Preface to the Natural Faithful Remnant Version ('NFRV Bible')

Summary

Every translation makes choices — this preface explains the specific choices behind the NFRV, and why its editors call it a work of preservation rather than translation.

- The NFRV as a non-copyrighted re-editing of the NKJV/KJV text.
- Key terminology corrections: "soul" → "spirit"/"body," "hell" → "grave"/"Gehenna"/"tartaroos," "cross" → "stake," "church" → "congregation," "Jesus" → "Yah'shua," "God"/"Lord" → "Yahweh," "Jew" → "Judean."
- The case for the traditional Textus Receptus Greek text over the modern critical text used by most contemporary translations.
- Historical overviews of the King James and New King James Versions, including a note on deliberately uncorrected inherited errors.

The full article begins on the next page.

Preface to the Natural Faithful Remnant Version ("NFRV Bible")

"This is the day which Yahweh has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it"! (Ps. 118:24)

This is the day to be joyfully encouraged! For today, you hold in your hand, a faithful English transliteration of the Word of Yahweh, our One True God Almighty and Creator of all this is!

The Natural Faithful Remnant Version ("NFRV") may be the world's only edition of Yahweh's Word with both Old & New Covenants properly divided into the original 7 divisions and published in a 7 volume set with all 49 original books arranged in their original order and numbered sequence!

This **non-copyrighted** work is based upon the familiar language and grammatical style of the NKJV Holy Bible. We have re-edited the Old and New Covenants from the KJV (and NKJV) in the style of the NKJV Bible, to create a faithfully corrected and revised version insofar as the known and established translation, punctuation, omissions, additions, alterations and resulting contextual errors that have crept into Yahweh's Word are concerned.

Essential Premise of the NFRV:

It is essential to understand that this work is not yet another "translation" into the English language. The NFRV is a work of preservation, not translation. It is quite probably the only faithful work of truly preserving Yahweh's Word as originally written, that has been conducted for many centuries. Following this Preface is a brief history of the great many translations which will doubtless convince most people, that already too much effort has been lost in this area of translating.

Existing translated versions with extreme variations abound, all proclaiming their complete accuracy with an alleged justification! Our efforts are not to add to this list of obviously erroneous translations, but rather to selectively edit from it, and correct those English translations of the original Hebrew (and translated Greek) that are not only accepted as the most accurate, but proven to be so.

In continuing to read this preface, you will come to appreciate that certain of the available Hebrew texts of the Bible still exist that are widely accepted and proven to be completely accurate and reliable copies of the original language writings as they were inspired. Further, it is also well established that these copies of the original texts are the basis for some existing English versions of both Old and New Covenants.

There are however, several established errors even in these time honored versions, recognized by a majority of scholars. Some of these known errors have been the alleged impetus for many of the later efforts at re-

translations of the entire work. This futile explanation does not justify these otherwise spurious efforts at re-translation of the whole.

NFRV - Preserving in Summary:

The NFRV is an inspired work of preserving Yahweh's Word as originally written and entrusted unto His Scribes.

We believe that it should always be noted that Yahweh entrusted the work of preserving His word; His oracles, to the Israelite people and not to "Jews" or to anyone else, nor did He ever make provisions to change or alter this trust. In this respect we have laboriously attended to reviewing voluminous available material in our attempts to determine what was originally inspired by Yahweh and entrusted to His Scribes.

Having entrusted preservation of His oracles to the Israelite people, does not mean that He expects everyone to learn and read only in Hebrew, nor does it mean that He will not allow an accurate translation into English or other languages. Our efforts were charged with seeking the original inspired words available and preserving those in direct equivalent English language. In this sense, we never had any intention of "translating", rather our intention was to transliterate in order to preserve Yahweh's originally inspired words together with their literal meanings, such that English readers could grasp the spiritual intent of His oracles and reconcile them with what is written in their hearts and minds.

Every Bible version that has been copyrighted is bound to be a poor version. Yahweh inspired His own words and He appointed His own writers. A legal copyright claims that the owner and author of the work in question is the copyright holder - which by legal definition, means not Yahweh. A copyright also requires by law, that the copyrighted material either be a "completely new literary content", or that it be deemed by an appointed board to be "significantly at variance from the original writing" to qualify for a copyright. Both of these requirements destroy any possibility of a copyrighted Bible being of any value at all - except to the commercial copyright owner.

There are non-copyrighted Bibles such as the King James Version, which is also corrupted. The KJV and its copy-righted successor, the New King James Version, are easy English translations to read and can be useful but only if taken into context of the original language writings, which makes them very difficult for anyone that does not read Hebrew. We used the English "style" of the KJV and NKJV, because it is the easiest form of English to read, but we ensured that our word for word transliteration was always based upon the originally inspired Hebrew language writings.

In our own humble efforts that we call the NFRV, we find our confidence in stating that we believe it to be the most accurate English version currently available. We were able to take full advantage of the voluminous material more recently available on the internet to compare a great many copyrighted and

non-copyrighted versions with the oldest known, existing copies of the original Hebrew writings, and to "transliterate" the many discrepancies and errors.

We have entertained extensive discussions with Hebrew Biblical scholars including many associated with a number of Hebrew/Jewish Bible versions. Their comments, which we have generally come to agree with by active comparisons, are that the KJV is the most accurate English version in terms of word for word translation of the Old Covenant from the current Hebrew versions, several of them citing that it is virtually "pure", at over 98.3% accurate in terms of "word for word".

However it is important to note that the modern Hebrew texts they are referring to in these comparisons, have also been adulterated, insofar as the Jewish superstitions which were for example, the impetus for changing the names and titles of Yahweh were included, as well as a number of other deliberate word “substitutions”. Also, there are a number of English idiosyncrasies that make the phrase "word for word" somewhat ambiguous, such as the difference in prepositional phrases which convert verbs to nouns in English, possessive variations, and particularly punctuation differences that are significant in terms of changing the meaning of English words and phrases.

Other difficulties arise when we try to translate directly from the original Hebrew, and that is they used no vowels and they used no punctuation. When they finally got around to adding the "vowel points" or "pointing" the original words, they had already decided to alter various things including Yahweh's name. Also, they only started incorporating any type of punctuation in the late 18th or early 19th centuries. While they had earlier translated the Hebrew into Greek, they had no punctuation and any punctuation that is contained in any Greek manuscripts is purely "fabricated", as punctuation was not invented until the 15th century by Manutius, a printer that lived in Venice. But the import of punctuation in modern English is paramount. Moving commas or semi-colons for example, can radically change meanings of sentences in English, even if the words have been properly translated, whether from Hebrew, or re-translated from Greek.

The modern Hebrew language is radically different than what was used at the time the words were originally written. Modern Hebrew uses both vowel points and punctuation, which means that most modern Bible scholars rely upon someone's interpretation of what vowels should be pointed in the original writings and what punctuation should be used. The problem with this is that Yahweh did not inspire punctuation, He inspired specific words that did not use vowels, hence the vowels and punctuation that are added are often added according to man's interpretations and are therefore often at variance as is easily demonstrated by reviewing the many versions.

Our efforts in correcting the translations for the NFRV took all of these things and many more into consideration such as the actual records of changes that have been compiled over the years in terms of the Jewish Scribes own admitted adulterations of Yahweh's original words. For some reason, even though they have felt some need to make changes to His word from time to time, they have also diligently recorded

these changes such that anyone that really wants to, can take the time to reverse them - which we have. There are many examples of word substitutions and other changes made by the early Scribes, most, if not all of which have been well documented and preserved in various Hebrew and Jewish Encyclopaedia (much like the Catholic Monks who documented their word substitutions of the Latin Vulgate within the Catholic Encyclopaedia).

The New Covenant is another story. Virtually every modern translation has used early translated Greek texts that are well established to have been deliberately adulterated, particularly as to the words surrounding the nature of the Messiah, maliciously leading almost all “Christians” to the erroneous belief that the Messiah pre-existed with Yahweh as some form of God. This coupled with all of the many supporting adulterations traced into these same texts, causes “Christians” to universally worship the Messiah as their God as opposed to Yahweh, who even the Messiah claimed was the only true God.

Yahweh's first criticism of modern spiritual Israel contained in the book of Malachi, concerns the sin of forgetting the Father. In Malachi 1:6, Yahweh asks through His prophet; "If then I be the Father, where is mine honour?" This is where most "Christians" have been lured off track. Traditional Christianity teaches the Gospel of the ‘Christ’, about the ‘Christ’. The TRUE Gospel, is the one the Messiah TAUGHT - about the "Kingdom of Yahweh"! The Kingdom of Yahweh, is Yahweh's Government, with Yahweh's laws, administered by Yahweh’s Family!

What we are pointing to here by way of example, is that proper re-translation of the existing Greek texts into English for the New Covenant, requires direct comparison to the meaning and context of the Hebrew texts of the Old Covenant wherever it is quoted from, but also wherever it was used to prophecy about the false doctrines that would be associated with the false ministry and false *church(es)* of the New Covenant period. To simply take the available New Covenant Greek texts and translate them at face value without any regard for these many prophecies would be recklessly arrogant and disobedient to the will of Yahweh.

For example, the early translators of the Greek transcripts used the word “Jew” (or “Jews”) to render the Greek “Ioudaios” and “Iudeaus”, or possibly “Iewes” – terms describing a person connected with Judea. The correct transliteration is “Judean”, not “Hebrew” or “Israelite” – and, just as importantly, not a claim about ancestry at all: a person's religious or national identity as recorded in the text does not, by itself, establish who was or was not a physical descendant of Israel.

NFRV Translation Correction Examples:

Erroneous use of the English word, “soul” where the Greek for “pnuema” or Hebrew for “ruah” were written, has been corrected to the English word: “spirit”.

Erroneous use of the English word, “soul” where the Greek for “nephesh” or Hebrew for “soma” were written, has been corrected to the English word: “body”.

Erroneous use of the English word, “cross” where the Greek for “stauros” was written, has been corrected to the English word: “stake”.

Erroneous use of the English word, “hell” where the Greek for “hades” or Hebrew for “sheol” were written, has been corrected to the English word: “grave”.

Erroneous use of the English word, “hell” where the Greek for “Gehenna” or Hebrew for “Gai Hinnom” were written, has been corrected to the English phrase: “Valley of Hinnom [city dump]”.

Erroneous use of the English word, “church” where the Greek for “Ekklesia” was written, has been corrected with English phrases: “called out ones”, or “congregation”.

Erroneous use of the English word, “hell” where the Greek for “tartaroos” was written, has been corrected to the English equivalency with the word: “*tartaroos* [a place of restraint only for fallen angels]”.

Erroneous use of English “Lord”, and “God”, replaced with the correct English transliteration “Yahweh”, where the context refers to is His name, as opposed to one of His titles, which remain, “God”, “GOD”, “Lord”, or “LORD”.

Replace certain erroneous uses of English “heaven”, with correct translation, “sky”, “clouds” or “air”, as context demands. The word “heaven” remains as Yahweh’s domain or place of habitation, akin to “plane/place of existence”.

Example of Punctuation Corrections:

Luke 23:43 normally reads, "...Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

However, the correct reading of Luke 23:43 should be: "... Assuredly, I am saying to you today, you will be with Me in Paradise."

Example of Grammar Corrections:

Replace erroneous use of the English word “Jesus” and the phrase “Jesus Christ” with the correct transliterations “Yah’shua” and “Yah’shua the Messiah”, respectively.

Replace erroneous use of English word “Amen” with correct transliteration “Amam”.

Other Correction Examples:

Replace incorrect use of the word “natural”, with correct translation “carnal”.

Replace incorrect use of words that personify His Holy Spirit, such as “He”, with the correct translation “it”.

Eliminate spurious additions to the original texts admitted to by early Catholic Monks, such as these underlined words in 1 John 5:7-8; "For there are three who bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word,

and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness on earth: the spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one".

Eliminate erroneous translation, improperly added capitalization and spurious personification of the word "Logos" to imply it means or is another name of the Messiah, when in fact it refers directly to the Father Yahweh, and literally means Yahweh's "spoken word". This correction also clarifies that Yahweh Was, Is and Will Be, the exclusive Creator of all things, all by Himself.

NFRV Free* to Public!

"This is the day which Yahweh has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it"! (Psalms 118:24)

We are immensely pleased to be able to present to you, this *FREE COPY of our best efforts in preserving Yahweh's Word. It is our humble and hopeful prayer that it will be of good service to you!

This is the day to be joyfully encouraged! For today, you hold in your hand, a faithful English translation of Yahweh's Word!

*Limited 3rd Special Edition release Free in Downloadable Electronic PDF Format. Professionally Printed, Bound Copies Available at Cost of Printing / Binding.

A Brief History of Bible Translations:

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In recent years, as evidenced by their translations, translation committees have demonstrated that they are more committed to carnal-minded, special interest groups, who desire to make the Word of God convey a particular political, sexist or ecumenical religious agenda, than they are to accurately translating the Word of God. Moreover, they have used inferior Alexandrian-type Greek texts for their translations of the New Covenant. They have further corrupted the Word of God by using common street language and superimposing a neuter gender language in their efforts to please radical minorities and others.

They are assaulting the Word of God with a vengeance. Their final *coup de grace* is the elimination of God the Father and Jesus Christ from the New Covenant itself! By changing and corrupting the Scriptures with new versions that use common street language and "politically correct", neuter gender language, the sacredness of the Holy Scriptures has been debased. Thus, the Scriptures have become secularized and profaned!

The History - How it Happened:

How did such designs against the Word of God ever develop in Western civilization, the bastion of Christianity that has published and distributed the majority of the billions of Bibles in the world today? Why do we see a world so deluded, deceived, degenerate and immoral that it is readily embracing

Christianity without God and accepting debased, corrupted, blasphemous, 'politically' correct Bibles with hardly a whimper of resistance? Rather, than rehearsing a broad overview of history, we will examine a listing of the various English Bible versions and translations, which tell the story of a slow but steady, insidious corruption of God's Word.

After the publication of the King James Version in 1611 virtually nothing was done for years to change the English Bible. However, beginning in 1871, Westcott and Hort, with a committee of revisers, began to change the Greek text of the Byzantine family, commonly known as the Textus Receptus, or the Received Text. They produced a revised New Covenant Greek text to conform to the inferior Sinaiticus and Vaticanus Greek texts from which the English Revised New Covenant in 1881 came, followed by the complete Bible in 1885, known as the Revised Standard Version.

After the RSV, many new English versions were produced:

Fenton, NT 1895;

The Emphasized Bible, Rotherham 1897;

The Bible in Modern English, Fenton 1901;

American Standard Version in 1901;

Moffatt, NT 1913, 1917; OT 1926, 1935;

Douay Bible 1941 (Catholic);

New World Translation 1950 (Jehovah's Witnesses);

Revised Standard Version 1952;

New Covenant in Modern English, J. B. Phillips 1957;

The Amplified New Covenant 1958;

Berkley New Covenant 1959;

The Amplified Old Covenant 1962;

New American Standard Bible 1963;

The Jerusalem Bible 1966 (Catholic);

New English Bible 1970;

New American Bible 1970;

The Living Bible (Paraphrased) 1971;

Today's English Version (Good News for Modern Man) 1976;

New International Version 1978;

New Jerusalem Bible 1985;

Revised English Bible 1989;

New Revised Standard Version 1990;

Contemporary English Version 1995;

New Covenant and Psalms (Inclusive Version) 1995;

New Living Translation 1996;

New American Standard Bible 1997;

The Bible in Contemporary Language—The Message 2002;

Today's New International (Inclusive) Version, proposed in 2002;

The New Testament in its Original Order, a Faithful Version, by Fred Coulter 2003.

Most of these Bibles or New Covenants listed above should never be used to determine the true teachings of God the Father and Jesus Christ. Every Bible student needs to have a Bible that is essentially a literal translation of the original languages. To understand the Word of God and to live by every word of God "... we must first arm ourselves with the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17), namely, the true Word of God, which is found in the printed Masoretic [Hebrew] text [for the Old Covenant], the Textus Receptus [Greek text for the New Covenant], and the King James Version and other faithful translations" (Hills, The King James Version Defended, 2000, p. 242, bracketed comments and emphasis added).

Hills protégé, Theodore P. Letis, wrote of the demise of the modern-day Bibles because political and sexist agendas are now controlling the philosophy of Bible translation committees and publishing companies: "The Bible in English has fallen on hard times. Not only do some feminists see it as a format from which to transform Ancient Near Eastern, patriarchal religions [through the use of inclusive versions] into modern, 20th century paradigms of egalitarianism [i.e. Communism, under the guise of liberalism, and world government], but the American Bible publishing industry has reduced it to a commodity, hoping to maximize gains by imposing a marketing-manufactured consensus on conservative evangelicals, calling it the beginning of a 'new tradition [Christianity without God]' " (Ibid., back cover, bracketed comments added).

<u>The Flawed Translation Practices:</u>

Today, too many translators are not actually translating; rather, they are interpreting what they think the writer was thinking or intending to write at the time he wrote it. This method of translation is utterly

absurd! How can a translator today, thousands of years removed, presume to know what the writer was thinking or intending to write when he wrote the text? It is impossible! When the writer wrote the words that became the text, he expressed his thoughts in those words. He wrote what he was thinking or what he was inspired or commanded by God to write. Therefore, the written words of the biblical Hebrew and Greek need to be translated accurately, faithfully and truthfully because they are the words of God—the absolute truth from the God of Truth.

In his book The Word of God in English, Leland Ryken wrote a great deal about this dynamic equivalent method of translating the Bible, exposing the fundamental errors of such translations: "No principle has been more central to the dynamic equivalent project than the claim that translators should translate the meaning or ideas rather than the words of the original....

When these translations claim to give 'the meaning of the original' (GNB [Good News Bible]) or 'the thought of the biblical writers' (NIV [New International Version]), they signal that the translators were committed to translating what they interpret the meaning of the original to be instead of preserving the language of the original. The premise is that 'a thought-for-thought translation ... has the potential to represent the intended meaning of the original text even more accurately than a word-for-word translation' (NLT [New Living Translation.

"The fallacy of thinking that a translation should translate the meaning rather than the words of the original is simple: There is no such a thing as disembodied thought, emancipated from words. Ideas and thoughts depend on words and are expressed by them. When we change the words, we change the meaning ...

The whole dynamic equivalent project is based on impossibility and a misconception about the relationship between words and meaning. Someone has accurately said that 'the word may be regarded as the body of the thought,' adding that 'if words are taken from us, the exact meaning is of itself lost.'

"When the words differ, the meaning differs. To claim that we can translate ideas instead of words is an impossibility" (Ryken, pp. 79-81, emphasis added).

Ryken rightly points out that a translator is only a steward of God's word: "For essentially literal translators, the translator is a messenger who bears someone else's message and 'a steward of the work of another' whose function is 'to be faithful to what is before him' and 'not ... to change the text.'

Dynamic equivalent translators assume the roles of both exegete and editor. In those roles, they perform exactly the same functions that exegetes and editors perform—they offer interpretations of the biblical text right in the translation, and they make stylistic changes that they think will improve the biblical text for a target audience" (Ibid., p. 91).

Furthermore, Ryken shows the fallacy of making readability the ultimate goal of translation while sacrificing truth: "Because dynamic equivalence has dominated the field for half a century, the criterion of

readability (code language for 'easy to read') has become the chief selling point for modern translations...Having had a quarter of a century to ponder the matter, I have concluded that the criterion of readability, when offered as a criterion by itself, should be met with the utmost resistance. To put it bluntly, what good is readability if a translation does not accurately render what the Bible actually says? If a translation gains readability by departing from the original, then readability is harmful. It is, after all, the truth of the Bible that we want." (Ibid., p.91, bold emphasis added).

Being truthful and faithful to the original is the key to excellence in an English translation because "The only legitimate appeal to readability comes within the confines of a translation's having been truthful to the language of the original. Faithfulness to what the Bible actually says is like a qualifying exam. If a translation does not give us that, it has failed the test, and we can be excused from inquiring into its readability.

Within the confines of accuracy to the original text, a translation should strive to achieve maximum readability by avoiding obsolete words and demonstrably archaic language, and by using with discretion and where necessary words that are slightly archaic and words in a reader's passive as distinct from active vocabulary (words that are understood by readers though not regularly used by them)" (Ibid., p. 92, emphasis added).

As Ryken clearly states, it is a fallacy to translate the Bible on the basis of how we would say something or how the Bible writers would express something if they were living today. Of this he wrote: "Once again we need to state the obvious: The biblical writers are not writing today, they wrote millennia ago. To picture them as writing in an era when they did not write is to engage in fiction, and it distorts the facts of the situation.

"The real objective to claiming to know how a biblical writer would have expressed himself if he were writing today is that it is totally speculative. There is no verifiable way by which we can know how biblical writers would express themselves if they were writing today.

In our experience it is invariably translators who want to produce a colloquial Bible expressed in a contemporary English idiom who propose to know how biblical writers would have expressed themselves if they were living today. To engage in such speculation is to remake the Bible in our own image....It is pure speculation how Paul would have expressed himself if he were speaking and writing today.

We do not know how he would have expressed himself in modern terms. We do not want a speculative Bible. We need a Bible based on certainty. What is certain is what the biblical writers did actually say and write" (Ibid., pp. 98-99, emphasis added).

Ryken summarizes what makes the best Bible translation as follows:

1. Accuracy;

2. Fidelity to the words of the original;

3. Effective diction;

4. Theological orthodoxy;

5. Preserving multiple meanings;

6. The full exegetical potential of original text;

7. Expecting the best from readers;

8. Transparency to original world of the Bible;

9. What you see is what you get;

10. Respect for the principles of poetry;

11. Excellence of Rhythm;

12. Dignity and beauty.

In his conclusion Ryken writes: "English Bible translation has lost its way in the past half century. We are further from having a reliable and stable text than ever before. The only Bible reader who is not perplexed is the one who sticks with just one version and does not inquire any more broadly into what is going on. English Bible readers deserve a translation that they can trust and admire because it represents standards of excellence and dignity" (Ibid., p. 293, bold emphasis added).

The Wrong Greek Text Has Been Used For the New Covenant: Nearly all the modern translations of the Bible, such as the GNB, NIV, NEB, NLT, NASB and The Inclusive Version, The Message—In Contemporary English, have been translated from corrupt Greek texts—eclectic versions—or the combining of various spurious texts. After over one hundred years of scholarly and textual research, these deficient, corrupt texts have now been shown not to be the true text of the New Covenant. Rather, the very text that was rejected, beginning with Wescott and Hort in the 1880's, has now been proven to be true text of the New Covenant that God has preserved for us today. That Greek text is the Textus Receptus—Stephens 1550 Greek text and other similar texts.

Need to Return to the Greek Textus Receptus:

There is a strong movement and demand, even by scholars, for a return to the more accurate Textus Receptus Greek text. In his book, The Ancient Text of the New Covenant, Dr. Jakob Van Bruggen shows why the Alexandrian type texts are inferior and should be rejected as the basis for translating the New Covenant. After more than a century of using these texts for translation, he is calling for a return to the Byzantine Greek text known as the Textus Receptus—Stephens 1550 edition and other similar Greek texts in the Textus Receptus family that were used during the Reformation.

In his concluding remarks, Van Bruggen calls for a rehabilitation of the ancient text which he calls the Church text: "There is, therefore, every reason to rehabilitate the Church text again. It has already been accepted for centuries and centuries by the Greek Church as the ancient and correct text. Its right does not have to be proven. The person who thinks he knows better than those who preserved and transmitted the text in the past should come along with proof. The churches of the great Reformation deliberately adopted this ancient text when they took the Greek text [instead of the Latin Vulgate] as a starting-point again. This text deserves to remain recognized as reliable, unless real contra-proof can be given from a recovered better text. However, there are no better texts ... we plead for rehabilitation of the ancient and well-known text. This means that we do not dismiss this text which is found in a large majority of the textual witnesses and which underlies all the time-honored Bible translations of the past, but [that we] prize and use it" (page 36, bracketed comments added).

Van Bruggen's call for the rehabilitation of the Textus Receptus begins with new translations and the casting aside of the United Bible Societies eclectic "Majority Text" that was created by subjective scholarly opinions and guesses: "The examination of the modern textual criticism and the readings it defends should, however, not stand in the service of eclecticism whereby the Byzantine text is only accepted as one of the sources for optional-readings. Eclecticism is always a subjective matter and only creates new mixed [false] texts. The criteria of eclecticism also contradict each other. Now that considerable agreement concerning the texts exists in the broad stream of the text-tradition, there is no need to resort to eclecticism. Copies of a corrupt text-form in the 2nd century, accidentally saved, would then receive a place equal to that of copies from many other centuries which are generally accepted as faithful copies [which is not correct]" (Ibid., p. 38, bracketed comments added).

"The rehabilitation of the received text should, in the churches of the Reformation, result in putting this text into use again, and that first of all for Bible-translation. Translations which go back to the Byzantine text do not need to be old translations ... But the newest translation should still give access to the text of the Church of the ages and not to the text of five learned contemporaries in the 20th century. The Greek New Covenant of the United Bible Societies should as a basis for translations of the New Covenant be exchanged for an edition of the Textus Receptus ..." (Ibid., p. 38).

Historical Overview and Preface to the

King James Version:

[Re-written – with inherent errors left for demonstration, from copy-righted material published by Nelson Publishers as part of the KJV.]

Based on a suggestion made by John Reynolds, King James of Great Britain was taken with the idea of completing a correct translation of a Bible which would be satisfactory to all. In 1604, within a month of

this proposal, a plan for the translation had already been put forth. Fifty-four translators were chosen to represent a balance of clergy and laity, theologians and linguists.

Formal work was delayed until 1607 and only forty-seven of the original fifty-four translators actually worked on the Bible. The translators were divided into groups of six -- two each working at Oxford, Cambridge and Westminster. Members of the groups met frequently to review and refine the text of the translation. For the most part the translators labored at considerable personal sacrifice and without financial support. Several of them did not live to see its completion of the Bible.

The translators referred to every translation available in an effort to achieve accuracy and beauty in phrasing. These included: the best Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek manuscripts then existing, the Bishop's Bible, Tyndale's version, Coverdale's version, the Geneva Bible, versions of the Bible in Spanish, French, Italian, German, the Vulgate and other Latin versions, and the Rheims-Douai version.

In addition, every scholarly work or assistance was sought to give insight and improve the accuracy and beauty of the final text.

In 1611, after at least a nine month period of final review and revision, the King James Bible was completed. A flattering dedication to King James was included at the beginning of the Bible.

Since the 1611 version, two minor revisions were made during the 1600's. In 1769 a revision was completed to modernize spelling. It is this version which is referred to as King James today. The King James Bible has been the most universally accepted translation for centuries. It is well known for its Elizabethan English, poetic literary style and accuracy in preserving the exact wording and structure of the underlying text.

Historical Overview and Preface to the

New King James Version:

[Re-written – with inherent errors left for demonstration, from copy-righted material published by Nelson Publishers as part of the NKJV.]

Purpose:

In the Preface to the 1611 edition, the translators of the Authorized Version, known popularly as the King James Bible, state that it was not their purpose "to make a new translation . . . but to make a good one better." Indebted to the earlier work of William Tyndale and others, they saw their best contribution to consist in revising and enhancing the excellence of the English versions which had sprung from the Reformation of the sixteenth century.

In harmony with the purpose of the King James scholars, the translators and editors of the present work have not pursued a goal of innovation. They have perceived the Holy Bible, New King James Version, as a

continuation of the labors of the earlier translators, thus unlocking for today's readers the spiritual treasures found especially in the Authorized Version of the Holy Scriptures.

A Living Legacy:

For nearly four hundred years, and throughout several revisions of its English form, the King James Bible has been deeply revered among the English-speaking peoples of the world. The precision of translation for which it is historically renowned, and its majesty of style, have enabled that monumental version of the Word of God to become the mainspring of the religion, language, and legal foundations of our civilization.

Although the Elizabethan period and our own era share in zeal for technical advance the former period was more aggressively devoted to classical learning. Along with this awakened concern for the classics came a flourishing companion interest in the Scriptures, an interest that was enlivened by the conviction that the manuscripts were providentially handed down and were a trustworthy record of the inspired Word of God.

The King James translators were committed to producing an English Bible that would be a precise translation, and by no means a paraphrase or a broadly approximate rendering. On the one hand, the scholars were almost as familiar with the original languages of the Bible as with their native English. On the other hand their reverence for the divine Author and His Word assured a translation of the Scriptures in which only a principle of utmost accuracy could be accepted.

In 1786 the Catholic scholar, Alexander Geddes, said of the King James Bible, "If accuracy and strictest attention to the letter of the text be supposed to constitute an excellent version, this is of all versions the most excellent." George Bernard Shaw became a literary legend in our century because of his severe and often humorous criticisms of our most cherished values. Surprisingly, however Shaw pays the following tribute to the scholars commissioned by King James: "The translation was extraordinarily well done because to the translators what they were translating was not merely a curious collection of ancient books written by different authors in different stages of culture, but the Word of God divinely revealed through His chosen and expressly inspired scribes. In this conviction they carried out their work with boundless reverence and care and achieved a beautifully artistic result." History agrees with these estimates. Therefore, while seeking to unveil the excellent form of the traditional English Bible, special care has also been taken in the present edition to preserve the work of precision which is the legacy of the 1611 translators.

Complete Equivalence in Translation:

Where new translation has been necessary in the New King James Version, the most complete representation of the original has been rendered by considering the history of usage and etymology of words in their contexts. This principle of complete equivalence seeks to preserve all of the information in the text, while presenting it in good literary form. Dynamic equivalence, a recent procedure in Bible

translation, commonly results in paraphrasing where a more literal rendering is needed to reflect a specific and vital sense.

For example, references to Christ in some versions of John 3:16 as "only Son" or "one and only Son" are doubtless dynamic equivalents of sorts. However, they are not actual equivalents of the precisely literal "only begotten Son," especially in consideration of the historic Nicene statement concerning the person of Christ, "begotten, not made," which is a crucial Israelite doctrine.

In keeping with the principle of complete equivalence, it is the policy to translate interjections which are commonly omitted in modern language renderings of the Bible. As an example, the interjection behold, in the older King James editions, continues to have a place in English usage, especially in dramatically calling attention to a spectacular scene, or an event of profound importance such as the Immanuel prophecy of Isaiah 7:14. Consequently, behold is retained for these occasions in the present edition. However, the Hebrew and Greek originals for this word can be translated variously depending on the circumstances in the passage. Therefore, in addition to behold, words such as indeed, look, see, and surely are also rendered to convey the appropriate sense suggested by the context in each case.

In faithfulness to our readers, it has seemed consistent with our task to cooperate with competent scholars who are governed by the biblical principle of divine authorship of the Holy Scriptures. Therefore, all participating scholars have signed a document of subscription to the plenary and verbal inspiration of the original autographs of the Bible.

The Style:

Students of the Bible applaud the timeless devotional character of our historic Bible. Yet it is also universally understood that our language, like all living languages, has undergone profound change since 1611. Subsequent revisions of the King James Bible have sought to keep abreast of changes in English speech. The present work is a further step toward this objective. Where obsolescence and other reading difficulties exist, present-day vocabulary, punctuation, and grammar have been carefully integrated. Words representing ancient objects, such as chariot and phylactery, have no modern substitutes and are therefore retained.

A special feature of the New King James Version is its conformity to the thought flow of the 1611 Bible. The reader discovers that the sequence and identity of words, phrases and clauses of the new edition, while much clearer, are so close to the traditional that there is remarkable ease in listening to the reading of either edition while following with the other.

In the discipline of translating biblical and other ancient languages, a standard method of transliteration, that is, the English spelling of untranslated words, such as names of persons and places, has never been commonly adopted. In keeping with the design of the present work, the King James spelling of untranslated words is retained.

King James doctrinal and theological terms, for example, propitiation justification and sanctification, are generally familiar to English-speaking peoples. Such terms have been retained except where the original language indicates need for a more precise translation.

Readers of the Authorized Version will immediately be struck by the absence of several pronouns: thee, thou, and ye are replaced by the simple you, while your and yours are substituted for thy and thine as applicable. Thee thou, thy, and thine were once forms of address to express a special relationship to human as well as divine persons. These pronouns are no longer part of our language. However, reverence for God in the present work is preserved by capitalizing pronouns, including You, Your, and Yours, which refer to Him. Additionally, capitalization of these pronouns benefits the reader by clearly distinguishing divine and human persons referred to in a passage. Without such capitalization the distinction is often obscure, because the antecedent of a pronoun is not always clear in the English translation.

In addition to the pronoun usages of the seventeenth century, the -eth and -est verb endings so familiar in the earlier King James editions are now obsolete. Unless a speaker is schooled in these verb endings, there is common difficulty in selecting the correct form to be used with a given subject of the verb in vocal prayer. That is, should we use love, loveth, or lovest? do, doeth, doest, or dost? have, hath, or hast? Because these forms are obsolete, contemporary English usage has been substituted for the previous verb endings.

The real character of the Authorized Version does not reside in its archaic pronouns or verbs or other grammatical forms of the seventeenth century, but rather in the care taken by its scholars to impart the letter and spirit of the original text in a majestic and reverent style.

The Format:

The format of the New King James Version is designed to enhance the vividness and devotional quality of the Holy Scriptures:

—Words or phrases in italics indicate expressions in the original language which require clarification by additional English words, as also done throughout the history of the King James Bible.

—Verse numbers in bold type indicate the beginning of a paragraph.

—Oblique type in the New Covenant indicates a quotation from the Old Covenant.

—Poetry is structured as contemporary verse to reflect the poetic form and beauty of the passage in the original language.

—The covenant name of God was usually translated from the Hebrew as "LORD" (using capital letters as shown) in the King James Old Covenant. This tradition is maintained. In the present edition the name is so capitalized whenever the covenant name is quoted in the New Covenant from a passage in the Old Covenant.

The Old Covenant Text:

The Israelite Bible has come down to us through the scrupulous care of ancient scribes who copied the original text in successive generations. By the sixth century A.D. the scribes were succeeded by a group known as the Masoretes, who continued to preserve the sacred Scriptures for another five hundred years in a form known as the Masoretic Text. Babylonia, Palestine, and Tiberias were the main centers of Masoretic activity, but by the tenth century A.D. the Tiberian Masoretes, led by the family of ben Asher, gained the ascendancy. Through subsequent editions, the ben Asher text became in the twelfth century the only recognized form of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Daniel Bomberg printed the first Rabbinic Bible in 1516-17, that work was followed in 1524-25 by a second edition prepared by Jacob ben Chayyim and also published by Bomberg. The text of ben Chayyim was adopted in most subsequent Hebrew Bibles, including those used by the King James translators. The ben Chayyim text was also used for the first two editions of Rudolph Kittel's Biblia Hebraica of 1906 and 1912. In 1937 Paul Kahle published a third edition of Biblia Hebraica. This edition was based on the oldest dated manuscript of the ben Asher text, the Leningrad Manuscript B19a (A.D. 1008), which Kahle regarded as superior to that used by ben Chayyim.

For the New King James Version the text used was the 1967/1977 Stuttgart edition of Biblia Hebraica, with frequent comparisons being made with the Bomberg edition of 1524-25. The Septuagint (Greek) Version of the Old Covenant and the Latin Vulgate were consulted. In addition to referring to a variety of ancient versions of the Israelite Scriptures, the New King James Version also draws on the resources of relevant manuscripts from the Dead Sea Caves. In a few places where the Hebrew is so obscure that the King James followed one of the versions, but where information is now available to resolve the problems, the New King James Version follows the Hebrew text.

The New Covenant Text:

There is more manuscript support for the New Covenant than for any other body of ancient literature. Over five thousand Greek, eight thousand Latin, and many more manuscripts in other languages attest the integrity of the New Covenant. There is only one basic New Covenant used by Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Orthodox, by conservatives and liberals. Minor variations in hand copying have appeared through the centuries, before mechanical printing began in A.D. 1450.

Some variations exist in the spelling of Greek words, in word order, and similar details. These ordinarily do not show up in translation and do not affect the sense of the text in any way.

Other manuscript differences, regarding the omission or inclusion of a word or a clause, and two paragraphs in the gospels, should not overshadow the overwhelming degree of agreement which exists among the ancient records. Bible readers may be assured that the most important differences in the English New Covenant of today are due, not to manuscript divergence, but to the way in which translators view

the task of translation: How literally should the text be rendered? How does the translator view the matter of biblical inspiration? Does the translator adopt a paraphrase when a literal rendering would be quite clear and more to the point? The New King James Version follows the historic precedent of the Authorized Version in maintaining a literal approach to translation, except where the idiom of the original language occasionally cannot be translated directly into our tongue.

The manuscript preferences cited in many contemporary translations of the New Covenant are due to recent reliance on a relatively few manuscripts discovered in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Dependence on these manuscripts, especially two, the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, is due to the greater age of these documents. However, in spite of their age, some scholars have reason to doubt their faithfulness to the autographs, since they often disagree with one another and show other signs of unreliability. The Greek text obtained by using these sources and related papyri is known as the Alexandrian Text.

On the other hand, the great majority of existing manuscripts are in substantial agreement. Even though many are late, and none are earlier than the fifth century, most of their readings are verified by ancient papyri, ancient versions, and quotations in the writings of the early church fathers. This large body of manuscripts is the source of the Greek text underlying the King James Bible. It is the Greek text used by Greek-speaking churches for many centuries, presently known as the Textus Receptus, or Received Text, of the New Covenant.

Since the latter nineteenth century the theory has been held by some scholars that this traditional text of the New Covenant had been officially edited by the fourth century church. Recent studies have caused significant changes in this view, and a growing number of scholars now regard the Received Text as far more reliable than previously thought.

In light of these developments, and with the knowledge that most textual variants have no practical effect on translation, the New King James New Covenant has been based on this Received Text, thus perpetuating the tradition begun by William Tyndale in 1525 and continued by the 1611 translators in rendering the Authorized Version.

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