The Pseudoscience of Biblical Criticism

O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

1 Timothy 6:20

The Pseudoscience of Biblical Criticism

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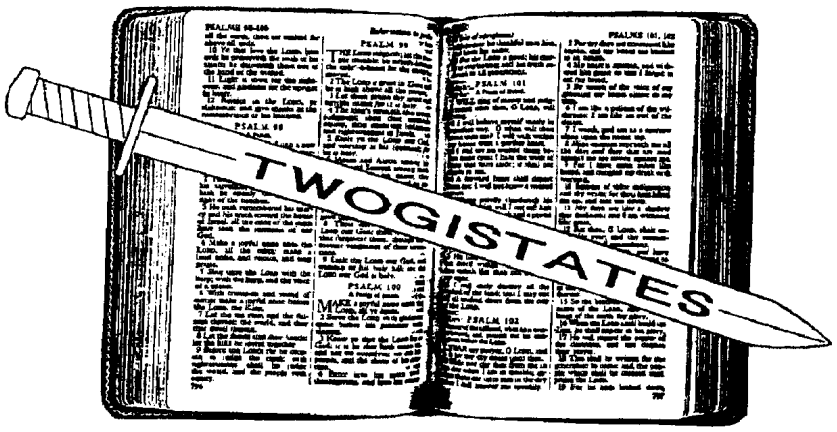

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.
Hebrews 4:12

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PREFACE

Pseudoscience is the improper use of the language of science to present information that appears to be scientifically sound, but in reality, it is based on false assumptions with the sole intent to deceive. It is the mechanism underlying many of the claims of advertisers and pollsters that we hear so much about today. The national opinion surveys that often appear in newspaper articles and on television programs fall into this category. The pollster may call 500 people about a subject. He'll then make nation-wide applications about the specific answers as if they were the epitome of truth for all citizens. For example, if a pollster calls 500 Democrats to determine President Clinton's popularity, he'll certainly get a positive answer. If he calls 500 Republicans, he'll just as certain get just the opposite negative answer. In any case, it doesn't matter what the question might be, let alone the convictions of the people called, for any conclusion based on such a small sample could never accurately portray the opinion of several million people. This kind of information is intended to deceive and falls clearly into the realm of pseudoscience.

Regardless of the scholar's claim of it being otherwise, biblical criticism is also a pseudoscience. Its findings are based on false assumptions, opinions, and innuendoes of religionists, which would never be accepted by the real scientific community. Nevertheless, because it has the appearance of being scientific, biblical criticism has clearly been accepted by the majority of the Christian world as the only way of evaluating God's dealings with mankind. The end result has been a degradation of belief in the Bible as God's inerrant Word and a general distrust of those who don't prescribe to the perspectives of the elite Christian scholars. This makes the common person's views about the Word invalid and leaves the scholar as God's only spokesman. This is a far cry from the priesthood of all believers as taught in the Bible.

This paper discusses the tenets of many of today's scholars and exposes the falsity of what some would advocate as being unmitigated truth. The reader will readily see that none of the unsupported claims of modern biblical scholarship even come close to the precepts of exactness demanded by true science. It is safe to say that biblical criticism is an illegitimate child of science, sired by modern scholarship and is truly pseudoscience at its best.

The critical reader will most likely question my qualifications to challenge the pseudoscientific methods of the scholar; perhaps even be highly critical of my comments because I lack a doctorate in biblical studies. If this paper were about some intellectual discussion of the Bible, this would perhaps be a valid concern, but I ask the reader to keep in mind that it is not about the Bible, it is about science, and I do have a scientific degree. I further suspect that the same critic who may make negative comments about my work will not utter one word of disapproval about the edicts of Bible scholars who do not hold scientific degrees. And even further, he will probably honor their efforts as if they were highly respected scientists.

Do not be misled, leave the truths of science to the scientist, the deception of pseudoscience to the scholars, and trust God to preserve and reveal His Word to mankind. He doesn't need anyone to tell Him what He has said and how to say it. He knows exactly what He is doing. He has a plan for this world, and I don't see Him changing His agenda this late in the program to make it agree with "what the scholars say."

Carl Graham

* * * * * * *

"There exists no reason for supposing that the Divine Agent, who in the first instance thus gave to mankind the Scriptures of Truth, straightway abdicated His office; took no further care of His work; abandoned those precious writings to their fate. That a perpetual miracle was wrought for their preservation—that copyists were protected against the risk of error, or evil men prevented from adulterating shamefully copies of the Deposit—no one, it is presumed, is so weak as to suppose. But it is quite a different thing to claim that all down the ages the sacred writings must needs have been God's peculiar care; that the Church under Him has watched over them with intelligence and skill; has recognized which copies exhibit a fabricated, which an honestly transcribed text; has generally sanctioned the one, and generally disallowed the other."

John William Burgon
Dean of Chichester
The Revision Revised, 1883

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"Our opponents talk of the true view of inspiration as the mechanical theory; but it is easier to nickname a truth than it is to disprove it. At this moment, we believe the infallibility of Holy Scripture to be the centre of the conflict. To discuss the question of what is taught in Scripture is one thing, but to question Scripture itself is quite another. We can be largely tolerant of all teaching which reverences the Word of God; but for that conceit which calls God himself before the bar of human criticism, we have no word of denunciation sufficiently expressive. If we were dealing with heathen we could understand it; but from those who call themselves Christians it is not to be endured."

Charles H. Spurgeon
The Sword and The Trowel
July, 1887

The PSEUDOSCIENCE
of
BIBLICAL CRITICISM

INTRODUCTION

Science and technology are the driving forces in today's society. It seems that if a person can be convinced that something is scientifically sound (whether it is or not), he'll accept it without further question. Consequently, the whole world has adopted this theme as people attempt to sell everything from ideas to fairy tales. The concept is "if anything can be made to appear to be scientifically based, it has to be all right." All areas of life, from the home to the work place, have been influenced by this seemingly easy way to get ideas across.

The field of theology is no exception as theologians have readily affiliated biblical research with the claims of natural science. By combining the two, new birth has been given to a totally new field of Bible study called biblical criticism which purports to be based on science and thus cannot be refuted. It is this endeavor that has brought about the many new ideas and philosophies that we hear so much about in the Christian world today.

At its beginning, the concept of biblical criticism was not readily received by the scholarly community at-large. However, it eventually crept into the curriculum of the seminaries and colleges and new generations of scholars accepted it as being a valid science. Since they held the respect of the Christian community, their views were accepted in the churches and the traditional view of a God-breathed Bible fell into disrepute.

Basically, the average Christian didn't care about scholarly beliefs and practices. All he wanted was a Bible he could read, understand, and trust. The biblical critic knew this, and also knew that the typical Christian would not accept a frontal attack on the Bible that had been used for almost nineteen centuries (Translations based on the Hebrew and Greek texts which underlie the King James Bible). Therefore, a more devious plan took shape to sell a Bible that was purported to be older, clearer, and more accurate. Additionally, and most importantly, the theologians claimed this was a Bible that would hold up under the most rigorous scientific scrutiny. Their phenomenal success has far exceeded even the most optimistic expectations. This is evident by the many versions of the Bible based on this so-called new science being enthusiastically accepted throughout the world.

It must be noted that the unprecedented acceptance of biblical criticism by scholars and lay people alike has ushered in a new era in Christian theology. Ultimately, this acceptance generated a new hierarchy in the Christian community that artificially placed the scholars on a higher spiritual plane than the common person. Thus, a new division

in the religious world evolved which placed the scholars in an elite group distinctly separating them from the laity.

Because the scholars are advocating viewpoints totally different from that of the historic church, the average Christian is left in a situation where he doesn't know what to believe. He certainly can't turn to the modern Bible for one version says one thing, another something else, and hardly any two agree. He is left scratching his head and having to call on the intellectuals to tell him what God has said. As a result, the true message of the Bible gets left out, and he ends up accepting the scholar's opinion in place of the Gospel. What this does in actuality is put the scholar in the place of God. He (the scholar) becomes the supreme authority for all matters of faith and practice and many follow him to their own destruction.

The issue is not whether these critics are lost or saved, for only God can accurately assess that. However, we can look at a broader issue and determine if any of God's commandments are being violated regarding the changing of His Word. Further, we can compare proven scientific investigative techniques with the techniques of the biblical critic to determine if the methodology being used is in reality true science. It would seem that infractions in either of these two areas would be enough for the average Christian to totally reject these new versions of the Bible as well as anything else that comes under the heading of biblical criticism.

BIBLICAL CRITICISM

Biblical criticism is an inclusive term that is used by modern scholars to define their approach to understanding the meaning and identifying the text of the Scriptures. According to the publishers of *Biblical Criticism: Historical, Literary and Textual,* there are basically three types of criticism acknowledged today as being the most important: historical, literary, and textual.[1] Each of these plays a significant role in fashioning the final wording of the modern Bible.

Historical criticism is a study of the Scriptures and other available documents primarily to establish the historicity of the events presented. The scholars in this area look for evidence to establish the presence of such things as the universal flood, the Exodus from Egypt, the campaign of Joshua, and any other historical event described in the Bible. In general, their view of the Scripture is that if an event can't be proven by external sources, it didn't happen.

Literary criticism deals with underlying sources, the different types of literature, and questions regarding the authorship, unity, and dates of the materials. The scholars in this area search for discrepancies in the Scriptures and try to correlate what they deem to be errors in relation to how they think various passages ought to read. They treat the Bible as a secular book of literature for their evaluation.

Textual criticism is, according to Fee, "…the science that compares all known manuscripts of a given work in an effort to trace the history of the variations within the text so as to discover its original form."[2] The scholars in this area attempt to take all the known Greek manuscripts, compare them, and establish what they believe to be the original texts. Some of these scholars claim to believe in the divine inspiration of the original manuscripts of the Scriptures.[3]

Notice that Dr. Fee includes in his description that textual criticism is a science, and it is taught as science in practically all religious schools and universities today. If it is truly a valid science, then the world should listen to what the scholars are saying; but if it is not, then we should ignore their words because nonscientific investigations have no credibility whatsoever.

THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD

The scientific method is a set methodology which, when used properly, will lead to a degree of confidence in whatever is being studied. It is the proven way the scientific community has chosen to evaluate new ideas, reevaluate old ones, and even look at themselves. It is an important tool for the scientist, and if it can be used in the biblical world, the scientific method is an important tool in the hands of competent Bible scholars as well.

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines the scientific method as "Principles and procedures for the systematic pursuit of knowledge involving the recognition and formulation of a problem, the collection of data through observation and experiment, and the formulation and testing of hypotheses." [4]

There are six steps in following the scientific method: [5]

1. Identifying the problem.
2. Setting up a hypothesis.
3. Developing a method to solve the problem.
4. Gathering the data.
5. Evaluating the data.
6. Drawing conclusions.

Problems are identified many ways. They can be formulated from observation, failures, or just plain old curiosity. Whatever the problem may be, or however it may be stated, it must be stipulated in such a way that it can be tested. Otherwise, the scientific method will not apply.

The hypothesis must be set up so that it can be refuted. It must not include nonobservables, personal conclusions, or value judgments. In other words, the hypothesis must be objective statements or questions that can be observed and evaluated to reach an unbiased conclusion.

Hypotheses are often referred to as theories in the secular world, but keep in mind that a theory may be an unproven assumption or just pure speculation. Theories and hypotheses are not always used in the same context.

Developing a method is accomplished by specifying the observable consequences. This means that the method must include all possible ramifications which will prove or disprove the hypothesis. In other words, if one thing is true, then some other must be also. For example, when smoking and cancer are studied, it is expected that smokers will have a higher rate of cancer than nonsmokers will. The method will include looking at both smokers and nonsmokers and comparing the cancer rates among the two groups.

Gathering the data is a natural event of developing the method. If no data can be gathered, then it is impossible to evaluate a situation using the scientific method. Any conclusion without data to back it up is purely speculation.

Evaluating the data and drawing conclusions are intrinsically interrelated, but one must be exceptionally careful not to draw conclusions before all the data is evaluated. It is also important that sufficient data be present and that extraneous data not be allowed to enter into the process. Either insufficient or extraneous data can give false information, which will lead to an erroneous conclusion. Often times a positive answer cannot be obtained, but through statistical analysis, one can obtain the probability of the occurrence or nonoccurrence of an event.

Drawing conclusions is where most mistakes are made in any scientific inquiry. This is probably because the process readily lends itself to subjectivity. It is often times difficult for the researcher to separate his own biases from the conclusions dictated by the data, and as a consequence, he may force the answer he wants. This is the major reason why all scientific tests must be capable of replication (duplication) by unrelated parties. Replication is the only true test of scientific validity.

PSEUDOSCIENTIFIC METHODS

Our society is filled with assertions of scientific credibility ranging from the simple to the complex which, when closely evaluated, will not measure up to true science. This type of declaration is often observed in opinion surveys and high pressure selling presentations. While many of these kinds of claims may appear to be scientifically based, they are in fact structured to deceive or to present a personal point of view. This is not science; it is simply pseudoscience in its truest form.

Pseudoscience is described in *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* as "a system of theories, assumptions, and methods erroneously regarded as scientific"[6] Pseudoscience often gets confused with bonafide science and leads to the wrong conclusions. To that end, one needs to be familiar with some of the pseudoscience methods as given by G. C. Helmstadter.[7]

1. The method of tenacity refers to something being accepted as a fact because we have always believed it to be so. The old saying about it being unlucky for a black cat to walk across one's path would fall into this category, especially among the very superstitious. The beliefs passed on by our forefathers are another example. We don't know exactly why we believe certain things, but we accept them as facts, and no one can convince us otherwise.

2. The method of intuition is based on things known to be true because of common sense. These are what Helmstadter calls self-evident truths. It is true because it has always been so. It is an intuitive truth, however, which is accepted as fact. An example of the method of intuition was the belief that the earth was flat.

Intuition is not all bad. It is a large part of how we run our daily lives. However, we must remember that our intuition is based on our own experiences and causes us to respond relative to the things we perceive that are best for us. It is not intended to withstand scientific scrutiny, or to be an analytical tool of inquiry. We need people in our world with good intuition, but this needs to be moderated with knowledge and facts. Intuition must never be allowed to take the place of informed judgment, especially where other people are involved.

3. The method of authority is an appeal to some highly respected authority, and the stated facts are to be accepted without further question. This is a dangerous approach to take for we can't always trust those who are called authorities. At one time, the medical profession taught that all diseases were in the blood. Consequently, people were bled to help them get well. Needless to say, many people died from this procedure.

Today the government is often the cited as the final authority, and we are led to believe that our officials always have our best interests at heart. However, events of the past will tell us that even this source can't be trusted. For example, if you listen to the government researchers, they'll tell you that practically everything on this planet causes cancer. Remember the cranberry scare a few years back? There was no validity to the scare but it sure hurt the cranberry industry. Nothing has changed in the cranberry industry, but cranberries now do not cause cancer. Authorities are not always right unless they stick with the facts and stay away from suppositions.

4. The rationalistic method reaches the solution of any problem by individual reasoning, and the conclusion reached is only as valid as the person's reasoning capability. Unfortunately, most people's reasoning is biased based on what they alone

have experienced in life. In most cases, it'll be OK for them but will not apply to the rest of the population.

The problem with the purely rationalistic approach to knowledge is that hidden assumptions, which may or may not be true, are often made. For example, Team A beat Team B and C; so it is rational to assume that they will beat Team D. I wouldn't bet my life savings on this kind of logic, for there are too many variables to be sure. However, reasoning is important in its place and must be used properly to aid the scientist in coming to factual conclusions.

Pseudoscientific methods have so invaded the modern scene that it is often difficult, if not impossible, to determine what is true and what is false; deception has become the normal way of life. Religious people as a group are most vulnerable to false claims, as we are more likely to believe that a person is telling the truth if he says he is following God's way. After all, we are taught that Christians always tell the truth, and since our Bible scholars claim to be Christians, we would never think they would knowingly deceive anyone.

Perhaps it is not in good taste to question professing Christians about their basic beliefs as God has endorsed the priesthood of all believers. However, we are no longer talking about man's relationship with God. What we are really addressing is man's relationship with science and science's man-made rules. Since the scholars have gotten away from religion and into the area of science, it is not only proper, but also imperative, that we put everything they say to a strict scientific test. After all, we know from experience that many things that march under the banner of scientific inquiry are not always true science.

IS BIBLICAL CRITICISM SCIENTIFIC?

Is biblical criticism scientific? This is a valid question since the scholars who participate in the areas of biblical studies claim to be following a scientific approach in finding the truth about the Scriptures. Dr. T. C. Smith of Furman University says "techniques have been developed which have enabled restoration of the original manuscripts 'for all practical purposes.'"[8] If this is true, we owe the scholars a great debt of gratitude; but if it is false, we must ignore all their claims and classify all those who subscribe to the theories of biblical criticism as pseudoscientists and refuse to believe anything they produce as a result of their misguided efforts.

First, let's look at historical criticism. Is it scientific? This was previously stated as an approach to the Scriptures in order to establish the historicity of the events presented. A favorite topic of the historic critic is the first 11 chapters of Genesis. Since it is impossible to establish from independent sources that Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden, and further, since it can't even be proven that there was a Garden of Eden, the historic critic has rejected this part of the Bible as myth and folklore.

Another example of the use of historical criticism applied to Scriptures is found in the account of Noah and the flood. Archaeologists have uncovered ancient writings, the Epic of Gilgamesh, which describe an event similar to the flood. The historic critic has concluded, based on the Epic of Gilgamesh, that the biblical flood was an account of a secular story. They also state that many races and tribes tell the same kinds of stories.[9] Consequently, they deduce that the story of Noah and the universal flood is myth.

From the examples given, you can see that the historic critic does not concern himself with scientific facts but relies totally on opinion to reach invalid conclusions. Certainly, he will make many statements that seem to be facts. However, close scrutiny will reveal that some will be out of context while many others will be from his own imagination. The methods of historical criticism do not fit the scientific criteria for collection of data, let alone the correct interpretation, even if the meager data were valid. One can only conclude that historical criticism falls clearly into the pseudoscience category.

How about literary criticism, is it a true science? This was previously stated as dealing with underlying sources, the different types of literature, and questions regarding authorship, unity, and dates of the materials. The literary critic has brought the Christian world such outstanding theories as "Moses could not have possibly written the first five books of the Bible." They come to this conclusion because of the different literary styles that can be detected in the Pentateuch. However, there is no common agreement among literary scholars about who wrote what and how much. Some see many authors, while others see only a few. (See Appendix 1 for further discussion.)

A point to make about scientific claims is that to be accepted the end results must be capable of replication (repeated) by other scientists. If a test cannot be replicated with the same results as the original experiment, it is discarded, or classified as invalid. It is perfectly clear that nowhere in the vast amount of research in the literary field are there findings that lend themselves to replication. Failure of this alone is enough evidence for the true scientist to reject the work of the literary critic. Literary criticism is definitely not science and must be classified as only another pseudoscience. (See Appendix 2 for an example.)

It would be natural to assume that textual criticism is a science simply because so many well known, conservative scholars endorse this method of biblical research. Looking again at Dr. Fee's definition, we see that textual criticism is "…the science that compares all known manuscripts of a given work in an effort to trace the history of the variations within the text so as to discover its original form." This sounds commendable because all Bible-believing Christians want to know for sure that they have the best edition of God's Word in which to seek His guidance for their lives. If textual criticism is truly a science, then we can put a high degree of trust in what the textual critics tell us.

There is no simple way to describe the many and varied procedures the textual critic goes through to reach a final wording on any part of the Scriptures. Perhaps a few

of the basic rules of textual criticism will help put the issue into an understandable perspective.

According to Richard N. Soulen, "The principles of textual criticism are little more than rules of thumb, or 'codified' common sense as someone has suggested, or 'common sense' and use of reason."[10] (Here is a clue about textual criticism because pseudoscience has a method of intuition which relies on common sense.) He lists these principles as being comprised of external and internal criteria.

External criteria is determined by a complex method of placing the manuscripts into families which show relationships between each other. These families of manuscripts are classified and given weight based on the opinions of the scholars who are doing the evaluation. According to Pickering, only a small percentage of the over 5,000 extant manuscripts are given high priority because they feel this group gives the oldest wordings.[11] Primarily, only two manuscripts are represented because they seem to outdate all the rest. In other words, the scholars disregard most of the information and draw conclusions on merely a small number of readings with the highest priority given to one or two. This is hardly scientific in approach or conclusion. After all, didn't Soulen say textual critics use a "rule of thumb"? Credible scientists clearly will not accept this loose approach to inquiry.

There is a major question that must be answered before conclusions can be drawn about external criteria. This question is simply, "Are the oldest manuscripts really the best?" The oldest manuscripts date back to the fourth century, but does their age give them precedence over all other later manuscripts? This question can be answered readily if one will take the time to investigate the oldest extant manuscript, the *Codex Sinaiticus.* The *Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Alexandrinus,* published by The British Museum, gives an excellent overview of this document.[12] Here, one will find many books and chapters missing, writings that don't belong in the Bible, and a document with so many changes and mistakes that the authentic scientific community would discard it completely as an unreliable witness. However, the textual critic gives the *Sinaiticus* high priority for all his decisions and ignores the discrepancies that discredit it. (See Appendix 3 for further information on the *Sinaiticus.)*

The oldest manuscript is not always the best. This is evident by the many early church writings that give correct readings in practically every area that scholars see as problems. However, the critics refuse to accept them for they do not affirm the pet theories of textual criticism. The so-called external evidence theory of the textual critics is no more than a fairy tale. It has been given credibility by gullible people following blindly the work of others who were out to destroy God's Word and glorify themselves. (See Appendix 4 for further information on quotes from the early church fathers.)

Internal criteria are not quite as complex as external criteria as there are some set rules to follow. Again, these are taken from Soulen.[13]

1. The more difficult reading is often preferred. The logic behind choosing the more difficult reading is that the textual critic feels that the scribes would most likely simplify an expression rather than make it more complex.

2. Which reading would be more likely to have given rise to the other? In selecting which reading would be more likely to have precipitated the other, the scholar would have to make a subjective decision based on what he knows about the text being considered.

3. The shorter reading is generally preferred. It is generally thought that the scribe would be more likely to add to the wording rather than take away from it. This rule often times creates conflict with rule one, and the scholar will have to make a subjective decision about which one to follow.

4. The reading characteristic of the author is generally preferable. The textual critic studies all the writings he can acquire of a particular author. When a diverse question comes up, he simply makes a decision based on what he thinks the author would have written.

Textual criticism's internal criteria violate true science in many areas. Some of these are as follows:

1. The criteria are supposed to be self-evident to the researcher.

2. All the rules have subjective criteria that cannot be measured or objectively evaluated.

3. All the rules were designed to focus textual studies in a single direction so that only one conclusion may be reached.

4. Much data is ignored because of biased rules. The large majority of the manuscripts and the writings of the early church leaders are not considered as valid evidence.

5. The rules themselves violate each other. For example, if the oldest is the best, then how can the shortest or the least complex be the best.

There is really no need to go any further with an evaluation of textual criticism methodology, for it is obvious that all its conclusions are filled with false premises, subjective rules, opinion, and no valid facts which can be accepted as true science; clearly, there is no objective way to measure any of the criteria effectively. Consequently, the whole area of textual criticism is no more than a pseudoscience that has gained great headway into the Christian world by slick salesmanship, deception, and misleading statements.

There are other clues that designate the whole body of biblical criticism as a false science. For example, you often hear scholars making statements such as, "Most scholars accept 'such and such' as a fact," as if this makes it so. One of the

pseudoscience methods is to quote a higher authority, and the listener is expected to accept it as genuine without question. The modern biblical critic doesn't even give you the authority's name, and you are expected to believe whatever he says because "everybody else is doing it." Sounds like some of the logic my teenage son tried to use to convinced me it was OK for him to do certain things. The *Harbrace College Handbook* calls this a "fallacy of irrelevance."[14] Quoting nonexistent references not only defies valid science, it also grossly violates the rules of effective writing. (See Appendix 5 for examples.)

Another statement you often hear from the Bible scholar is, "The original manuscripts don't contain 'such and such'." This is stated as if the person talking knows for sure what is in the original manuscripts, and you wouldn't dare disagree with the original writings as God has handed them down. This is not only calculated to intimidate the listener, it is supposed to give the speaker much more authority for it infers that he alone knows for sure what God has said. (See Appendix 6 for examples.)

It might also be mentioned that if the biblical scholars have actually reestablished the original manuscripts then there would be only one underlying text and only one English version of the Bible. However, there are many different Greek and Hebrew texts, and multitudes of translations, and they all claim to be the very words of God. These disagreements should make it obvious that something is seriously wrong here, for it would be folly to worship a God who is not sure about what He has said and is always changing His mind.

OBVIOUS CONCLUSIONS

It can only be concluded that there is no evidence of a scientific nature in the methodology of biblical criticism. This whole area of study is made up of half-truths, innuendoes, and opinions. It is a pseudoscience in its truest sense, and nothing that comes out of this endeavor can be trusted to be either from God or illustrative of His Word for mankind.

Actually, when we get to the bottom line, the whole issue is about faith. This has nothing to do with science but has everything to do with the Author of science and His promise to preserve His words for every generation. It is about whether one believes God or not. He tells us not to mess with His words, He tells us He'll preserve His words, He tells us He'll reveal His words to us through the leading of the Holy Spirit, but **He never tells us He'll allow His words to become corrupted and let man straighten them out.** When man begins to put words in the mouth of God, he has overstepped his authority and has dared God to do anything about it. I'm sure God will handle it in His own way, but He expects us to at least be leery of those who would question what He has said. (See Appendix 7 for quotes from the Bible about providential preservation.)

The Christian is presented with a quandary as he attempts to find out which version of the Bible can be trusted to give all of God's truth. However, for the diligent seeker,

the problem is not unsolvable for he will find that the King James Bible (1611 Authorized Version) is the only English Bible available today which has not been corrupted by the meddling of enlightened scholars. It is the only version that you can trust to give all of God's perfect truth without compromise, it has stood the test of time, it reflects the thoughts and teachings of the early churches, and it can be relied on totally for daily living and the promise of life hereafter.

* * * * * * *

AUTHOR'S COMMENTS

Perhaps the reader is wondering about my qualification for writing about science and biblical criticism. I have a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering, a Master's degree in Industrial Management, and a Master's degree in Christian Education. In addition, I have served 30 years in the Air Force in the areas of engineering test and management. I have also taught in the mechanical, industrial, and robotics areas at a technical college.

I don't expect to change the viewpoint of anyone who is involved in biblical criticism because a commitment to a cause produces a strong resistance to opposing views, but I do hope to at least cast doubt in the minds of those who have questions about the new versions of the Bible. I urge you to thoroughly research the issues addressed in this paper, and then make up your own mind with full knowledge of what is at stake. It could mean the difference between what God really said and what someone thinks He might have said.

There are many organizations that support the King James Bible and its underlying texts. Some of these are listed below.

AV Publications, PO Box 280, Ararat, VA 24053 is the parent company for G. A. Riplinger's book, *New Age Versions.* This book is destined to become the classic work against pseudoscience.

Bible Baptist Bookstore, PO Box 7135, Pensacola, FL 32534 has an extensive listing of books and literature which support the King James Bible. Dr. Ruckman has written a great book on *Manuscript Evidence*.

The Bible For Today, 900 Park Avenue, Collingswood, NJ 08108, is an excellent source for pro King James Bible literature. I encourage the reader to contact them for their extensive listing. Be sure and ask for Dr. Waite's book on *Defending The King James Bible.*

The Trinitarian Bible Society, 217 Kingston Road, London, England 5W19, 3NN, has been in business since 1833 and has stayed on the firm ground of supporting the

texts underlying the King James Bible. They have a comprehensive list of material that has solid biblical evidence to defend their stand.

The *0 Timothy* Magazine, 1219 N. Hams Road, Oak Harbor, WA 98277, is an exceptional monthly publication for those who want to hear the other side of the story about biblical criticism. Brother Cloud has many well-written publications that expose the modern heresy.

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Carl Graham

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APPENDIX 1

Can You Trust the Scholars?

I attended Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, North Carolina from 1982 to 1985. During my years there I had a number of professors who did not believe the Bible as it is written. I have listed a few of the things they tried to teach me to give the reader insight into what is going on in the scholarly world.[1]

Theistic evolution is a fact. This means that man evolved the way the evolutionist say he did, and when he evolved enough to look for God, there He was.

The first eleven chapters of Genesis are made up of myths. It was taught as being developed from several sources at various times throughout Old Testament history.

There are many errors in the Bible. It can only be trusted in a broad sense for faith and practice. It is not accurate in areas of history and science.

Moses did not write the Pentateuch.

Moses did not lead the children of Israel out of Egypt as the Bible presents it. He was probably a slave that escaped with a small number of other slaves.

The parting of the Red Sea did not happen. The escaped slaves crossed at the Reed Sea that was shallow. They waded across.

The wandering in the wilderness for forty years did not occur.

Much of the Bible, especially the Old Testament, is of more recent origin than it claims to be.

The book of Job is totally of secular origin.

David did not write many of the Psalms attributed to him.

The miracles Moses performed in Egypt are all natural occurrences in that part of the world.

The Ten Commandments were written about 200 BC and placed in the Bible by the priests so they could use them to control the people.

The prophecies of the Bible were written after the events happened to make them appear as if they were accurate forecasts.

Jesus was born of a young woman. It is impossible for a virgin to conceive as the Bible presents it.

Many of the sayings attributed to Jesus were not His. They were added by writers of the Gospels.

There is no Satan, and no hell.

All people, who worship God, in any form, will be saved.

An unknown author wrote John's Gospel.

Paul did not write many of the books attributed to him.

The Book of Revelation is spurious and shouldn't be in the Bible.

The above comments are only illustrative of the many and varied human approaches to God's Word by the scholars of today. But, I didn't learn about the saving power of Jesus Christ at the seminary; I learned this truth from faithful believers, some of whom never attended school. Here are a few of the things the seminary didn't teach.

The Bible is the inerrant, inspired Word of God. It is all truth, without error, and is the only source needed to learn about God's plan for mankind.

The only way to salvation is by acceptance of Jesus as your personal savior. His blood, the perfect sacrifice, was required by God to atone for the sins of the world. This was realized by His death on the cross.

Since the Bible is inerrant, all the miracles and wonders described within its pages are from God, and they stand as proof that He is who He says He is.

The issue of salvation does not require scientific proof, but is one of faith. Those who seek proof are missing the point completely. Faith is the only issue where God is concerned. One either believes Him, or he doesn't. If he does, the truths of the Bible present no problems. But, if he doesn't, the whole of the Bible is subject to doubt and questioning.

Unless we come to Jesus with the faith of little children, we cannot see the kingdom of God. This simply means to accept God at His word, trust in Jesus, and live a life that speaks of Him and His teachings.

Can you trust the scholars? Only if you know as much about the Bible as they do, for only then can you tell when they are telling the truth. This is not to imply that all Bible scholars are corrupt, but to point out that all have been exposed to corrupt doctrines, and that it is hard even for them to tell what part of the exposure had an effect on their faith. The line between faith and intellect can sometimes be awful fuzzy, especially if what the person is saying seems to make good sense.

How does this tie into the modern versions of the Bible? It has to do with several specific areas, but none so important as the underlying texts which are being espoused today. There is not a modern Bible version that has not been corrupted by the liberal ideas of the present day scholarship. All one has to do is read the published writings of the committee members of any version to fully understand this.

In reality, they all use basically the same corrupt text of Westcott and Hort. Today it is called the Nestles/Aland or United Bible Societies text. Whichever is claimed as the source, they both have had over a century of liberal scholarship corruption. And, the corruption gets more profound as various scholars vie to be the next in line with a faith-shaking discovery about the errors of the Bible.

The Bible says that God gave the original manuscripts as the Holy Spirit moved the writers. God placed the Old Testament in the care of the priests of Israel and the New Testament in the care of the Church. He watched over them throughout the centuries to keep them pure and undefiled. If He had wanted man to question what He did, He would have written it in the Scriptures.

When the printing press was discovered, God inspired King James to order the Bible to be printed in the language of the English-speaking people. The translators of that day had not been bombarded with doubt and unbelief as have our modern scholars. Consequently, there was produced an English Bible which used the preserved texts and gave us a trustworthy version of the Word of God. It is known today as the Authorized King James Version of 1611.

Can you trust the scholars? The answer is no! It is not that they all set out to deceive; it is simply that they all have been deceived. If you look at it from their standpoint, you'll understand that many of them honestly think that God gave us

inerrant scriptures, ignored them for centuries, let them get totally corrupted, and then called intellectual scholars to straighten them out.

You have to decide where you stand on God's Word, for you alone will stand before Jesus to account for your actions here on earth. My advice is don't take anyone's word for it (not even mine). Search out the facts about Bible versions. When you are satisfied that you know enough about them to make an informed choice, ask for God's guidance, and I'm sure your decision will be one which will please Him.

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APPENDIX 2

Hypothesis of the Biblical Critic

There are many and varied hypotheses which have been formed to explain what the critics see as problems in the Scripture. A few of these are listed below.

The Documentary Hypothesis is a theory that the Pentateuch was a compilation of selections from several different written documents composed at different places and times over a period of five centuries. It is defined as consisting of four documents: J - written about 850 BC; E - written about 750 BC; D - written about 621 BC; and P - written about 570 BC.[1]

The Four-Document Hypothesis of the Synoptic Gospels is a theory that the writers of the four gospels used common sources to form their final writings. These sources were M, Mark, Q, and L.[2]

The Two-Source Hypothesis is a theory that Matthew and Luke used two independent sources to write their Gospels. These sources were Mark and Q.[3]

As the reader can readily see, there is no end to theories and hypotheses where the Bible critic is concerned. None of these hypotheses have been put to a valid scientific test. In fact, there is no way to test them, as the named sources cannot possibly be consulted. However, this does not slow the critics down, for they continue on as if these theories were God-approved and etched in stone. These theories, and others like them, are responsible for many of the changes we see in the modern versions of the Bible.

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APPENDIX 3

Is the Oldest Manuscript Really the Best?

According to Dr. Everett F. Harrison, Professor of New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary and one of the translators of the New International Version of the Bible, there are nearly 4,700 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament available today.[1] The greatest majority of these are fragments of the various books. The oldest of these which presents all the books of the New Testament is the *Codex Sinaiticus.* It is purported to date back to the first half of the fourth century. It has portions of the Old Testament, all the books of the New Testament, and other spurious books that don't belong in the Bible.[2] When scholars mention the oldest manuscripts, they are frequently talking about the *Codex Sinaiticus.*

If the *Codex Sinaiticus* is the oldest manuscript, and if it is supposed to be the best, then it would make sense to translate it, call it the Word of God, and get on with the business of doing God's work. Obviously, this has not been done, for it is not as complete as the scholars would lead us to believe. I have looked, in some detail, at Helen and Kirsopp Lake's photocopies of the manuscript[3] and here are a few of the things that I observed.

1. It is not a complete Bible as a large portion of the Old Testament is missing.

2. Even if it were complete, there are many mistakes and omissions in the text that hinder its being translated verbatim.

3. There were three or four scribes (depending on who is doing the evaluation) who copied the text originally.

4. There were a large number of correctors, apart from the scribes, who corrected the text over the centuries.

5. There is no way to accurately determine the exact date of the manuscript. At best, the fourth century date is a guess.

6. There are many spurious books included in the manuscript, which are not accepted by the Christian community as being canonical.

7. There is no way to trace the history of the manuscript, and without the history, the trustworthiness of the document cannot be ascertained.

In addition to the above observations about the text itself, there are a few subjective thoughts about the *Codex Sinaiticus* and its position of prominence among the translators that must be considered.

1. The *Codex Sinaiticus* was not handed down through the church, and as such, it must be suspect for God has always used His church to preserve the New Testament Scriptures.

2. The many errors, mistakes, and corrections alone would be enough for the true scientist to reject the entire manuscript as being a false witness of God's Word.

3. If we followed the text and books of the *Codex Sinaiticus,* we would have a Bible that would be totally foreign to the Christian world.

4. God would not give us His Holy Word and let it become corrupted, as some seem to advocate.

5. If the *Codex Sinaiticus* is such a good manuscript, why did the Saint Catherine monks of earlier years toss it in the trash can?

6. God would not use liberal scholars, many who don't believe in the virgin birth and miracles of the Bible, to give His pure Word to the world.

7. It does not make sense to throw out 1,900 years of Scripture tradition, ignore the early church writers and accept a document of which only God (and Satan) knows its history.

The bottom line is you can't trust the modern scholars who don't have enough faith to believe that God said He would preserve His Word, and that He has done exactly that over the centuries. The battle is not over which Bible is right; the real battle is over whether one believes God or not. The true test is not scientific evidence, but faith in the Word of God.

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APPENDIX 4

Comments on I John 5:7

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." I John 5:7, King James Bible.

All the modern translations either omit this verse or footnote it to cast doubt on its authenticity. The reason is given by a top scholar in the field of biblical criticism, Bruce Metzger.[1] He says in part that there is no manuscript evidence to support including it in the Bible; all the early manuscripts do not have it, and the earliest manuscript in which it can be found was written about 1520.

The oldest, most complete manuscript is the *Sinaiticus.* According to the British Museum, it dates somewhere between 300 and 350 A.D.[2] This document does not include I John 5:7.

The problem, as I see it, is whether there are any references to I John 5:7 in writings earlier than 1520, the year it supposedly was added to the Bible. I have listed below two quotes by early Christian writers and the dates they lived. There are many others in Latin writings that were taken from earlier copies of the Scriptures.

A.D. 120-202, Irenaeus.

"so that according to them, all things being are indeed said (in Scripture to be), as it were, one;"[3]

A.D. 200-258, Cyprian.

"The Lord says, 'I and the Father are one;' and again it is written of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, 'And these three are one.'"[4]

A.D. *345-421,* Jerome.

"The Latin Vulgate translated by Jerome (382-405) included I John 5:7 as we know it in the King James Bible. "

Miscellaneous Sources

Edward F. Hills in his book *Believing Bible Study* cites several early sources in support of I John 5:7.6 Some of these are as follows:

Two Spanish bishops in the 4th century.

Cassiodorous of Italy (A.D. 480-570)

Several African orthodox writers from A.D. 439 to A.D. 534.

Old Latin manuscript of the 5th or 6th century.

In the *Speculum* of the 5th or 6th century.

It was found in the great mass of the later Vulgate manuscripts and in the Clementine edition of the Vulgate, the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church.

The above information is not conclusive, but it does indicate that many questions must be answered by the scholars before they take it upon themselves to reject any of God's words. What anyone believes to be true as related to what God really said must always be moderated with a strong conviction that God said He would preserve His words.

For those who would be interested in researching this further, I recommend *A History of The Debate Over 1 John 5:7-8* by Michael Maynard, Comma Publications, PO Box 1625, Tempe, AZ 85281-1625. Maynard does a superb job of documenting the history of 1 John 5:7-8 and provides information that erases any doubt, even for the most skeptic, that these verses were in the original manuscripts.

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APPENDIX 5

Everybody Else Is Doing It!

Three of the most often quoted phrases of the theological pseudoscientists are some variation of, "Most scholars agree", "The best manuscripts say" and "The original manuscripts say.'' These statements are supposed to give credence to whatever has been stated. Unfortunately, both liberal and conservative scholars have fallen into this trap of believing something is true because "everybody else is doing it." To illustrate, I have included a few statements from noted authors who use these phrases in their writings. (The underlined emphasis is mine.)

Louis A. Barbieri, Jr.

Most conservative scholars acknowledge that the Gospel writers made use of various sources.[1]

William Barclay

It is well-neigh universal judgment of scholars, both ancient and modern, that Peter is not the author of *Second Peter.*[2]

Burton L. Goddard

They inform the reader that certain verses that follow have traditionally been thought to be part of Holy Writ were, in the judgment of the translators, not present in the original writings.[3]

Edgar J. Goodspeed

I have closely followed the Greek text of Westcott and Hort, now generally accepted. Every scholar knows its great superiority to the late and faulty Greek texts from which the early English translations from Tyndale to the Authorized Version were made.[4]

Roy L. Hunnicutt, Jr.

A majority of Old Testament scholars assumes that the authorship of Exodus is much more complex than the ascription of authorship to a single person would imply.[5]

J. N. D. Kelly

It is difficult to decide whether Jude himself composed the epistle, or whether it has been fathered on him pseudonymously. Many scholars are satisfied that he did, and the possibility can't be ruled out.[6]

Bruce M. Metzger

Although Genesis is silent as to its author, Jewish and Christian though had long accepted it as the work of Moses. However, nearly all modern scholars agree that, like other books of the Pentateuch, it is a composite of several sources, embodying traditions that go back in some cases to Moses.[7]

NIV Editors

The earliest and most reliable manuscripts do not have John 7:53-8:11.[8]

Edwin H. Palmer

For one who loves God and wants to know exactly what God says to him, a modern translation that is accurate and clear is necessary.[9]

C.I. Scofield

It is generally agreed that verse 7 (Reference to I John 5:7) has no real authority, and has been inserted.[10]

R. C. Sproul

The King James Version is simply less accurate in its representation of the original writings of Scripture than most modern translations.[11]

Frank Stagg

Most scholars believe that one of the narratives which Luke (1:1-4) alluded to was the Gospel of Mark.[12]

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APPENDIX 6

Scholars Assail the King James Bible

Often times the textual critics will attack the King James Bible and those who ascribe to its teachings in a derogatory manner as if their statements are all that is needed to show its inferiority. Some of these statements and corresponding scholars are given to illustrate the widespread acceptance of this practice.

Robert G. Bratcher

I trust that you have a high enough view of Scripture not to use a translation that is textually inadequate, and linguistically antiquated, such as the King James Version. To use the King James Bible is to relegate the Bible to a dead past, distant and irrelevant; of interest to the professional scholars, historians, antiquarians, but of no practical value for the average person.[1] (Author's note: Dr. Bratcher is the translator of the *Good News Bible.)*

James A. Brooks

The popular KJV is based on the "Received Text" now known to lack trustworthiness at many points.[2]

D. A. Carson

The plain truth of the matter is that the version that is so cherished among senior saints who have more or less come to terms with Elizabethan English, is obscure, confusing, and sometimes even incomprehensible to many younger or poorly educated Christians.[3]

Kirsopp Lake

Speaking generally, the Protestant version (English and German) were made from the Greek texts of Erasmus and his successors. They represent a rather corrupt form of the late Byzantine text. … this version is known in England as the "Authorized" and in America as the King James.[4]

Joseph P. Lewis

…the Kings James is no longer completely intelligible to all readers. It is no longer the most accurate and most readable English rendering of the Word of God.[5]

Our survey has shown that those who feel they can escape the problem of translations by retreating into the citadel of the KJB have a zeal for God that is not in accord with knowledge.[6] (Author's note: Dr. Lewis is a translator for the NIV.)

Neil R. Lightfoot

The King James Version rests on an inadequate textual base.

The King James Version contains many archaic words whose meanings are either obscure or misleading.

The King James Version includes errors in translation.[7]

Edwin H. Palmer

The KJV is not, however, the best translation to use today. This is for two reason: (1) it adds to the Word of God and (2) it has now-obscure and misleading renderings of God's Word.[8] (Author's note: Dr. Palmer is the Executive Secretary and Coordinator of the NIV Translation Committee.)

Preface to the Revised Standard Version

The King James Version of the New Testament was based upon a Greek text that was marred by mistakes, containing the accumulated errors of fourteen centuries of manuscript copying.[9]

Philip Schaff

It was not the fault, it was the misfortune, of the scholars from Tyndale downward, to whom we owe our English Bible, that the only text accessible to them was faulty and corrupt.'[10] (Author's note: Dr. Schaff was the editor of the American Standard Version of 1901.)

R. C. Sproul

But one fact concerning the King James Version cannot be ignored: the King James Version is simply less accurate in its representation of the original writings of Scripture than most modern translations."

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APPENDIX 7

God Said He Would Preserve His Word

There are at least two very important points about the preservation of the Bible that must be addressed: (1) God either preserved His Word as He promised, or (2) He lied about it. There is no in between position about this proposition, for it all has to do with

faith. One either believes God, or He doesn't. If he believes God and His Holy Word, the choice is obvious. But, if He doubts God's resolve to protect His Holy Word, the end result is doubt and confusion about what He really said.

The only question that needs to be answered for those who accept God at face value is "What does the Bible say about God's preservation of His Word?"

Regarding the Old Testament, the Words of Jesus should suffice for the believer.

Matt. 4:4. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Matt. 5:18. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Matt. 24:35. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

Luke 16:17. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

Luke 24:44. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses and in the prophets and in the psalms, concerning me.

John 7:19. Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepth the law?

John 10:35. If he called them Gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken.

There are many other places in the Bible which imply or state that God will preserve His Words.

Psalm 12:6-7. The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, 0 Lord, Thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.

Psalm 119:152. Concerning Thy Testimonies, I have known of old that Thou hast founded them forever.

Ecclesiastes 3:14. I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever, nothing can be put to it, nor taken from it: God doeth it, that men should fear before Him.

Romans 4:20-21. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in the faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised he was able also to perform.

II Timothy 3:16-17. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

I Peter 1:23-25. Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which livest and abideth forever.

It is clear from the Bible that God has preserved His Word for all generations. This does not mean He has preserved the essence of truth, but the actual words as He gave them. Man has violated God's Holy Word and has short-changed the world about what God really said. Those responsible for this will have to face the judgment of God for this transgression as described in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 22:18-19. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in his book.

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Appendix 1

The comments in Appendix 1 are statements made by scholars that I heard while I was attending Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. There were many other statements like these, but the reader can get an idea of what some of my professors thought of the Bible. I am told that some of today's scholars subscribe to inerrancy. However, I cannot see how they can claim the Bible is all truth, without error, and then accept the modern versions which are no more than illegitimate offsprings of liberal theologians.

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Appendix 7

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When we say the KING JAMES BIBLE is "GOD'S WORD KEPT INTACT," what do we mean by *"intact"?* The word "intact" comes from the Latin word *intactus,* which, in turn, comes from *in* (meaning "not") and *tactus* (meaning "touched") It means "not touched." It means, "not harmed." Nothing harms or defiles it. That is what we mean when we say "GOD'S WORD KEPT INTACT." If we really want to know what the Hebrew in the Old Testament says and what the Greek in the New Testament says in the English language today, the KING JAMES BIBLE--in my studied opinion--is the only translation that completely and accurately reflects, in English, the original Hebrew/Aramaic and Greek.

Dr. D. A. Waite
President, Dean Burgon Society
Defending The King James Bible, 1992

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