJV used italics to identify words that weren’t technically in the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts, but undeniably belonged contextually to convey the proper meaning. The Gothic type did not have italics, so the printers used Roman type as a substitute for italicized words. The visual result of mixing heavy bold black Gothic words with skinny light Roman words, depending on how many italicized words were supposed to appear on a page, was considered weirdly ugly by printers because it had a blotchy effect. Not a problem – they simply used Gothic type for many of the words that were supposed to be Roman-italic type, which made the overall look of the page acceptable to them.

The English alphabet was not yet fully developed, and the Gothic alphabet was old fashioned. The letter v wasn’t yet part of the English alphabet (the letter u was used as both a v and a u), it also didn’t have the letter j (an i served double duty for the letter i and j). The lower-case s looked similar to our modern letter f. These letter differences caused correctly-spelled English words to look different to us today. For example, the Roman-type word *sin* looked like **fin** with Gothic type; *Jesus* looked like **Iefus**; *joy* looked like **ioy**, etc. And when all of those “new” letters were officially added to the English alphabet, it took a few years for printers to add those little metal letters to their inventory.

Also, in 1611 the English language was still developing, there was no dictionary, and word spelling was therefore not standardized. If an old document has the same word spelled different ways, they weren’t misspellings; it was perfectly acceptable. Sometimes **be** would be **bee**; **moued** (moved) could be **mooued**; and **me** might be spelled **mee**. Other examples of modern-versus-1611 Gothic spelling: *stars*–**starres**; *also*–**alfo**; *ran*–**ranne**; *evil*–**euill**. And, of course, typesetters sometimes added or subtracted word letters to better justify page margins.

Why am I telling you all of this? Because you may read someday something like this: “The KJV in use today is radically different from the original KJV of 1611; the original text has had 75,000 changes made to it. Today’s KJV is not the same as it was in 1611.” Statements like that made by anti-KJVers are *technically* correct when they use the word *changes*. But some other anti-KJVer will read that technically-correct statement, not realize it is subtly misleading, and will go around saying things like, “The text of the 1611 KJV has had 75,000 revisions (instead of *changes*).” Or he’ll say, “There have been many revisions to the 1611 KJV; the text of today’s KJV is very different from the original.” They will also say, “There have been many errors in the text of the King James Bible – instead of correctly calling them typesetter errors.”

Just to be clear: **The KJV has never been “revised,”** which is why it is *still* the Authorized **1611** King James Bible. If the text had been “revised,” it would be renamed according to the year of the revision – such as this fictitious example: “the **1629** King James Bible.” Yes, the original text of the KJV has had many thousands of *changes* made to word spellings and to typesetter errors of many, many kinds. Those *changes* can also be called *edits* – and *editions* – but changes and edits are neither revisions nor do they result in a new version.

Why do anti-KJVers always specifically mention changes made to the **1611** printing of the KJV – as opposed to printings made in later years such as 1612? Because both 1611 print-run editions used Gothic type. Fact: The Gothic print runs of 1611 and the Roman print runs of 1612 were both made from the translators’ Master Original Copy...which means, even though the texts of the 1611 Bibles and the 1612 Bibles were exactly the same, it is *technically* accurate to say there were tens of thousands of *changes* made to the original 1611 text. Look at these “changes,” for example:

- Because of the old Gothic lower-case **f** in the name **Mofes** in the 1611 text, the name *Moses* alone technically underwent 852 changes between 1611 and 1612 just because the lower-case Gothic **f** was changed to the lower-case Roman-type s...and there are a whole lot more words in the Bible than Moses that use a lower-case s. Lots of changes from a printer’s perspective; but zero revisions to the text.
- The name **Iefus** in the 1611 Gothic text was changed to the Roman *Jesus* 952 times...and we haven’t begun to scratch the surface of the 75,000 “changes” made to the Bible when the old Gothic type was replaced, when typesetter errors were corrected, when word spellings were slightly different, etc., etc.

Why do anti-KJVers stoop to misleading tactics like the above? Because, first, they want to make uninformed people think the miraculously-inerrant text of the KJV is just a myth perpetuated for unknown reasons by Bible-believing Christians. Second, they abhor the fact that 400 years ago an inerrant Bible was published...and they’ve been unable to find any errors or contradictions in it. Third, *they really are constantly revising the text of their modern versions – in some cases tens of thousands of times – by not only changing, adding, subtracting actual words, they also sometimes use new words they discovered and liked in other manuscripts*. Fourth, they cannot deny the existence of the errors and contradictions in all of their modern versions that Bible believers point out, and deep down inside they know it makes them look like fools and simpletons when they constantly claim those errors and contradictions have made their mere versions somehow “more accurate.” And, knowing their constant revisions and their “new, improved” mere versions prove they aren’t happy with their fruits, they defend themselves by saying misleading things about the “tens of thousands of changes” made to the 1611 KJV...because, hey, *that’s the deceitful way the Bible-selling game is played!* And in the hope of selling more mere versions, they’ll even try to make their mere versions look like they’re improvements on the KJV. For example, when Thomas Nelson publishers’ **New KJV** came out in 1982, they had to add the word *new* to the version’s title *because its text had been revised* – which made it no longer the KJV. Not surprisingly, however, the publisher’s promotional literature for the NKJV still “played the game” by falsely claiming the NKJV to be “the fifth major revision of the King James Bible.” They knew most people wouldn’t know the AV1611 underwent four major attempts to clean up typesetter errors, standardize word spelling and words in italics, and correctly record the marginal notes made by the translator committees. Those four major attempts were not revisions; they were the editions of 1629, 1638, 1762, and 1768 *that did not change the text*. Calling the 1982 NKJV the fifth “revision” of the KJV revealed the Thomas Nelson publishers to be ignorant, incompetent, or deceitful.

I mentioned earlier that *only the text* of the King James Bible is Scripture. The chapter and verse numbering system had proven from the start to be incredibly helpful when discussing and studying the Bible...but it’s not the word of God. The Scripture references in the margins, as helpful as they might be, are not Scripture. The marginal “alternative words” are also not Scripture, and a number of them are false. But I want to address paragraph markings in Bibles.

The 1599 edition of the Geneva Bible, in addition to attempting to clean up typesetter errors, inserted paragraph markings. These marks (¶) called *pilcrow*s, had been used intermittently in secular writings by scholars over the centuries when they wanted their readers to be sure to keep separate the scholar's written ideas, arguments, or subjects. During the Middle Ages it became a fad to use pilcrow as ornamentals – oversized designs in bright colors intended to add attractiveness to the otherwise-boring handwritten Bible pages. Then after the printing press matured, it was considered sophisticatedly stylish to leave spaces for colorful pilcrow to be manually drawn in after the printing was complete. Over time, non-showy pilcrow were added to printers' type inventories so they could use them if required in legal documents. Two decades after the Geneva Bible first came out, pilcrow – now that they were included in more type inventories – were added to the word of God in a spur-of-the-moment, ill-advised attempt by the Geneva printer to make God's word conform to man's opinion-based, arbitrary subject groupings and isolators. Mankind's helpful standardized chapter and verse numbering was different from non-standardized pilcrows because the numbering system merely made referencing and finding Scripture easier. Pilcrow, on the other hand, tended to isolate (if the reader paid attention to them) this section or subject from that. Because pilcrow placements were purely *subjective*, it is not surprising that years after the Geneva had pilcrow added to its text, some unknown printer began, on his own, adding pilcrow to the KJV...and, not surprisingly, the paragraph markings in the Geneva and KJV *were put in different places*. Indeed, the printer's arbitrary addition of pilcrow to the KJV abruptly ends with Acts 20:36. Nobody knows why, and today Bible believers are so suspicious of publishers making *any* changes to the KJV that any and all interest in making changes has vanished. Some say God didn't want His text to be "corralled" by man, and He wanted to use the attention-getting termination of pilcrow in His Bible to send a message about what He thinks of men using subject groupers and isolators that hinder the type of here-a-little-and-there-a-little Bible study that so enriches personal Bible study. The pilcrow in the KJV did not come from any manuscripts, have never been paid much attention to by Bible believers, and have hindered – among those who don't know better – the kind of studying God tells us to do. In fact, one "Bible scholar" tried to use the pilcrow to convince me the Gap theory is incorrect *because there is no pilcrow at the beginning of Genesis 1:2 – therefore nothing could have happened between 1:1 and 1:2*. Is he "corralling" the word of God? I trow so, bro. Pilcrow, unlike chapter and verse numbering, have no meaningful function in the Bible for several reasons:

- Subject groupings and segregations did not exist in any manuscript or Bible from the time God had Moses begin recording His word.
- Because of what pilcrow are supposed to do, *only God can add them to His marvelous word*. And the fact that He has not done so means *they are not part of His inspired, inerrant word*.
- Because nobody agrees about where to place pilcrow in the Bibles they publish, some Bibles have them and some don't. Pilcrow and so-called "paragraph Bibles" are merely man-made ornamentation and sales gimmicks.

Sadly, theology, Reason, the games Bible publishers play, and plain old unbelief have succeeded in hiding the fact that only the KJV meets God's own definition of His holy word...and that **war on the word** sells a lot of "new, improved" mere versions.

Most editions (print runs) of the KJV were primarily for the purpose of supplying more Bibles for public use, but minor efforts to clean up typesetter errors were made at the same time. There were four major attempts to clean up typesetter errors and to make the English of the Bible conform to the rapidly-maturing language of the worldwide British Empire. Those four major attempts to clean up and modernize the KJV were:

The 1629 Cambridge edition of the King James Bible was an attempt by Cambridge University to clean up the embarrassing sloppiness of both the official London commercial printers and the unofficial make-a-quick-profit printers who seemed to hire poor-quality typesetters and proofreaders (when they even bothered to hire proofreaders). This 1629 edition concentrated on publishing a quality, truly-proofed Roman text that italicized all of the proper words and properly recorded the translators' marginal Scripture references and the alternative readings of certain Hebrew and Greek words. The marginal references, for example, told where certain NT quotes of the OT could be found in the OT; and the alternative readings pointed out readings that expressed the same or similar contextual meaning. For example, the text of Acts 12:13 said **And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda**. Next to it in the margin the handwritten translator's alternative reading said, **Or, to aske who was there**. (As mentioned in AOR, translators had good reasons for not making their alternative readings part of the text, and alternative readings are often superfluous, sometimes misleading, and are not Scripture. The translators included them because it was a growing fad among scholars; a fad that would grow into the modern layman's aids that have done so much to subvert faith in *Thus saith the Lord*.)

The main result of this cleaned-up 1629 edition was to greatly reduce the opportunities for pewsters, preachers, and scholars to spend their time joking about sleepy typesetters and proofreaders...which led to more emphasis on the text, which made this 1629 edition the real turning point when preachers and pewsters first began to sit up and notice there was something genuinely special about the AV1611's text. The obvious quality of the 1629 edition caused sales of the KJV to rise sharply – so much so that it rapidly ate into sales of the cheaply-priced Geneva Bible Version – and would have eventually caused the Geneva to drop out of sight even if King James hadn't, in an effort to literally put all Christians on the same page, banned publication of the Geneva in Britain. How do we know the AV1611 was going to make the Geneva version irrelevant? Because *even in Scotland*, which had made owning the Geneva a *requirement*, everybody realized the Geneva they already owned was just a "mere version," so, even though they already owned the required Geneva, they went out and spent their money on the increasingly-known-to-be-special KJV...and printers in Scotland quickly began printing KJVs...and then in 1634 Scotland officially adopted the KJV in place of the now-acknowledged-to-be inferior Geneva version. The unprecedented quality of the KJV's spirit-feeding text had made God's word more important and in-demand than the Geneva's flesh-feeding Enlightened notes. In fact, the KJV was popularly called "the Bible without notes" to distinguish it from the Geneva. Even the Puritans who came to America in 1620 with their Geneva Bibles, quickly switched to the KJV when its merits became widely known. And as the King James was distributed around the world, Christians of all languages agreed that it is the manuscript authority.

Even the Catholic Church quit trying to sell its Douay Rheims version, and did a major revision to it to make its text similar to that of the KJV. (And they tried to hide that fact by not renaming what everybody quickly recognized as a completely new Bible version – it was *not even close* to the previous Douay Rheims.) *Everybody* – Protestant and Catholic – wanted a KJV...and it quickly went around the world and became THE word of God, THE English Bible, and THE final manuscript authority.

The 1638 Cambridge edition of the Authorized 1611 King James Bible was a result of the noticeable impact the 1629 edition had on *everybody*: Puritans, Catholics, Protestants, and users of the Geneva and Douay-Rheims Bibles. Everyone realized with increasing excitement that the KJV really was “better” ...and some people were daring to say *it might even be more than better*. The 1638 editors had compiled a list of places the 1629 edition had missed or skipped, and this 1638 edition managed to clean up almost 75% of the earlier typesetter errors. This edition, however, still had human typesetters: **Luke 7:47** which says **Her sins, which are many, are forgiven** incorrectly said **Her sins, which are many, are forgotten**. But this edition contributed to the growing reputation of the KJV, and the already-strong sales skyrocketed. The King James Bible was on its way to becoming *the* Holy Bible.

The Cambridge editions of 1629 and 1638 were so noticeably better than all of the earlier printings done in London that people began informally referring to the new printings as “the Cambridge Bible,” and began to say this was finally the quality Bible envisioned by King James’ royal mandate. Indeed, people were starting to use words to describe the KJV like “perfect,” “authoritative,” and “no exacter or truer edition in England.” The Authorized 1611 King James Bible’s inestimable text was beginning to establish it as *the* standard by which all Bible versions have been measured – and it has remained so ever since...and it earned another nickname among Christians: “the translation to end all translations.”

The 1762 Cambridge edition shows, after all the work that went into Cambridge’s two earlier editions, just how *massive* an undertaking it was in those days to accurately transfer – manually and piece-by-piece – the handwritten text of a lengthy, complex, important text to a printed page. This 1762 edition continued that huge undertaking...but also began to deal with the more-standardized word usage and spelling taking place in the rapidly-maturing, world-wide English language that had spread all around the world. This edition is sometimes called the “standardized” edition because it was the first edition to use standardized spelling based on Samuel Johnson’s famous *Dictionary of the English Language* published in 1755, which became one of the most influential dictionaries in the history of the English language. Other than its standardized spelling, this 1762 edition of the KJV had very little impact for two reasons: 1) Soon after its Bibles were printed and started being distributed for sale, a fire destroyed the bulk of the inventory. 2) The Authorized Version had already been recognized for several decades as *the* Holy Bible because of its inerrant text. 3) The King James Bible was now also being recognized from a purely literary standpoint as a great work of English literature. (The KJV has had more lasting impact on word usage and quotable quotes than the works of William Shakespeare.) Therefore, the 1762 Cambridge edition’s standardized spelling was relatively insignificant when compared with the miraculous fact that this was no “mere version,” and it was already being translated into other languages worldwide, which contributed to a unifying, shared *reverence* by God’s faithful people.

Because of the obvious difference between the Authorized Version and all other Bible versions, the authority, the truth, the faith-based love, the respectful reverence, and the confidence that Christians have in God’s word now became openly real, tangible, and provable. Because of faith and belief in the *actual words* with which God describes Himself and His word, English-speaking Christians accepted the King James Bible as God’s miraculous evidence of things not seem, as proof that everything God says in His word is spiritual, eternal, unalterable *truth*; the AV1611 became *reality*.

Interesting note: By the time Johnson’s dictionary showed up in 1755, the English of his day was *mostly identical to our English today*. Then, the widespread universal acceptance and use of the King James Bible, together with the fact that the printing press increased public literacy and made the KJV more affordable caused English usage and spelling to stabilize so much all over the world that several centuries later when we of the 20th and 21st centuries began reading our KJVs there were very few English words in it we needed to look up.

The inerrancy of the KJV was making it evident that God’s word does not come from Moses, David, Daniel, or the King James translators – *it comes from Him*. I say again, a number of places in the Bible, including Genesis 11, the Babylonian Captivity, the superscription on His cross, and the various languages God gave utterance to on Pentecost, shew it isn’t *language* that is important – it’s *Truth*...and that means anything in any Bible version in any language around the globe that expresses the same truth as that expressed in the KJV (whether or not “scholars” agree with it), and that is received by a faithful heart is *His Truthful manna with His power behind it*. The King James Bible shewed *inerrancy* has the power to sustain His believers even when they are mocked, maligned, and ridiculed by foolish modern apostates who try to pass off ERROR manuscripts, mere Bible versions, and pathetically-useless layman’s aids as some weird kind of dark-last-day “authorities.” The real problem with the modern mere versions isn’t *intellectual* – as in easy-to-recognize manuscript-mess-based errors or contradictions, it’s *spiritual* – as in the quiet-but-very-real subversion of faith in the living word of God...as demonstrated by the modern exaltation of layman’s aids above any and all Bible versions on Earth.

Titus 3:10,11 A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

Readings that agree or disagree with the KJV prove nothing. Text-type “families” prove nothing. Readings from “superior,” “inferior,” “Catholic,” “Protestant,” “ancient,” or “late” manuscripts prove nothing. Some of that info may be interesting, and some of it may reveal how biased both conservative Christians and liberal scholar-theologians can be; but it’s mostly a waste of time. My prayer is that the time I have “wasted” researching all of this stuff will help you not waste your time. In fact, the miraculously inerrant Book we feed on every day *is better and more efficacious than seeing miracles* (Lk 16:29-31; Jn 20:29; 2 Co 5:7), and when we read, heed, and feed on God’s word – by being doers – we are maintaining our salt and helping the church resist all of the damning leaven that is so ubiquitous in our modern world.

The 1769 Oxford edition was an attempt on Oxford’s part to show it could, as had Cambridge, do quality clean-up work and print an accurate text. It had taken Oxford a while to be licensed as an official Bible printer, so it was highly motivated for the task. Most of the minor stuff mentioned above had been taken care of in the earlier editions, so in this edition, Oxford

modernized the spelling of more words, and made minor adjustments to the formatting...and those touch-ups made this edition the icing on the cake; no serious need for further modernized spelling and formatting changes were ever found...and later corruption in the publishing business caused God's people to decide they'd rather stick with a Bible they knew to be God's word than buy a "new, improved" so-called "King James Bible," or "New King James Bible" of 1982, or "King James Bible 2016."

When all of the spelling upgrades, typesetter error corrections, formatting changes, etc., are considered, the 75,000 changes may sound like a lot. But they are less than one-hundredth of a percent of the multiple millions of pieces of type that *manually and for centuries* – one piece at a time – went into the printing of a King James Bible.

SELECTED RESULTS OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE

I've mentioned some of the many things throughout history that were designed to take various-sized bites out of our faith. That process is called "subversion" in the Bible, and it's an efficient and effective tactic of the Devil because the biggest and most important aspect of our relationship with the Lord is faith/belief in Him and His word; and the key to our building that relationship is doing the word. The hundreds and thousands of little bites that are daily assaulting and weakening and subverting both our faith and our doing are very real and very serious warfare problems for the Lord. So, He did two things: First, He gave us His NT defensive tactics (War College Trumpet W3) to reduce our exposure to the insidious and ever-present leaven of modern churchianity and society, and second, he gave us the unique and miraculous inerrancy of the text of the KJV. That inerrancy has always been attacked by doubt-filled Christians *for whom God's definition of His word means absolutely nothing!* But the inerrancy of the KJV is a cold, hard, irrefutable fact that has been with us for over four centuries, and we can therefore be confident doers of the literal words in God's Book. His word really is Truth. And because of what truth is, we know anything and everything scientists and theologians have come up with in their attempts to subvert the credibility and authority of the AV1611 are nothing but guesswork.

In the early 1800s, there were a few scandals in which deceitful printings of the KJV were made, which claimed to be continuations of the modernizing of the spelling. But that's not what got people so upset; they discovered that changes to the text were also being made. In 1833 the public was alerted to that fact by a treatise, *The Existing Monopoly: An Inadequate Protection of the Authorized Version of the Scripture*, and a real furor erupted. One of the scandals directly or indirectly involved the (relatively new) Oxford Press and its new generation of "scholars," and the public outrage over the embarrassingly-childish "justification" Oxford published caused its Press to reverse course and leave the KJV alone. (Oxford had tried to fool everybody by publishing a facsimile of one of the 1611 pulpit-sized KJV pages with its bold black gothic text that *most modern people could barely read*, and that had been replaced in KJV printings by modern Roman type for several centuries...and Oxford deceitfully said they were continuing to leave "antiquity" behind and "march ahead with progress." That irrelevant, condescending nonsense had nothing to do with planned the revisions to the inerrant text, and only added to the public outcry.) Then in 1847 the American Bible Society announced a "major improvement" was being worked on for the KJV. However, when the scholars hired by the ABS showed the results of 3.5 years of their work to the ABS, the ABS – and the public when the changes were leaked – were so shocked and offended by the kinds of textual changes that the ABS immediately terminated the project without publishing a single Bible. Because of these and other "scholarly" attempts to "improve" God's holy Bible, the majority of Christians – while not being "KJV-onlyers" as defined today – became precursors of today's Bible believers known for not tolerating any changes to the text of the 1769 Oxford edition of the Authorized 1611 King James Bible – even if the changes were considered "minor improvements." No jots or tittles – or even paragraph-marking pilcrows could be messed with because the Christian public had learned that scholars and theologians could no longer be trusted not to mess with God's word. This was all part of God's preservation of His inerrant text in His 1611 Bible that – *unlike all modern versions* – *has no copyright protection*. That's part of the reason the 1769 Oxford edition became *the* text of the AV1611...and is the inerrant text still in use today. To be clear: it is the same inerrant *text* as all editions of the KJV going all the way back to, and including, the 1611 gothic print runs: its typesetter errors have been cleaned up, and the English words and spelling have been mostly modernized. Any old-fashioned words and spelling that remain are humbly-and-proudly accepted by Bible believers...and have become *distinguishing Shibboleths* (Jud 12:5,6) that help today's believers recognize the AV1611 from KJV-wannabe impostors.

One of the greatest historical testimonies to the unique, never-matched greatness of the KJV is that all these centuries later, many Christian churches today still embrace and defend the King James Bible as the one-and-only legitimate English language Bible. It became the most printed book in the history of the world, and the only book in history with over one billion copies in print. The Authorized Version has been called "the most influential version of the most influential book in the world, in what is now its most influential language." It has contributed 257 commonly-used idioms to English, more than any other single source, including twice as many as Shakespeare – examples include "feet of clay," "reap the whirlwind," "let there be light," "sheep in wolf's clothing," "letter of the law," "cast the first stone," "twinkling of an eye," "skin of his teeth," "sour grapes," etc.

The King James Bible has also had a good rearguard-action effect on history (War College Trumpet W2). The salt of the KJV slowed the spread of the leaven of the Greek philosophers so that the American and French secular revolutions didn't happen until the 1700s; the KJV delayed by a century the rise of atheistic Philosophy and cultic sects...until the 1800s when all hell broke loose: such as Charles Darwin's evolution, Friedrich Nietzsche's nihilism, Karl Marx's atheism, Joseph Smith's Mormonism, Ellen White's Seventh-day Adventists, and Charles Russell's Jehovah's Witnesses, which all either reject the authority of the Bible, or have other books or people with authority equal to or greater than the Bible. The KJV kept modern theology from becoming a major factor in Christianity until the 1950s. *The delay of the American and French secular revolutions was hugely beneficial because those two Enlightenment-based revolutions, together with the British Industrial Revolution, drove the last nails into the coffin of the Feudalistic way of life that had existed since Adam*. One of the philosophers who "justified" the burial of feudalism and the rise of modern, urban, capitalistic, democratic, egalitarian, industrial society was Adam Smith, who is known mostly for his book on capitalism, *The Wealth of Nations*. Why, you ask, was it necessary for Christians to "justify" getting rid of feudalism and replacing it with the modern society we grew up in? It was necessary because God's people have always lived in some variety of authority-promoting, tribalistic, communal, vertical-

hierarchy societies (called *feudalism* in general), and have therefore linked feudalism with Christianity. In England, for example, “feudal utopia” was called “feudal wisdom” and “feudal theory” – which were articulated in the old saying, “**Land, Fealty, God.**” It meant: **Land** is a serious responsibility that God gave us dominion over (Gen 1:26); **Fealty** meant faithful, obedient service all the way up the chain of command (Rom 13:1,2); and many verses teach that **God** is glorified by this orderly, authoritative, hierarchical, communal (outward-directed, charitable) type of character-building living.

It was blasphemy to try to demean or discredit the feudal way of life, so it had to be done tactfully and gradually. Adam Smith’s *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* of 1759 led the way: Smith’s methodology in his book was a truly secular product of the Age of Reason. He subtly combined ethics, morality, philosophy, and psychology with Albertus-Magnus-like labyrinthine arguments that made you sometimes wonder if he was for or against ditching feudalism. But he made it clear that if you abandoned the charitably-outward-directed all-for-one-and-one-for-all feudalistic society and began to selfishly pursue your own interests, you were doing the right thing because you were allowing the “invisible hand” behind modern industrial economics to indirectly *make society better for everybody*. In this way, Smith’s *Theory of Moral Sentiments* arguments were full of the same kind of humanistic nothingisms – and were just as successful among the carnal populace – as were the anti-Bible, anti-monarchy, pro-democracy, pro-rebellion arguments in Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* of 1776. Because of Smith’s “convincing arguments” it wasn’t long before thoroughly-Enlightened, increasingly-materialistic Christians began going with the sludge by openly badmouthing feudalism as nothing but “oppression,” “slavery,” and “social tyranny” that forced people to live in “squalid poverty” because, even though people who lived on feudal manors were valued parts of a charitably-supportive society and therefore lacked nothing, they usually had *zero cash* with which to buy the latest faddish bauble. I say again, when society was feudalistic, life was better and *nobody complained*. But when we turned our backs to living close to the land, to the fealty of Christian duty, and to lifestyles that openly and deliberately glorified God in everything we did...we began to do exactly what the devils did when they turned their backs on God’s ways – we badmouthed being monetarily poor, being hard workers, having “tyrannical” patriarchs, and being submissively-obedient workers – nothing and nobody was spared.

“The Translation to End All Translations”

As mentioned earlier, during the 1600s the several qualities of the KJV’s text made people push aside the mere Bible versions they already owned, and purchase an Authorized Version. But during the 1700s scholars’ increasing depth of knowledge of the textual purity of this new Bible translation authorized by King James caused them to realize there was something superior about the KJV that went beyond any shallow public popularity over a shallow new fad about another mere Bible version. As scholars carefully burrowed into the text, they quietly experienced a dawning realization that went through three stages: In the first stage, they admitted the KJV was the “best” of all Bible versions. And further studies led to the second stage when they saw for themselves it was also the “most accurate” version. But they then had to deal with the intellectually challenging fact that more and more respected scholars, preachers, and pewsters, who had *privately* shared with others that this text increasingly looked like it might actually be *inerrant*, were now *openly* speaking out about how they had become *convinced* about the KJV’s inerrancy. This rising excitement over the KJV’s supposed inerrancy caused preachers, pewsters, and scholars who viewed themselves as too careful or circumspect to make rash proclamations, to investigate if the rising excitement about the inerrancy of the KJV was merited or not...because “inerrancy” was not something to be taken lightly and rashly proclaimed. Once they realized, then quietly accepted, the inerrancy of the KJV, they took the third logical step that astonished scholars they knew who had not yet fully and completely looked into the matter: These serious Bible believers who based their walks on *faith* didn’t just pay lip service to the inerrancy of the Authorized Version: because of all that inerrancy means, they rejected the error-filled Hebrew and Greek manuscripts that they had previously accepted as “the choice of serious scholars and theologians,” and they also quit using the error-filled Latin Vulgate that had long been traditionally viewed as “the scholars’ Bible.” They were no longer burdened by the “scholarly necessity” to “consult” multiple inferior, error-laden sources to help them “figure out God’s holy Scripture.” They moved on from the impenetrable quagmire of the manuscript mess, and they quit using textual aids by well-intentioned scholars who either didn’t have Biblical faith or hadn’t yet looked into *why* the KJV was so amazing and unique. Indeed, they no longer needed human reference books that never actually said anything definite, and they certainly no longer needed to waste their time with the ERROR manuscripts. As true believers, they looked for God’s word by using God’s definition of His word as the lens through which they viewed manuscripts, Bible versions, and human aids...and quickly and easily singled out the Authorized 1611 King James Bible as *the only one that didn’t disqualify itself*.

1 Tim 6:3-5 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth...

During this century of the 1700s the King James Bible – in spite of its previous typesetter errors, its antiquated first-edition blackletter font, and its non-standardized spelling – came to be regarded by more and more Christians as God’s inspired text in itself – *because there was no other text or manuscript that even came respectably close to meeting God Almighty’s definition of His holy word!* To the believers who went through these faith-based and Scripture-based stages of comparison, learning, and growth, *any* challenge to the KJV was increasingly regarded as an assault (intentional or not) on Holy Scripture itself by exalting the multiple known errors in the old manuscripts and previous mere Bible versions. It wasn’t rocket science; it was as plainly obvious as the nose on your face, and that’s why Christians whose faith was based on *Thus saith the Lord* declared the KJV to be “the translation to end all translations.”

2 Cor 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Simple comparisons of the KJV’s text with that of all other versions *was made easily available* when printers in the 1700s began publishing bilingual Bibles in which the text of the Authorized Version was compared with the texts of other Protestant vernacular-language Bibles. Christians easily and undeniably saw for themselves that the text of the KJV wasn’t just “better,”

and it wasn't just "the best" ...and, although these comparisons weren't proof, they added *conviction* to the growing enthusiasm over the KJV's inerrancy...*because nothing else could survive a side-by-side comparison!* And that is how the "theology of inerrancy" – which is defined as doctrines and beliefs based solely on *Thus saith the Lord* – came into prominence during the 1700s. Inerrancy had always been given a lot of lip service by many Christians, but the undeniable proofs of the King James Bible fueled a rising tide of faith and belief...and even *excitement*.

The Gap

An example of how the King James Bible's inerrancy made people sit up and pay attention to God's literal words in the Bible is Gap creationism (see AOR chapter D4). The Gap theory's existence among serious Bible believers can be traced back to at least the late 1500s, but now that the KJV was causing the spiritual fire and enthusiasm of *belief* to spread throughout the worldwide body of Christ, actually taking the *exact* words God used seriously had become widespread – which shewed that the words in His Bible were again commanding respect as *authoritative*. In the late 1700s, therefore, Gap creationism made a big comeback. As you know, even Scotland ditched the Geneva mere version and switched to and began printing the KJV...and a Scottish KJV Bible preacher, **Thomas Chalmers** (1780-1847) began openly shewing the Scriptures point to the Gap Theory. (Chalmers said he began looking into the Gap Theory because of the 200-year-old writings of a Protestant theologian, **Simon Episcopius** (1583-1643).

Another man who was a prominent proponent of Gap creationism and was contemporary with Thomas Chalmers was British historian **Sharon Turner** (1768-1847). The Gap theory, which is built upon a here a little, and there a little belief in God's very words, became increasingly accepted as more Christians realized the Bible has no errors and is to be taken literally. The Gap was also widely preached during the revival of the mid 1900s when Bible believers recoiled in horror at the growing number of "big name" preachers who began endorsing mere versions – Billy Graham being but one example when he endorsed and began using the newly-published RSV. He enthusiastically recommended its use as "the most nearly perfect translation in English." The Gap was even included in marginal notes in some Bibles published in the first half of the 1900s. But the vicious war on the word during the 1900s (the 1925 Scope's Monkey Trial and the "God is Dead" hippie-doper anti-authority revolution that began in the mid 1960s) made it too difficult to be a Bible believer for those to whom Christianity was just a pious act...and the Gap became too frightening for many church goers to even mention.

Why people hate and attack the KJV...when they claim it's "*just another version*" like the one they use:

It's because something inside them knows the KJV is *not* just another version. We are involved in a spiritual war. Our only effective defense, our only hope of pleasing our Saviour, is to stick with what His Training Manual says *literally*. That would normally be easy and straightforward...but this is a *spiritual* war, therefore *faith* and *belief* are critically-important requirements. And that is where the KJV enters the warfare scenario: The text of the KJV – ignoring its unique, miraculous inerrancy – delivers the same gospel message as all of the mere versions – ignoring their glaring errors. Why then do modern Christians, who approve of and recommend hundreds of mere, error-filled versions that make Christ a liar and say Elhanan is the one who killed Goliath, *openly despise the AV1611*? It's because the King James Bible **builds the kind of *faith* that results in Bible believers who reject theology, Reason, layman's aids, and *take God at His word***. Modern mere versions, on the other hand, produce the kind of Reason-based "lip-service belief" among God's people the war on the word *is designed to produce*: While reading their "latest, greatest" mere version, they, like Eve, leap with skepticism to their feet shouting, "Yea, hath God said?" ...and run to the shelf for their just-published, "filled with the mostest" layman's aid that is designed to make Self the true authority in their lives, which is idolatry. The KJV, on the other hand, is arming the church with *faithful servants* who, while reading yet another passage in their old, worn KJV that fills them with love, humility, thanksgiving, and emotion, quietly bow their heads and praise God for His wonderful word. Reason is at enmity with faith, and because the KJV enables faith, liberals are *rabidly* opposed to the King James Bible, to King James "onlyers," to the KJV's irrefutable inerrancy, and to the other *amazing facts* that apply *only* to the KJV – *and to no other Bible version or manuscript on Earth* (as discussed at the end of AOR's KJV chapter). To those who don't believe in the actual, practical inerrancy of any Bible or manuscript, when we openly tell them the KJV is *inerrant*, unbelievers get their backs up and react to that simple statement as if it's a *dare*. That's but another manifestation of the war on the word. They are aware of the fact that unbelieving scholars – for *hundreds* of years – have tried and tried to find a single provable error...because that would disqualify the KJV as God's word. But not a single error has ever been found. In all provable cases of conflict between the King James Bible and *any* new version – the King James Bible has *always* proven to be correct, true, accurate and consistent; and the new version is wrong, false, inaccurate and contradictory.

Another indisputable difference between the ERROR manuscripts and the King James Bible: It is well known that no *individual* ERROR manuscript, or even a "family" of ERROR manuscripts, or even *all* existing ERROR manuscripts, have, over the last 600 years, been able to produce a Bible version that *anybody* thinks is even *close* to being inerrant. Now let's compare the texts of those much-lauded, highly-recommended mere modern versions with the text of a single Book – the Authorized 1611 King James Bible. *That simple comparison* is why the KJV is recognized as *the translation to end all translations*. *That* is why any modern Bible version, no matter what language it is being translated into, should have a translator or committee of translators who know both *English* and the *language* of the version they are creating...and they should have a single, solitary inerrant master copy they are translating from – the KJV. That's all they need; it's the only manuscript or group of manuscripts they need to produce an inerrant modern Bible version. *And that simple fact underscores how ignorant, inept, or unbelieving most scholars and theologians have been for well over 600 years.*

But that's not all; unbelievers *love* to say things like: "Only the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts are perfectly preserved by God." But then when you open the *several modern versions they own (!)* so they can "better search for the truth," and you point out that their so-called "perfectly preserved" manuscripts were the source texts for their error-filled mere versions, they will, with the practiced ease and straight face of a career used car salesman, say, "Well, what I meant to say is: Only the Holy Bible's *original-autograph manuscripts* were inspired and inerrant." And then they look at you with a *who-can-argue-with-that* look. So then you reply, "If what you say is true, it means King David never read a copy of Moses' originally-written,

inerrant first five books of the Bible...(and he wouldn't have understood the language they were written in if he had them). And it means Jeremiah's contemporaries, who never had a chance to read Jeremiah's original-autograph manuscript that the king cut up and burned, never read an inspired and inerrant copy of Jeremiah. Indeed, Isaiah, who never saw David and Solomon's original autographs, therefore never saw inerrant copies of Psalms and Proverbs. But let's go several centuries later when our Lord Jesus Christ stood up in synagogue and read from Isaiah; if you are correct, and only the original-autograph manuscripts were inspired and inerrant, He was reading a corrupt manuscript that – if you had it today – *you'd "correct" the shit out of with your layman's aids.*" (Yes, in all probability you'd have already walked out on somebody who is apparently subverted.)

Another thing that really irks those *who just can't stop themselves* from attacking the inerrancy of the KJV: The inerrancy of the Authorized Version has been advertised and strengthened, less by the in-depth knowledge and skillful arguments of its defenders, than by the faithless blindness, illogical, contradictory arguments of its attackers. They don't know how bad it makes them look when they stupidly try to convince Bible believers that God wants us to take His definition of His word, and – without authority – allow them to redefine it in an attempt to somehow cover up for all of the obvious, idiotic, indefensible errors and contradictions they keep publishing in new mere version after new mere version. Are these people stupid? Are they corrupt atheists? Or has their lack of Biblical faith failed to make them the kind of doers of God's word that would preserve their salt and keep them from becoming casualties in the war on the word?

The Authorized Version as literature

Beginning in the 1600s when the AV1611 was making all other Bible versions irrelevant, it became a reader and a textbook. There are more quotes down through the ages about its literary beauty, its poetic elegance, its unforgettable prose that rolls off the tongue, and the way it affects us deep inside than I have cared to record. The King James Bible is today still considered one of the greatest pieces of English literature ever produced. In modern times when more and more Christians reject God's definition of His word as inerrant, verse quotations often reveal if someone uses the KJV or if they use a corrupt modern version they've altered with their latest copy of a guesswork-promoting layman's aid. But even today, any news reporter, author, or writer of any kind is aware of the fact that if they are not familiar with the content and wording in the KJV, they risk exposing themselves to a major segment of society as uninformed and incapable of understanding the source and meaning of quotes often uttered and written by others. Or, to word it the way a prominent atheist did fairly recently: "Not to know the King James Bible is to be, in some small way, a barbarian."

An interesting fact

Hebrew is an intricate, complex, sophisticated language that can easily be used to efficiently convey any information – even complicated technical info. That's why Hebrew – and an accompanying alphabet – were needed to write the OT; there's a lot of very detailed information in the OT. The info in the NT isn't nearly as complex as that in the OT, which made the Koine Greek fine for the NT. "Koine" just means a *common*, or *simple*, or *street* version of a language. In this case, the "street Greek" of commoners like the Hebrew Apostles used when they wrote the NT epistles to common folk was fine. The non-universal language *Hebrew* was for God's Hebrews during the OT era. The Greek universal language was so God's word during the NT could go to the whole known world. And the universal language of the English King James Bible accurately published both the complex Hebrew OT and the simple Greek NT in a form the entire modern world could read. Why English – even though it was a new language that didn't yet have a dictionary to which it was "supposed" to submit? Because English is the closest language to Hebrew in the world; it's a complex, sophisticated language that can efficiently, accurately, and more eloquently translate anything and everything from the dead-languages of the Hebrew-Aramaic Testament and the Greek Testament into a worldwide living language. If the KJV had to bow to the later creation of dictionaries, we'd also tend to bow to the later, incomplete addition of pilcrows! Those are some of the reasons modern Bible versions in foreign languages should be inexpensively translated from the English KJV; doing so makes it quick and easy to verify a passage in the new translation by easily consulting the text of the KJV to see if a word or phrase in the foreign language version is an accurate rendition of God's word. The fact that many people today still consult the inaccurate, unreliable, dead-language ERROR manuscripts (mostly via layman's aids) instead of the KJV just means they've been "educated" into becoming casualties by thinking Origen and so many other intellectual giants were wrong when they correctly discovered that "textual criticism" cannot produce the "true text" from the "manuscript mess." The irrefutable and miraculously-unique characteristics of the King James Bible make the modern decisions by translation committees and by pretentious scholar wannabes to use corrupt dead-language ERROR manuscripts as indefensible and foolish as were the decisions made by the ignorant, carnal-minded, agenda-driven, manuscript-destroying Masoretes. *Inerrancy* is God's proof that the KJV is God's Book. No other Bible version or manuscript can say that – because all the ERROR manuscripts and the versions that come from them are known to be corrupt.

From all points of view the King James Bible has shown that the Bible is better in English than it is in Greek or Hebrew – whether you compare them for literary flow and ease of memorization; for inerrancy; for ease of communicating God's message; for ease of conveying complex, detailed descriptives; for finding meaningful trails of here-a-little-and-there-a-little breadcrumbs; and for the various ways different verses can affect us inside when being read at different times. I say again, the King James' OT in English is recognized as better than the OT in Hebrew, and the King James' NT in English is recognized as better than the NT in Greek. This is not to say the Holy Spirit doesn't guide believers and reveal His truths to them no matter what Bible version in whatever language they are using. As pointed out several times in earlier chapters, there is no "sacred language," and that includes English. But when the available Bible versions and manuscripts that exist all over the world today are examined, the only one that meets God's definition of His word, and the only one having *so many of His fingerprints all over it*, and the only one that should be used as a "Master Original" when translating God's word into any of the many languages on Earth, and the only one that stands out as *the living word of God*...is the Authorized 1611 King James Bible.