

## **The Holy Bible: King James Version or Modern Translations?**

A common delusion of the young and ignorant is reflected in a Catholic catechism, which says, “The Bible today exists only in translations; the original books of the Bible have disappeared” (*The Baltimore Catechism No. 3*, eighth edition, p. 14.) A careful reading of the title page of the King James Version of the Bible should dispel this delusion. It informs the reader that it is “translated out of the original tongues.” The original language of the Old Testament, which contains the divine law and holy books of the nation of Israel, is Hebrew, with brief portions (Daniel 2:4-7:28, Ezra 4:8-6:18 and 7:12-26) in Aramaic, a related language learned by the Jews during their Babylonian captivity in the sixth century before Christ. The original language of the New Testament, which contains holy books and letters written after the conversion of the Gentiles, is Greek, the *lingua franca*, that is, the common language, of the Roman world in the apostolic era. Translations made during the Middle Ages, when knowledge of Hebrew and Greek was virtually nonexistent among Christian scholars in the West, were often made from the Latin, as was the fourteenth-century English translation of John Wycliffe. With the Renaissance and Reformation came a resurgence of interest in the original languages of the Bible. Martin Luther was the first to translate the whole Bible from the original languages into modern German. His translation, published in 1534, was followed by a multitude of translations into other modern languages, including English. Our King James Version, which was published in 1611, displaced earlier English versions and remained the only Bible in common use until the publication of the Revised Version, of which the New Testament appeared in 1881 and the Old Testament in 1885.

### ***The Samaritan Pentateuch***

The Hebrew Pentateuch has been copied over the centuries not only by the Jews but by the Samaritans as well. These first five books of the Bible, written by Moses, are the only portion of the Bible accepted by the Samaritans. When the Hebrew and Samaritan Pentateuchs are carefully compared with each other, a few differences emerge. However, Bible critics have been unable to use the Samaritan Pentateuch to justify a revision of the biblical text because their own research has revealed that the Samaritan variants have been adopted to defend the Samaritan religion against that of the Jews. (See, for example, *The Samaritan Pentateuch an Adaptation of the Massoretic Text* by C. H. Heller, 1923.) One example of this is Deuteronomy 27:4, where the Samaritan scribes have replaced “Ebal” with “Gerizzim” as the place where Moses commanded the children of Israel to build an altar. The reason for this change is that the former Samaritan temple was located on Mount Gerizzim, where the Samaritans still worship today. The woman of Samaria, speaking to Jesus, alludes, in fact, to Mount Gerizzim when she says, “Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship” (John 4:20).

### ***The Septuagint***

The ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament known as the Septuagint or the Seventy received its name because 72 men are said to have been involved in its translation at the beginning of the third century B.C. in Egypt. The Septuagint is the version that was used by the early Church and is still in use among Eastern Christians who speak Greek. Only fragments of other early Greek translations of the Old Testament, such as those done in the second century A.D. by Aquila, Theodotion and Symmachus, survive. The Old Testaments of the Coptic, Gothic, Armenian,

Ethiopic and Georgian Bibles, which were translated during the first centuries of the Christian era, are said to have been made from the Septuagint.

### ***Kitto and Keil***

John Kitto's *Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature* of 1851, which is by no means devoted to a defense of the integrity of the Bible, sums up the evidence presented by the Samaritan and Septuagint Bibles for the authenticity of our Old Testament. In the second volume, page 708, we read that these Bibles, although they are "the work of inaccurate and capricious, if not sometimes ignorant translators," and "although the version of the Seventy has come down to us in a very corrupted state," are nevertheless "sufficiently close in their general resemblance to our Hebrew copies to show that the text in use among the Jews long before the Christian era was essentially the same with that which is now in our hands."

In his *Introduction to the Old Testament* (vol. 2, p. 328-331), C. F. Keil, a contemporary of Kitto, informs us that as early as the seventeenth century opponents of the integrity of the Hebrew text as handed down by the Jewish scribes known as Masoretes not only "exaggerated" its supposed faultiness but also "overestimated the critical value of the ancient versions and the Samaritan Pentateuch in accordance with their preconceived opinions." He then says that the doubts about the integrity of the Hebrew text that had been rekindled in the eighteenth century failed to achieve any results from the collation of manuscripts other than "to confirm the old Protestant persuasion that the text of the Bible was faithfully and carefully handed down by the Masoretes." He concludes that "without an exception, the various readings obtained from the manuscripts exert no influence of importance on the meaning and the contents of Scripture, so far as concerns the subject matter of the faith." Finally, using similar terms, he dismisses the objections to the Hebrew text raised by contemporary critics.

### ***Aramaic Bibles***

Before Alexander the Great, who spread the Greek language by his conquests in the fourth century B.C., the *lingua franca* of the Eastern World was Aramaic. This language, which is called Syriac in Daniel 2:4 and Syrian in Ezra 4:7, was never entirely supplanted by Greek and was still used by the Jews at the beginning of the Christian era. The Jews still publish and use Targums, that is, free translations of biblical books in Aramaic, the ages of which are not precisely known, but according to Kitto's *Cyclopedia* (vol. 2, p. 826), "all the circumstances of the case conspire to show that there were written Targums of several Old Testament books in the time of the Maccabees." The Samaritans also have a translation of the Pentateuch in their own Aramaic dialect, which agrees with their Hebrew Pentateuch. Since early Eastern Christians who spoke Aramaic also needed a Bible in their own language, it is assumed that the Aramaic translation known as the Peshitta, which is still their standard Bible today, was translated before the end of the apostolic era. The antiquity of the Peshitta seems to be confirmed by the fact that this version lacks certain books, namely, II Peter, II John, III John, Jude and Revelation, which were written later than others and may not yet have been in general circulation or were not yet fully accepted when it was translated. According to George Lamsa, who has translated this Bible into English, the name Peshitta means "straight, simple, sincere and true," to distinguish it from other versions, which were introduced into some of the churches of the East after the emergence of early heresies. (See his *Introduction to The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts*.)

### ***Latin Bibles***

Western Christians, who spoke Latin, also needed a Bible in their language, and so early in the Christian era a variety of translations emerged in this language as well. It took several centuries for Jerome's version, known as the Vulgate, that is, the common version, which was completed in about 405 A.D., to entirely displace the former Latin translations. The Vulgate eventually became the standard Latin Bible. In about 1455 it was the first book to be produced on a printing press by Johann Gutenberg. The remnants of the older Latin translations are known collectively as the Old Latin version.

The Latin Vulgate Bible known as the Sixtine Edition was published by Pope Sixtus V in 1590. It was prefaced by the famous papal Bull *Aeternus ille*, which decreed that it was the authentic Vulgate to be used in all churches of the Christian world and that no one was to change the slightest particle or print any other edition under pain of severe penalties, including the "greater excommunication," from which one could be relieved only by the pope himself. However, as early as 1592 a revised edition was published under Clement VIII. This Vulgate, known as the Clementine Edition, which is said to differ from the Sixtine Edition in 3,000 places, became the standard Latin Bible of the Catholic Church. The difficulty of escaping the penalties pronounced by Sixtus V was surmounted by the bold device of presenting the Clementine Edition as a Sixtine Edition. Early editions thus had the name of Sixtus V, rather than that of Clement VIII, on the title page. (See the entry under Vulgate in James Hastings' larger *Dictionary of the Bible*.)

### ***The Greek New Testament***

The canon, that is, the contents, of the New Testament was defined not by any Church council, as is commonly believed, but by the apostles themselves, as we see in I Timothy 5:18, where Paul quotes from Luke 10:7, referring to it as scripture, and in II Peter 3:15,16, where Peter views Paul's epistles as scripture. From the epistles of John and the first chapters of Revelation we see that heresies began to emerge in the apostolic era. Church history describes the progress and development of these heresies, which have racked the Church through the ages. The existence of early heresies ensured that any attempt to revise the New Testament or its contents would be unsuccessful, for no reviser would have had access to all manuscripts of all sects in all languages. The Greek New Testament, edited by Desiderius Erasmus, was first printed in 1516. Translations of the Bible in affordable printed editions then became available in all the languages of Christendom. The power of the Pope was, of course, threatened by the resultant exposure of his errors and superstitions, and it was not long before Catholics, inspired by the devil, began to burn Bibles and Bible translators and readers, as Reformation histories confirm.

### ***Vaticanus and Sinaiticus***

When the devil realized that threats and violence were of no avail, that the more his vicar, the Pope, raged, the more the Word of God prevailed, he came up with a new scheme. He inspired scholars to catalogue and compare extant manuscripts to see whether any differed from the standard texts sufficiently to justify using them to revise the Bible. The uniformity of Hebrew manuscripts precluded any serious attack on the Old Testament, and so critics focused mainly on the New Testament. It is not surprising that, as in all ancient books, a few minor variants exist also in copies of the New Testament, as for example in James 2:18, where the text of the King James Version reads, "without thy works." Here the margin reads "Some copies read *by thy works*." A careful reading of the context shows that, regardless of which version is followed, the meaning of the

passage remains the same. No scholar would seriously expect to find enough typographical errors in the various editions of Shakespeare to justify revising his works, but secular works do not afflict consciences as does the Word of God. Human beings, who cannot find relief for their burdened consciences in other ways need to convince themselves that the Bible is unreliable. Bible critics, driven by the devil to satisfy this need, were convinced that with enough effort they could eventually find enough variants to mutilate the Bible.

Critics began to focus, in particular, on one manuscript or codex located in the Vatican Library in Rome. It is known as the *Textus Vaticanus*, that is, the Vatican Text. Except for the fact that it has been there since the fifteenth century, its origin and history are unknown. It is an incomplete manuscript that differs in many places from the standard Greek New Testament, which is referred to as the *Textus Receptus*, that is, the Received Text. Vaticanus is, in fact, filled with so many errors and anomalies that any conscientious researcher would have disregarded it, but one critic by the name of Constantine Tischendorf, who studied it personally, was soon enamored by it. On the basis of paleography, that is, the science of handwriting, it was declared by scholars to date from the fourth century A.D. One of the main rules that paleographers follow in New Testament studies is that uncial manuscripts, that is, those written in capital letters, are to be viewed as older than those written in cursive script. Vaticanus is an uncial manuscript as are a number of others that the critics have catalogued. Tischendorf found one such uncial manuscript, which became known as *Sinaiticus*, in the monastery of St. Catherine on Mt. Sinai. He first found some leaves of the Septuagint in a wastebasket while visiting the monastery in 1844, but on a subsequent visit in 1859 he obtained from the monks more leaves of the same manuscript, including the whole New Testament, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, and part of the *Shepherd of Hermas*. Tischendorf became attached to this manuscript because, though differing from Vaticanus in many ways, it is similar to it in that it too has numerous errors and omissions and differs considerably from the *Textus Receptus*. Instead of being tossed back into the wastebasket, where it belonged, *Sinaiticus* was quickly declared to date from the fourth century A.D. and became a cherished trophy of the critics. After Tischendorf had announced his discovery, a world-famous forger, Constantine Simonides, who had previously offered the University of Leipzig six forged leaves of the *Shepherd of Hermas* as genuine, came forward with the claim that he had written *Sinaiticus*. This claim was quickly dismissed, and critics continued their work of undermining confidence in the Bible. (For more on Simonides, see James Bentley's 1986 book *Secrets of Mount Sinai*, pp. 100-102.)

### ***Burton's Criticism***

The critics have assigned identifying letters to each of their uncial New Testament manuscripts. Vaticanus is identified by the letter B and *Sinaiticus* by the Greek letter Aleph. Three later uncial manuscripts that have also found a special place in the hearts of Bible critics are *Alexandrinus* (A), *Ephraemi* (C), and *Bezae* (D). *Alexandrinus* and *Ephraemi* are alleged to have been copied in the fifth century and *Bezae* in either the fifth or sixth century. In a book published in 1883, John Burton, a Bible critic who strongly objected to the radical approach of his colleagues, wrote a devastating review of these five uncial manuscripts:

“Singular to relate, the first, second, fourth and fifth of these codices (B, Aleph, C, D), but especially B and Aleph, have within the last twenty years established a tyrannical ascendancy over the imagination of the critics, which can only be fitly spoken of as a blind superstition. It matters nothing that all four are discovered on careful scrutiny to differ essentially, not only from ninety-nine out of a hundred of the whole body of extant manuscripts besides, but even from one another. This last circumstance, obviously fatal to their corporate

pretensions, is unaccountably overlooked. And yet it admits of only one satisfactory explanation: viz. that in different degrees they all five exhibit a fabricated text.”

Burton goes on to say that Alexandrinus, is also “depraved” and that Sinaiticus, Vaticanus and Bezae are “three of the most scandalously corrupt copies extant, that they “exhibit the most shamefully mutilated texts which are anywhere to be met with,” that their history is totally unknown and that they are the “depositories of the largest amount of fabricated readings, ancient blunders, and intentional perversions of truth which are discoverable in any known copies of the Word of God.” Burton asks us to imagine the text of Hamlet edited on the basis of similarly depraved and conflicting documents. The variant versions of “To be or not to be” might then read as follows: Toby or not Toby, Tob or not, To be a tub or not to be a tub, To beat or not to beat Toby, to beat that Toby or to be a tub. (See his book *The Revision Revised*, 1991 edition, pp. 11-16.)

### ***The Revision of the New Testament***

Under the leadership of two Englishmen, Brooke Westcott and Fenton Hort, critics classified the New Testament manuscripts that they had examined into families in accordance with shared similarities or variants. The theories have changed somewhat over the years, but at that time they classified their manuscripts into four families. The majority of manuscripts fell into a Syrian family, which they sometimes refer to also as a Byzantine family because it is the text that is actually used by the Greek-speaking world. Other manuscripts fell into Western and Alexandrian families. A fourth group, which they referred to as the Neutral family, was defined as the oldest and best, represented mainly by -- you guessed it -- Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, on the basis of which they concocted a new Greek New Testament, known as the Westcott and Hort text. Greek texts published later by Nestle, Souter, Aland, the United Bible Societies and others represent the same perverted manuscripts. Even if their manuscripts are as old as they claim, there was no legitimate reason for these manuscripts to annul the testimony of the horde of other manuscripts on which our New Testament is based. There are said to be over 5,300 manuscripts of part or all of the Greek New Testament in existence today. (See, for example, Josh McDowell, *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, 1979 edition, p. 39.) Other ancient books by contrast, such as those of Plato and Aristotle, often exist in no more than a handful and sometimes only one or two manuscripts. In addition to actual New Testament manuscripts, there are so many quotations in the multitudinous works of the Church Fathers of the first centuries of the Christian era that if the New Testament were lost it could quite conceivably be reconstructed from their writings. As for paleography, common sense tells us that if even one scribe can live and write as long as 70 or more years, there is no way to determine specifically when he copied a document on the basis of handwriting style alone. Styles differ, and a scribe may even prefer to imitate an older one. There is also the possibility that a recent copy of a manuscript may have been copied from an ancient one that is no longer extant. Perhaps the most damning objection to the revised text is the fact that the old manuscripts on which it is based have not worn out with time, as would be the case if they had been viewed as worthy of use. Why were they shelved so long before being “discovered”? In fact, why did Tischendorf have to recover part of Sinaiticus from a wastebasket?

Strangely enough, we do not have to prove the antiquity of our Greek text, for critics agree that the Greek text on which the King James Version is based is as old as the revised text. They cannot deny its antiquity because they have compared it with ancient translations and with quotations in the writings of the Church Fathers, many of whom wrote before Sinaiticus and Vaticanus were

allegedly copied. Thus even Westcott and Hort write, “A text virtually identical with the prevalent Greek text of the Middle Ages was used by Chrysostom and other Antiochian Fathers in the latter part of the fourth century, and thus must have been represented by manuscripts as old as any manuscript now surviving.” (See their appendix to *The New Testament in the Original Greek*, 1916 edition, p. 548.) The “prevalent Greek text of the Middle Ages” is, of course, the so-called Syrian or Byzantine text, that is, the standard text, known as the Textus Receptus, on which the King James Version is based. They refer to it as Antiochian because they fantasize that it is the result of a revision made by Greek Fathers in Antioch of Syria in about 350 A.D. In spite of the fact that there is not as much as a hint of such a revision in historical writings, it is represented as a historical fact in modern theological textbooks, having gained credibility through much repetition. The postulation of such a revision of the Greek text by critics is, of course, necessary to relieve the pressure of the massive evidence arrayed against their own text. What they leave unexplained, however, is why their text, which they allege to be no older than ours, should be preferred over the one used by all denominations of Christians, whether orthodox or heretical, until modern times.

### ***The Resurrection in Mark***

One of the most glaring omissions in Sinaiticus and Vaticanus is in chapter 16 of Mark, which ends abruptly with verse 8, with the women leaving the sepulchre afraid. The resurrection is thus missing in these manuscripts. After Westcott and Hort had completed their revision, Vaticanus was made available in a facsimile edition, which clearly shows that at the end of Mark an empty space was left by the scribe with enough room to add the remainder of the chapter. This seems to indicate that the last leaf was missing from an early manuscript of Mark from which Vaticanus was copied. The scribe thus left the blank space in Vaticanus, intending perhaps to add the missing words later. This blank space constitutes evidence that knowledge of the ending of Mark is as old as Vaticanus. In any case, it is simply ridiculous to assume that Mark, a member of the early church and a traveling companion of Paul and Barnabus, would end his Gospel without mentioning the resurrection.

Modern theologians promote the fantasy, parroted in our anti-Christian media, that Mark is the oldest gospel, that it was written after the fall of Jerusalem, which occurred in 70 A.D., and was then followed by Matthew, Luke and John, who had by that time somehow acquired a belief in the resurrection. Such nonsense is refuted by Acts 1:1, where Luke, referring to his Gospel, mentions his “former treatise of all that Jesus began both to do and teach.” Luke would not have ended Acts without mentioning the martyrdom of Paul if this event had occurred. He finished Acts, therefore, in about 63 A.D., while Paul was still in Rome and well before the destruction of the Jewish state. Luke realized that his story had not yet ended, and so he does not end Acts with the word “Amen.” Since he began his Gospel by admitting that others had undertaken to write of the same matters (Luke 1:1), and since Matthew and Mark have been placed before Luke in all editions of the Bible, we have no reason to assume that this is not the order in which these books were written. John, who, unlike the other Evangelists, wrote his Gospel long after the others, tacitly approves of their accounts by not repeating what had already been written. His focus is on Christ as the Incarnate Word, which had not been adequately covered previously and was being denied by some, as we learn in his epistles (I John 4:3, II John 7).

### ***The Woman Taken in Adultery***

Another glaring omission, known as the “pericope de adultera,” occurs in the revised text from John 7:53 through 8:11. This contains the well-known story of the woman who was to be stoned after having been “taken in adultery.” If we read the story carefully, we will see that the omitted portion is required by the context. The omitted portion comes after a failed attempt by the authorities to apprehend Jesus. The officers who had heard him speak went to the priests and Pharisees and were criticized for failing to bring him to them. The officers replied, “Never man spake like this man.” Nicodemus, who was also present, said, “Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doeth?” The other leaders then rebuked him, saying, “Art thou also of Galilee? Search and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.” According to the revisers, we are now to skip to verse 12 of chapter 8, where it says, “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” It is clear, however, that Jesus was not present, and so the omitted words are required by the context.

One of the manuscripts that revisers cite as evidence for the omission is Alexandrinus. However, Burgon points out that John 6:50 to 8:52 is missing because two leaves -- the very leaves that would have contained this passage -- are missing from the manuscript. This means that there is no justification for the use of Alexandrinus as a witness against the passage. Burgon also points out that two other manuscripts cited by the critics, though intact, exhibit a vacant space where the omission occurs, which testifies to the consciousness of the copyists that something is missing. He mentions too that a fourth witness to which the revisers appeal is not a Bible at all but a commentary. He then goes on to demolish the argument of the revisers by citing a horde of witnesses to our text from manuscripts, ancient translations and quotations in the writings of the Church Fathers, too numerous to list here. (See *The Woman Taken in Adultery* in Jay Green’s edition of Burgon’s works entitled *Unholy Hands on the Bible*.)

### ***God Manifest in the Flesh***

In I Timothy 3:16, where we read “God was manifest in the flesh,” certain old manuscripts allegedly lack the word “ΘΕΟΣ” (God), which is replaced by “ΟΣ,” a word that modern translations generally render here as “he.” Thus they read instead, “He was manifest in the flesh.” However, “ΘΣ,” an abbreviation for “ΘΕΟΣ” that appears in old manuscripts, is identical with the word “ΟΣ,” except for two horizontal lines, one in the middle of the “theta” and another one above the word, which indicates that it is an abbreviation. Some manuscripts have one line but not the other, as in the case of English handwritten documents in which the writer forgot to cross a “t” or dot an “i.” One manuscript appealed to by the revisers is Alexandrinus, which has faded somewhat with time, but researcher Frederick Nolan, in a book published in 1815, tells of a researcher of a previous generation by the name of Dr. Berriman, who had taken two friends to examine I Timothy 3:16 in this manuscript in the light of the sun with the aid of a magnifying glass. After two indifferent persons standing by had also examined the manuscript, Dr. Berriman committed the observations made that day to writing so that there would never be just cause to doubt the true reading of “ΘΣ.” Although the middle of the line in the “theta” had been retouched, the ends of the original line were still visible. (See Nolan’s book, *An Inquiry into the Integrity of the Greek Vulgate*, p. 285.) Burgon too, at the end of the nineteenth century, mentions a scholar who was still alive, who said that when his eyes were 20 years younger he could still discern a faint trace of the original line in the “theta.” Burgon then cites a multitude of witnesses to the true text from

manuscripts, ancient translations and quotations from the Church Fathers (*The Revision Revised*, pp. 424-520).

### ***The Johannine Comma***

In I John 5:7,8 we read, “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.” The revised text omits all mention of the Trinity here and reads, “For there are three that bear witness, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.” The omitted clause, known as the Comma Johanneum or Johannine Comma, is allegedly missing from most Greek manuscripts and even from some Latin ones. Neither is it in the first two printed editions of the Greek New Testament, published by Erasmus. Critics are thus confident that the evidence against the Comma is overwhelming. One advocate of the revised text boasted in 1881, “No defender of the genuineness of I John 5:7,8 will probably arise in the future. The controversy regarding the passage is finished, and will never be renewed” (See Alexander Roberts, *Companion to the Revised Version of the English New Testament*, p. 71.)

Erasmus, criticized for the omission, added the Comma in 1522 to his third edition from a transcript of the passage found in a manuscript in England, known as Britannicus. This, in turn, evoked a unending barrage of criticism from opponents of the Comma, including such renowned figures as Sir Isaac Newton and Edward Gibbon. Modern critics fantasize that Britannicus is identical with a manuscript at Trinity College in Dublin known as Montfortianus or No. 61, although the Comma in Montfortianus differs slightly from the one adopted by Erasmus for his third and subsequent editions. (Compare the facsimile of the Comma from Montfortianus in Clarke’s Commentary with Erasmus’ version in Kitto’s *Cyclopaedia*, vol. 2, p. 137.) Critics allege that Montfortianus is a composite manuscript and that the portion containing the Comma was copied for the sole purpose of having the Comma interpolated from the Vulgate so as to embarrass Erasmus. Now if we were to assert that some of the manuscripts that critics use to prove their fictions are forgeries they would ridicule us to no end. However, since they thus admit that fake manuscripts can exist, we will take the opportunity to remind them of a recent case, which was reported in the *Washington Post* on May 28, 1987, under the heading, “St. Mark Manuscript a Fake.” According to this article, researchers at Miami University had determined that an elegantly illustrated Greek manuscript of Mark, belonging to the University of Chicago and known as the Archaic Mark, was a forgery. The ink pigment used in the manuscript, which was alleged to be 900 years old, had not been invented until 1704. So much for paleography! As for Montfortianus, however, even Adam Clarke, a vehement opponent of the Comma, writes in his Commentary (under I John 5:7) in regard to the assertion that it is a manuscript of the sixteenth century: “This, I scruple not to affirm, is a perfectly unguarded assertion, and what no man can prove. In 1790 I examined this manuscript myself, and though I thought it to be comparatively modern, yet I had no doubt that it existed before the invention of printing and was never written with an intention to deceive.”

Another early printed Bible, the Complutensian Polyglot Bible of 1522, contains the Comma in parallel Greek and Latin columns. It has been charged that the version of the Comma in the Greek column of the Complutensian has been translated from the Latin. If so, why then does the Comma in the Latin column of this polyglot Bible differ from the one in the parallel Greek text? In verse 7, the Latin text has the reading of the standard printed edition of the Vulgate, known as the



Clementine version (which is also the reading in the Gutenberg Bible): “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit: and these three are one.” The Greek column, which differs, reads: “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit, and these three agree in one.” Thus we see that the Complutensian version of the Comma could not have been translated from the Latin because the Greek and Latin texts differ from each other in this Bible.

The words “and these three agree in one” are missing from verse 8 in Montfortianus, in the Greek and Latin columns of the Complutensian and in some other early editions of the Bible. We should point out, however, that the fourth-century writer Priscillian, who used the Old Latin, quotes not only the Comma but also a version of verse 8 that is identical with that of our Greek text. Quoting verse 8, he uses the very words “agree in one” (“in unum sunt”) in his *Liber apologeticus* 1:4. The unabridged edition of Matthew Henry’s Commentary also points out, under I John 5:7, that a third-century Latin book, *De baptismo haereticorum*, which does not quote I John 5:7, does quote a version of verse 8 that contains the words “agree in one” (“in unum sunt”). The presence of these words in works that even predate the Vulgate proves the antiquity of the reading “agree in one” (“eis to en eisin”) in verse 8 of our Greek text. A footnote in the Complutensian explains why the words “and these three agree in one” are missing from verse 8. According to this footnote, St. Thomas Aquinas believed that these words were added by heretics who wanted to obfuscate the unity of the Godhead by creating a unity of spirit, water and blood in verse 8. The problem, however, is really one of a defective Vulgate text, which reads “are one” (“unum sunt”), rather than “agree in one” (“in unum sunt”) in verse 8, but the footnote is significant because it shows that the Complutensian editors evidently felt no need to justify the inclusion of the Comma in verse 7 but only the omission of the final clause of verse 8. Such an omission is, of course, unjustified, in spite of what Aquinas may have believed, and verse 8 has been retained in entirety even in revised editions of the Greek New Testament.

Kurt Aland’s third critical edition of the revised Greek New Testament (1975) lists the identifying numbers and estimated ages of four cursives in which the Comma is found in the text: 629 (fourteenth century), 918 (sixteenth century), 61 (sixteenth century), and 2318 (eighteenth century). He lists four more in which the Comma is found only in the margin: 221 (tenth century), 88 (twelfth century), 429 (fourteenth century), and 636 (fifteenth century). The Comma is also found in Greek in the Acts of the Lateran Council, held in 1215, and is quoted in Greek by Manuel Calecas, a Dominican monk of the fourteenth century, and by Joseph Bryennius, a Greek monk of the fifteenth century. (See Kitto, vol. 2, pp. 138,139.)

It is evident that with the advent of printing, manuscripts became expendable. We will never know how many thousands of manuscripts have been worn out and lost for various reasons, such as the dissolution of monasteries and the dispersion of their libraries. Moreover, not all extant manuscripts of the Greek New Testament are complete. According to scholars of the eighteenth century, 113 manuscripts of the First Epistle of John were still in existence. (See the notes in Clarke’s Commentary under I John 5:7.) In the nineteenth century, Kitto claimed that there were more than 180 such manuscripts written between the fifth and fifteenth centuries (*Cyclopaedia*, vol. 2, p. 138.) Now the number has grown to over 500. (See the section entitled Faith’s Solid Warrant in Jesse M. Boyd’s 1999 study *And These Three Are One*.) However, let’s not concern ourselves about these numbers, and just for fun, let’s play their game and take into consideration only older manuscripts, as they do. Aland’s revised Greek New Testament is quite comprehensive in its listing of sources, and so let’s select it as the basis on which to proceed. Aland lists in a footnote in

support of the omission of the Comma only 10 so-called uncial manuscripts, which are supposed to be older and more reliable than cursives. Let's first eliminate all manuscripts to which Aland cannot conclusively assign a date earlier than the ninth century. This leaves us only four uncial manuscripts, including the notorious fourth-century Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, which are so hopelessly corrupt that they will have to be eliminated out of hand, leaving only Alexandrinus from the fifth century and another manuscript from the same century identified only by the number 048. If we reject Alexandrinus, which Burgon defines as "depraved," we are left with only one uncial manuscript that is said to omit the Comma before the ninth century, which is insufficient to establish any truth (Deuteronomy 19:15).

The Comma is found in the bulk of Vulgate manuscripts and even in Old Latin ones, including Freisingensis, an Old Latin manuscript copied in about 500 A.D. As for quotations of I John 5:7 in the writings of the Church Fathers, critics allege that Cyprian, a Latin writer of the third century, is unaware of the Comma, although he writes, for example, "And again it is written of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, And these three are one" (*On the Unity of the Church* 1:5). Tertullian also, who lived even earlier, referring to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, says, "These three are one." (*Against Praxeas*, chapter 25.) Critics imagine that these early writers are actually discussing the spirit, water and blood of verse 8, which they apply mystically to the three persons of the Trinity. The works of the Church Fathers are readily available in theological libraries, where readers can see for themselves that such mysticism has been extrapolated from later writers, who indeed expostulate on the Trinity on the basis of verse 8. Numerous other early Latin sources contain the Comma. The footnotes of Aland's revised Greek New Testament acknowledge Varimadum (380 A.D.), Priscillian (385), Cassian (435 A.D.), Victor-Vita (489 A.D.), Pseudo-Athanasius (sixth century), Fulgentius (533 A.D.), and Ansbert (eighth century). Among the many citations and allusions to the Comma that are conveniently ignored by the critics we find in Augustine's *City of God*, which he finished writing in 426 A.D., the words "God, supreme and true, with his Word and Holy Spirit, which three are one" (book 5, chapter 11). It is noteworthy that Augustine here writes not "Son" but "Word," as in I John 5:7, which he would hardly be expected to do if he were mentioning the Trinity without regard to the Comma.

Faced with incontrovertible evidence of the Comma's existence as early as their oldest Greek manuscripts, critics resort to fantasy. They imagine that in the fourth century, when Vaticanus and Sinaiticus are alleged to have been written, a marginal note or interpretative gloss was incorporated into the text of the Bible of the Western Church, that is, the Old Latin. From here, they say, it spread into the Vulgate and eventually even into certain Greek manuscripts, from which it found its way into the printed editions of the Greek New Testament and thence into all Reformation-era Bibles, including our King James Version. They fail to consider even as a remote possibility that the omission of the Comma in so many copies might be the error of a careless scribe, who, seeing two sets of three witnesses, skipped over the first set and thus created a version that was favored by copyists of one faction or another in the tangled doctrinal disputes over the Trinity that raged in the fourth century. Jerome, in fact, who lived at that time, in an introduction to the General Epistles, complains about "unfaithful translators widely deviating from the truth, who place in their editions only the three words 'water, blood and spirit' and omit the testimony of the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit, in which the Catholic faith is confirmed in the highest degree and the divine substance of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is proved to be one." Jerome's introduction, which is not included in standard editions of his works, is found in the Gutenberg Bible and in Vulgate

manuscripts, including Fuldensis, a sixth-century manuscript hailed by critics because the Comma is missing from its actual biblical text.

### ***Other Omissions and Variations***

Among the many other omissions in the revised Greek text, there is the story of the angel troubling the water in John 5:3 and Philip's statement to the eunuch in Acts 8:37 that he may be baptized if he believes. Some of the more blatant omissions are found in Matthew 6:13, Matthew 23:14, Matthew 27:35, Mark 9:44,46, Luke 9:55,56, Luke 17:36, Luke 23:17, Acts 15:34, Acts 23:9, Acts 24:6,7, Acts 28:29, Romans 11:6 and I Corinthians 6:20. The omission of the words "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all" in Romans 16:24 is of special significance because these are the very words that Paul uses to validate the authenticity of his epistles (II Thessalonians 3:17). In addition to omissions, the revised text contains many corrupted passages, such as in Matthew 19:17, where Jesus, in the new text, does not say, "Why callest thou me good?" but "Why askest thou me concerning that which is good?" Again in Luke 2:14, instead of the angels proclaiming "Peace, good will toward men," we read, "Peace to men of good will."

### ***The Hebrew Old Testament***

The Hebrew Old Testament was first printed by the Soncino Press in 1488. Until recently the oldest complete manuscript of the Hebrew Bible was said to be one in Russia known as Leningradensis, which is about a thousand years old. Differing ages are assigned to two other old but incomplete manuscripts, the Aleppo and Cairo manuscripts. Some say that they are a century older than Leningradensis and others that they are no older than the twelfth century. Paleography is of little or no value here, evidently because of the consistency in style of old Hebrew texts.

The original Hebrew Old Testament is still available in libraries, bookstores and private collections. The standard edition, first published in 1852, is known as the Letteris edition. It is named after its editor, Meir Letteris of Austria. Providence ordained that the Old Testament would be copied over the centuries not by Catholics, who generally don't even know Hebrew, but by professional Jewish scribes. To prevent any omissions, these scribes checked their work by counting the letters and words in each book of the Bible that they copied and identified the middle letter, middle word and middle verse of each book. Such calculations are by no means of recent origin. The Jewish Talmud, which was written between the second and sixth centuries after Christ, applies mystical meanings to the middle letters of biblical books (See, for example, *Kiddushin* 30:1 and *Baba Batra* 109:2.) The results of the careful labor of Jewish scribes, who still visit synagogues periodically to examine biblical scrolls to ensure that every jot and tittle is in place, are retained in printed editions in use today, in which their calculations are printed at the end of each Old Testament book. No one who consults a copy of our own Constitution questions the accuracy of the text, for we safely assume that no printer would be audacious enough to change one word of such an important document, and if he did so his work would be scornfully rejected. This is by no means less true of the law and holy books of the Jews that constitute the Old Testament. God arranged beforehand that the Old Testament would be copied by the very people who turned the Saviour over to the Romans for crucifixion. Thus no reasonable person would dare assert that the prophecies of Christ and the details of his life, death and resurrection had been fabricated after the fact by his friends. The multitude of biblical quotations in the Talmud and other ancient Jewish writings reflect the same Old Testament that we have today, as does the New Testament itself, which is strewn with Old Testament quotations.

The text of the original Hebrew Old Testament is written only in consonants. To facilitate pronunciation of the text, the Masoretes added their own markings, known as vowel points, beneath the consonants. Variant readings in the Masoretic Text generally affect only these vowel points. Marginal notes in our King James Bible indicate a few consonantal variants in some manuscripts, which do not affect the basic meaning of the text. For example, in Genesis 10:4 and I Chronicles 1:7, where we see the name “Dodanim,” the margin indicates that some manuscripts read “Rodanim.” This variant is due to the shape of the letters for “R” and “D” in the Hebrew alphabet, which appear nearly identical to the untrained eye. Another marginal note, in Song of Solomon 5:4, where the text reads “for him,” indicates that some manuscripts read “in me.” The difference here is due to the omission of one letter in one Hebrew word -- “alaiv” means “for him” and “alai” means “in me.”

The final book of the Old Testament is Malachi, which was written about four centuries before Christ and looks forward to the coming of John the Baptist and the “great and dreadful day of the Lord” (Malachi 4:5). In Catholic Bibles there are some additional books, written during the intertestamental period, which Protestants refer to as the Apocrypha. These books were translated not from Hebrew but from Greek and have never been part of the Hebrew canon, that is, they were never accepted by the Jews as Holy Scripture. Modern Bible critics, who do not believe that Daniel could have predicted future events, imagine that his book was written not in the sixth century B.C., as Daniel claims (Daniel 10:1), but in about 164 B.C. to encourage the followers of the Maccabees in their struggle against the Syrians. This is supposed to be indicated by its location in the Hebrew Bible, in which the books are arranged differently than in translations. The Hebrew Bible is divided into the Torah (Pentateuch), the Neviim (Prophets), and the Ketuvim (Hagiographa). Christ divides the Old Testament similarly in Luke 24:44. As arranged today, the book of Daniel is not among the prophets, where we would expect to find it, but among the Ketuvim. Whatever the reason for its inclusion with other old books, such as Job and Ruth, in the Ketuvim, Daniel lived and wrote long before the Maccabean era. He is mentioned along with Noah and Job as one of three righteous men in Ezekiel 14:14,20, a book that was also written in the sixth century B.C. The Apocrypha admits, in fact, that no prophets existed in Israel during the Maccabean era. In I Maccabees 4:46, we read that after the altar of burnt offering was pulled down the stones were piled up in a convenient place “until there should come a prophet to show what should be done with them.” Among memorable past events, I Maccabees 2:59,60 mentions incidents recounted in the book of Daniel -- the three men in the fiery furnace (Daniel 3) and Daniel in the den of lions (Daniel 6). Ecclesiasticus, another apocryphal book, confirms that the canon was already settled by the time of the Maccabees. We learn from the second Prologue to Ecclesiasticus that in the time of Jesus the son of Sirach, who, as even critics agree, wrote in about 180-200 B.C., the Old Testament canon, consisting of “the law, the prophets, and the rest of the books,” was already in existence.

### ***The Dead Sea Scrolls***

Not satisfied with the uniformity of the manuscripts that they catalogued, critics such as Rudolf Kittel and Paul Kahle continued their quest for variants, poring over hordes of manuscripts in a frantic search for anything they could sink their teeth into. Kittel died in 1929, but Kahle, undaunted, carried on their work but could find nothing to undermine the Hebrew Bible. The most that he could do was to replace the text that had been used in former printed editions with that of the Leningradensis manuscript in the third edition of their Hebrew Bible, published in 1937. However, this did not significantly aid their cause, for the previously printed editions and

Leningradensis reflect the same Masoretic Text and are thus virtually identical. Then, in 1948, it was reported that the earliest known manuscript of Isaiah, which became known as the Isaiah Scroll, had been found with other ancient scrolls in the library of St. Mark's Syrian Monastery in Jerusalem. William Albright, a respected professor of John Hopkins University, reviewed photographs of the scrolls. Contrary to the prevailing view of other experts that the scrolls were not ancient, Albright declared them to be as old as 100 B.C., and his reputation was evidently sufficient to settle the matter. The documents were published by Millar Burrows in 1950 in a book entitled *The Dead Sea Scrolls of St. Mark's Monastery*, and the seventh edition of the Kittle-Kahle Hebrew Bible, published in 1951, contained in footnotes the variant Bible readings in them. However, these Dead Sea Scrolls are by no means reliable witnesses to the text of the Bible. The Isaiah Scroll, for example, is so defective that even Burrows is compelled to acknowledge its many mistakes in the introduction to his work. In the fifth chapter of another book, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, which he published in 1955, he again discusses these mistakes, which include the omission or addition of words, the confusion of words and letters, the substitution of one word for another, the transposition of words or letters within words and various errors of other kinds.

As early as 1949, Metropolitan Mar Athanasius Samuel of St. Mark's Syrian Monastery was trying to sell the scrolls in the United States. The sales pitch included a new story about their origin. It was no longer alleged that they had been found in a library but that two Bedouin boys who had been searching for a lost goat found them in 1947 in clay jars in a cave near the Dead Sea. Details varied, depending on who told the story, but it seemed to be agreed that the boys, sensing the value of the documents, traveled on to Bethlehem, where the scrolls were acquired by a dealer by the name of Kando, who sold some of them to Metropolitan Samuel and others to Professor E. L. Sukenik of Hebrew University. Although the governments of Israel and Jordan both claimed ownership of the Scrolls, an advertisement appeared as late as 1954 in the *Wall Street Journal*, offering for sale "biblical manuscripts dating back to at least 200 B.C.," as an "ideal gift to an educational or religious institution."

Experts continued to doubt the truth of the story, the age of the so-called Dead Sea Scrolls, and even the existence of the Bedouins. Quite conveniently, a photograph of one of the boys turned up and has been published in various books, and an "interview" of this person was published by William Brownlee in October 1957 in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* under the title "Muhammad ed-Deeb's Own Story of His Scroll Discovery." There is no way to verify the identity of the person in the photograph or whether he ever found any scrolls anywhere. In fact, the so-called "interview," is really no interview at all but the boy's own brief account of the "discovery." Unfortunately for those who believe in the Dead Sea Scrolls, his story contradicts the details of all previous accounts. He claims that he was searching for the lost goat not with anyone else but alone, that he found the scrolls not in 1947 but in 1945, and that he did not travel on to Bethlehem but took them to his "house," where they remained for two years. The story is now so muddled that even historians admit that they have despaired of ever knowing the real details of the discovery.

Among those who viewed the whole story as a hoax was Professor Solomon Zeitlin of Dropsie College in Philadelphia. In a long series of articles in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, he rejected the idea that the Scrolls were ever in jars in caves, unless they were "placed" there, and steadfastly maintained that they were written in the Middle Ages. However, loud repetition of the claim of antiquity, which drowned out more reasonable voices, made the scrolls grow in prestige and value. The scrolls were finally purchased for the state of Israel at a cost of 250,000 dollars, most of which was recovered as income tax by the U.S. government. They are now viewed daily by naive tourists

at the Rockefeller Museum and the Shrine of the Book in Jerusalem, where they are on display together with many other scrolls and fragments of scrolls that were allegedly found later in other caves. The story of the Scrolls has now been enhanced by archeologists who have excavated ruins near the caves at a site known as Qumran, which they imagine, without the slightest shred of evidence, to have been a monastic community of Essenes, a Jewish sect that allegedly hid the Scrolls in caves on the approach of the Roman army that destroyed the Jewish state in 70 A.D.

The whole story may just be a rehashed version of an earlier story that goes back to 1883, when an antiquities dealer in Jerusalem by the name of Moses Shapira tried to sell the German government some parchments containing texts of the Pentateuch, mainly from Deuteronomy, that he said were found in caves by Arabs and were nearly 3,000 years old. These documents, written in the ancient Canaanite script, were eventually exposed as frauds. (For more on Shapira, see G. S. Wegener's book *6,000 Years of the Bible*, 1963 English edition, pp. 334-337.) The Middle East, which abounds in archeological relics, also abounds in fakes and hoaxes too numerous to recount here. The writer Cyrus Gordon admits that he has even been in workshops where fake items are made. He claims that antiquities dealers generally carry both authentic and forged antiques and that if they like or respect you they will tell you which items are genuine. He informs us that one dealer had, in fact, told him that his agents in New York have sold fakes to the best American museums. (See his *Riddles in History*, 1974, p. 19.)

In the Middle Ages, nearly every synagogue allotted a room known as a *geniza* for old or defective Bibles, where they, too sacred to be discarded, could quietly disintegrate. Sukenik and Aldrich, in fact, both voiced the opinion that the Dead Sea caves had been used as "outdoor *genizas*." The most famous *geniza* is one in an ancient synagogue in Cairo, where in the second half of the nineteenth century researchers began groveling in the dirt, breathing in clouds of dust in a frantic search for manuscripts. In 1896, two women showed some fragments that they had bought from a Cairo dealer to Solomon Schechter, a lecturer at Cambridge University, who identified them as being from a Hebrew copy of the apocryphal book Ecclesiasticus, which until then was believed to exist only in Greek. He then visited the synagogue, where he too burrowed about in the *geniza*. It is unknown how many documents found their way into private collections and libraries -- maybe even into caves -- before Schechter carted off the bulk of the items -- about 140,000 fragments -- in boxes to Cambridge University, where they are said to fill 164 display cases. When fragments of a text in Cambridge known as the Damascus Document were also found among the Dead Sea Scrolls together with additional fragments of Ecclesiasticus in Hebrew, scholars began to identify Schechter's manuscripts with the Qumran sect.

### ***Revised Versions***

At the end of the nineteenth century, as the result of the work of Westcott and Hort and other New Testament critics, revised versions of the Bible began to displace Reformation-era Bibles in all countries of Christendom. The Revised Version of the New Testament was published in England in 1881, followed by the Old Testament in 1885. In the United States, the American Standard Version of the Bible was published in 1901, followed by the Revised Standard Version in 1952, the New American Standard Bible in 1971, the New Revised Standard Version in 1989 and a myriad of other revisions based on corrupt original texts.

Anxious to free themselves from the bond of the Masoretic Text of the Old Testament, the translation committee of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible gave serious consideration to the variant readings of the Dead Sea Scrolls as presented to them by Millar Burrows. Thirteen

variants in the book of Isaiah were then quietly incorporated into their work. These variants are easily identifiable because footnotes indicate that they are based on “one ancient manuscript” -- a veiled reference to the Isaiah Scroll. One such footnote can be seen, for example, under Isaiah 21:8, where the Hebrew word “arieh,” which means “a lion,” is replaced by “roeh,” which the revisers render as “he who saw.” Evidence offered not by two or three but by one depraved witness should never be held as sufficient to revise any book, let alone a sacred text that exists in nearly every Jewish and Christian home and library throughout the world. Burrows himself changed his mind about the value of the readings. He wrote in 1955: “For myself I must confess that in some cases where I probably voted for the emendation I am now convinced that our decision was a mistake, and the Masoretic reading should have been retained.” (See his *Dead Sea Scrolls*, p. 305.) However, the damage was done, and the New Revised Standard Version retained all 13 items of the previous Revised Standard Version and even added seven more.

In the New Revised Standard Version, use of the Dead Sea Scrolls is acknowledged in footnotes by the abbreviation “Q Ms,” which means “Qumran manuscript.” The translators even had the gall to add a whole paragraph to the end of I Samuel 10 on the basis of nothing more than one such manuscript. This new paragraph, summed up, tells us that Nahash, king of the Ammonites, oppressed the Gadites and the Reubenites and put out the right eye of all of them except 7,000 men, who escaped and went to Jabesh-Gilead. Throughout the new revision we see in footnotes the letters “Cn,” which means “correction.” The revisers explain in a preface that this means that the Masoretic text, which has “suffered in transmission,” has to be restored in accordance with “the best judgment of competent scholars as to the most probable reconstruction of the original text.” In Zechariah 12:10 the divinity of Christ is assailed on the basis of such conjecture. Here, instead of God saying of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, “They shall look upon me whom they have pierced,” the text reads that they look upon “the one whom they have pierced.” A footnote admits that the Hebrew text reads differently. The earlier Revised Standard Version has in this place a footnote that mentions the name Theodotion, which evidently means that the revision is based on a reading in the Greek translation made by the second-century translator of this name, of whom we read in Kitto’s *Cyclopedia* (vol. 2, p. 915) that he was “not as scrupulously literal as Aquila” and was “certainly not well acquainted with Hebrew, as the numerous errors into which he has fallen demonstrate.” In fact, scholars seem to agree that his translation is nothing more than a revision of the Septuagint, which, in fact, reads “they shall look upon me” in this place.

In his 1993 book *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Modern Translations of the Old Testament*, Harold Scanlin informs us on page 27 that every major Bible translation published since 1950 claims to have taken into account the “textual evidence” of the Dead Sea Scrolls. On page 26 he gives the following number of departures from the Masoretic Text in modern translations of I Samuel alone:

New International Version, 15  
Today’s English Version: 51  
Revised Standard Version: about 60  
New Revised Standard Version: about 110  
New English Bible: 160  
New American Bible: 230.

### ***King James II Version***

The Bible version known as King James II, which has been disseminated by Jay Green, has become popular because it is included as a parallel text in his Hebrew-Greek Interlinear Bible. The King James II is not a modernized King James Bible, as its title would lead readers to believe. Green admits in fact in his Preface that he does not “accept” every word in the King James Version “as true scripture.” He mentions as one example Acts 9:5,6, even though these verses are in the Greek text of his own Bible, in older printed editions of the Greek New Testament, in the Vulgate and in other sources. As another example, he mentions I John 5:7, which he alleges to be adopted from the Complutensian, but this cannot be the case because the words of this verse in the Complutensian differ from the standard text, as has been shown above.

The King James II does not always adhere even to its own original text, as in Romans 7:6, for example, where the King James Version has “that being dead in which we were held.” Here the word “that” is a demonstrative pronoun, referring to the law. The words “being dead” (Greek: apothanontos) refer to the abolition of the law in Christ. Instead of following his Greek text, the translator follows a variant reading (apothanontes) and renders the passage in the same manner as in other new Bibles: “having died to that,” meaning that we have died to the law, which, as true as this is, does not reflect his own Greek text, which is also that of the King James Version. See also Psalms 68:13, where “sheepfolds” replaces “pots,” John 1:5, where “comprehended” becomes “overtake,” John 6:20, where “It is I” becomes “I AM” in capital letters, and Jude 19, where “sensual” becomes “animal-like ones.” The perfectly understandable word “hell” is changed to “Sheol” in the Old Testament (II Samuel 22:6) and to “hades” in the New Testament (Acts 2:27,31). The King James Version makes it clear in Hebrews 10:14 that those who are sanctified by Christ are perfected forever: “For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” In King James II the doctrine of justification is obscured by changing “those who are sanctified” to “the ones being sanctified.”

### ***New King James Version***

In the Bible fraudulently named the New King James Version we again see Romans 7:6, Psalms 68:13 and Hebrews 10:14 revised as in the King James II. Among many additional changes, we see in I John 5:19 the word “wickedness” replaced by “the wicked one.” The Isaiah Scroll is cited as a legitimate document in the margins, as in Isaiah 10,16 and 21:8, where it is referred to by the letters DSS. In Isaiah 53:9, “he made his grave” is changed to “they made His grave.” The margin admits that “he” is literally correct, leaving open the question of whether the revised reading is based on conjecture or the Isaiah Scroll, with which it agrees in this place. Isaiah 49:5 is also changed from “Though Israel be not gathered” to “So that Israel is gathered.” The margin admits that this reading does not agree with the Masoretic Text but with the Dead Sea Scrolls and other sources. The revised text of the critics is also referred to repeatedly in the margins, as in Mark 16:9 and I John 5:7. In Hebrews 2:16, instead of the King James reading, “For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham,” we read, “For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham.” In Hebrews 3:16, instead of “For some, when they had heard did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses,” we read, “For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses?” In I Kings 10:22 “navy of Tarshish” is changed to “merchant ships,” and “peacocks” is changed to “monkeys.” Could it be that the baboon brain of modern man has not evolved sufficiently for him to see that modernized King James versions are related to the King James Version in name only?



The New King James Version changes Romans 3:22 without any manuscript authority whatsoever, as do other modern versions. Here the words “the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ” are changed to “the righteousness of God which is through faith in Jesus Christ.” Modern translators thus reveal a lack of understanding of the biblical doctrine of justification, viewing faith as something that is generated by man rather than as coming by the Gospel (Romans 10:17, Ephesians 2:8, Colossians 2:12). The translators of the New King James Version do not even have a basic understanding of English grammar. They change, for example, the words of the King James Version in Matthew 24:4, “Take heed that no man deceive you” to “Take heed that no one deceives you.” Here they use the verb form “deceives,” which is in the third person singular, rather than “deceive” in the subjunctive mood, an aspect of grammar that they failed to learn in school.

In their Introduction to the New King James Version, the Thomas Nelson Bible publishers, who also publish numerous versions based on the defective text of the Bible critics, boast of the integrity of the original text and the “scrupulous care” they have taken to preserve the “precision” of the King James Version. According to a pamphlet written by M. H. Reynolds and entitled *The New King James Bible Examined*, popular television evangelist Jerry Falwell, a member of the Overview Committee, which reviewed the translation, has given the New King James Version his unqualified endorsement, saying, “It protects every thought, every idea, every word, just as it was intended to be understood by the original scholars.” The Preface of the New King James Version assures its readers that all the scholars who worked on the translation signed a “document of subscription to the plenary and verbal inspiration of the original autographs of the Bible.” Careful readers should note that such a subscription actually means nothing, for although we have copies of the Bible in the original languages, the actual documents penned by the Bible writers, which they refer to as the “autographs,” are no longer extant. With such words the translators thus express no confidence in the ability of the Holy Spirit to preserve his Word in writing throughout the centuries. In a 1996 pamphlet entitled *A Creationist’s Defense of the King James Bible*, Henry Morris, a member of the Overview Committee who reviewed the proposed translation of Genesis for the New King James Version, admits that he cannot even read Hebrew. In the same pamphlet he also acknowledges it to be his view that the King James Bible “is not inerrant in the sense of the original autographs” and that “most of us who prefer it agree that some words should have been translated differently.”

### ***Catholic Bibles***

The first complete English Catholic version of the Bible, the Douay-Rheims of 1609-10, is translated from the Latin Vulgate. It is equipped with explanatory notes to ensure that its readers remain in spiritual darkness. Like later Catholic Bibles, it contains Apocryphal books that have never been part of the Hebrew Bible and whose canonicity was rejected even by Jerome. In Catholic Bibles, the doctrine of justification of the sinner by the imputation of the righteousness of Jesus Christ is obscured, as, for example, by consistently rendering the Greek word for “righteousness” as “justice.”

A Bible for Catholics known as the Jerusalem Bible, which was published in England in 1966, purports to be more than just a translation of a French Bible known as *La Bible de Jérusalem*, but Alexander Jones, the general editor, admits that some books were translated from the French and then compared with the Hebrew and Aramaic. (See his comments on the first page of the 1971 paperback edition.) This Bible was superseded in 1985 by the New Jerusalem Bible, which claims to be translated entirely from the original languages. The Foreword boasts that “considerable

efforts” have been made “to soften or avoid the inbuilt preference of the English language” for masculine pronouns -- “a preference now found so offensive by some people.” Thus, for example, Matthew 4:4, which in the older edition reads, “Man does not live on bread alone,” is changed to “Human beings live not on bread alone.” The Introduction to the Pentateuch, citing John 1:45, 5:45-47 and Romans 10:5, admits that Christ and the apostles did not question Moses’ authorship of the Pentateuch, but then goes on to explain that there are “variations in style and repetitions and contradictions in the narrative which make it impossible to ascribe the whole work to a single author.” The Introductions to the various sections of the New Testament proceed on the assumption that the Gospels are nothing more than composites from various sources and that not all the epistles attributed to Paul were actually written by him.

In 1970, a Catholic Bible not based on the Latin Vulgate was published in America. According to its title page, the New American Bible is “translated from the original languages with critical use of all the ancient sources.” Those who fail to read the Preface may not realize the full impact of the words “critical use” and “all the ancient sources.” After quoting the 1943 papal encyclical *Divino afflante Spiritu*, which permits literary criticism of the biblical text, the Preface goes on to say that the Psalms are not based on the Masoretic Text at all but on the new Latin Psalter of 1944 and 1945. The introduction to the Pentateuch admits a belief in the modernist view that it was written not by Moses but by four anonymous authors, who are referred to by the letters J, E, P and D. The Preface admits that the Masoretic Text of the books of Samuel has been “corrected” by “more ancient” Qumran manuscripts. In II Samuel 18:11, for example, where the King James Version has “ten shekels of silver,” the New American Bible has the number “fifty” instead of “ten.” Scanlin explains, on page 122 of his aforementioned book, the reason for this change. He says that in a Qumran document known as “4qSam” there is a blank space just large enough for exactly four Hebrew letters to fill in the lacuna and that it is “quite likely” that the only number that would fit in this space is “fifty” rather than “ten.”

In 1986 the New Testament of the New American Bible was updated to incorporate non-sexist language. In 1991 the Psalms were revised with the same intent and with such zeal that common sense was thrown to the wind. For example, where the King James Version reads in Psalms 8:4 in regard to Christ: “What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” we now read in the New American Bible, “What are humans that you are mindful of them, mere mortals that you care for them?” Yet when this Old Testament passage is quoted in Hebrews 2:6 in the same Bible it remains utterly “sexist”: “What is man that you are mindful of him or the son of man that you care for him?”

### ***Bibles for Jehovah’s Witnesses***

In 1902 the Jehovah’s Witnesses, acquired the rights to an interlinear and parallel New Testament known as the *Emphatic Diaglott*, which was originally published by Benjamin Wilson in 1865. They were enamored by this New Testament because in it “God” is frequently and unjustifiably referred to as “Jehovah.” In an introduction to his New Testament, Wilson makes the incredibly ignorant statement that previous English versions, including the King James Version, are nothing more than revisions of the Latin Vulgate. He also explains that the Textus Receptus “has been convicted of containing over 20,000 errors” and “is now proved to be the very worst Greek Text extant.” He published his New Testament before the appearance of Westcott and Hort’s edition, and so he adopted as his Greek text the 1806 version of J. J. Griesbach, which is also based on corrupt manuscripts.

The *Emphatic Diaglott* has now been superseded by a new version based on the text of Westcott and Hort known as *The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures*. The parallel English text of this New Testament is identical to that found in the standard Bible of the Jehovah's Witnesses known as *The New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, which was first published in entirety in 1961. Strangely enough, prior to 1961 the Jehovah's Witnesses used and even published the very King James Version that they hold in such contempt. Their new Bible alleges in an Appendix (page 1452) that the original text of both testaments has been falsified by Hebrew and Greek scribes, who replaced the Hebrew word "Jehovah" with other words for God, and so their version reads "Jehovah" even where this word is found neither in manuscripts nor printed editions. In accordance with their belief that Jesus was not nailed to a cross, their Bible renders the Greek word "stauros" not as a "cross" but as a "stake." Since Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe in hell, their version renders this concept as gehenna, hades, sheol and tartarus. Passages that uphold the deity of Christ are consistently distorted. Thus in Hebrews 1:8, where, referring to Christ, the true text reads, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," their translation reads, "God is your throne forever." In John 1:1 "the Word was God" becomes "the Word was a god."

### ***New International Version***

According to the Preface of the popular New International Version, it was translated by more than 100 scholars of many denominations, which helped safeguard it from "sectarian bias." The Preface admits that the translation of the Old Testament is not based entirely on the Hebrew text but that readings from other versions were "occasionally followed where the Masoretic Text seemed doubtful and where accepted principles of textual criticism showed that one or more of these textual witnesses appeared to provide the correct reading." As for the New Testament, the Preface admits that "where existing manuscripts differ, the translators made their choice of readings according to accepted principles of New Testament textual criticism."

### ***The Living Bible***

The Living Bible is believed by many to be a real Bible even though the author, Kenneth Taylor, never claimed it was an actual translation but only a paraphrase. According to an article that appeared in *Time* in July, 1972, he lost his voice halfway through his work, which a psychiatrist who examined him attributed to psychological self-punishment for tampering with what Taylor believed to be the word of God. In spite of Taylor's affliction, Billy Graham continued to promote the Living Bible as a real Bible -- not a paraphrase -- in his crusades. We should also mention a New Testament known simply as God's Word, another Bible promoted by Billy Graham. The Preface of this version boasts that it avoids theological terms that have "little, if any, meaning for most readers." As examples of such words, it mentions "covenant, redemption, justification, repentance, grace, and righteousness."

### ***The Inclusive New Testament***

If modern Bibles have not done an adequate job in blurring the distinction between the sexes for a perverted world, since about 1996 an Inclusive New Testament has been available in bookstores. In this version the Trinity in Matthew 28:19 is rendered "Abba God, the Only Begotten and the Holy Spirit." The names of Christ's female ancestors have been added to the genealogy of Christ in Matthew 1:1-17, where they are placed in front of those of the males. Sensitivity to women extends even to the "great whore" and "mother of harlots" of Revelation, who becomes the "Source of All

Idolatry” in Revelation 17:5. In the section entitled “acknowledgments” the editors regret that not all who worked on the project could be recognized “out of fear for their ministry, career or job.”

### ***Color-Coded Bibles***

Those who accept the view of modern scholarship that the biblical text was concocted by a hodgepodge of various writers and editors over the centuries will be happy to know that new Bibles are available to help them sort out who wrote what. There is, for example, *The Bible with Sources Revealed*, a Pentateuch published by Richard Elliott Friedman in 2003, which identifies its imaginary contributors (E, P, R, etc.) by giving them their own colors and fonts.

Another color-coded Bible has been published by a group of scholars that began meeting in 1985 in a forum known as the Jesus Seminar. For six years they discussed the issue of authenticity of the words of Jesus in the New Testament and finally came up with a new edition of the gospels entitled *The Five Gospels* -- that’s right, five, not four, because a fifth gospel, a so-called Gnostic Gospel known as the Gospel of Thomas, is included. This gospel, originally written in Coptic, is alleged to have been found in 1945 -- in what else but a jar -- together with other ancient Gnostic documents, by two peasants digging in a cliff near some caves in the vicinity of Nag Hammadi, Egypt.

The words of Christ in *The Five Gospels* are color-coded to indicate the degree of authenticity that the scholars attach to them. However, no certainty is indicated at all that any of the words attributed to Christ were actually spoken by him. Those “most probably” spoken by him are printed in red. Pink indicates less certainty. Words in gray “did not originate with Jesus but may reflect his ideas.” Words left in black are inauthentic. In this edition, the Gospels are arranged in the order in which they were allegedly written, Mark being first and Thomas last. The only words of Christ printed in red in Mark are found in 12:17: “Pay the emperor what belongs to the emperor, and God what belongs to God.” In the rendering of the Lord’s Prayer in Matthew 6:9, the only words in red are “Our Father.” By the time these scholars reach the version of the Lord’s Prayer in Luke 11:2, the only word they leave in red is “Father” -- a word uttered at some time or other by every human being who is able to speak. In John, red is entirely lacking, and the only pink is found in chapter 4, verse 44: “A prophet gets no respect on his own turf.” The Gospel of Thomas ends with words that can only be viewed as offensive in our politically correct era. When Peter requests that Mary leave the disciples because “females do not deserve life,” Christ objects, saying, “Look, I will guide her to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every female who makes herself male will enter the domain of Heaven.” These words are, not surprisingly, left in black.

### ***Non-Guilt Bibles for Jews***

Even before the release of the new movie “The Passion of the Christ,” which was expected to portray the role of the Jews in the crucifixion of their Messiah in an excessively historical light, a media campaign was launched against the historical accuracy of the Bible. In an article entitled “Who Killed Jesus,” the February 16, 2004 issue of *Newsweek* tried to convince readers that the book that countless believers take as “the immutable word of God” was written by “human authors” and “is not always a faithful record of historical events.” However, the article does not tell us where we can find other accounts of the crucifixion by which to compare whether the Bible is indeed in error. Unexpurgated editions of the Talmud confirm, in fact, the hate of the Jews for Christ and their role in his crucifixion. (See, for example, *Sanhedrin* 43:1, cited with other

Talmudic passages on Christ in Part II of Bernhard Pick's *The Talmud, What It Is*, published in New York in 1887.) In any case, those who are anxious to relieve the Jews of all guilt will be happy to know that *The Gospel According to Saint John*, published by Dagobert Runes in 1967, is void of all passages offensive to Jews. On the title page, Runes informs his readers that the King James text that is followed has been "edited in conformity with the true ecumenical spirit of His Holiness, Pope John XXIII" and "without adulteration by hate and revulsion against the people of the Savior." According to the Preface, "serious mistakes have infiltrated the New Testament." Passages in which Jesus speaks of the Jews as "the sons of the devil, doing the devil's work," are obviously "erroneous or false," for Christ, according to the editor, could not have spoken in such a manner of "his own kin, his own parents, his own people."

For Jews who would like to become Christians in name only, there is a Jewish New Testament published by David Stern in 1989 and a Complete Jewish Bible published in 1998. Throughout his Bible, Stern replaces common English words with Jewish jargon. The Lord becomes Adonai, and names such as Jesus, Abraham and Paul become Yeshua, Avraham and Sha'ul. In his Introduction, Stern does not use B.C. and A.D. but insults Christ by using the modern Jewish abbreviations B.C.E. and C.E. The aim of his translation, he explains, is to remove "centuries-old antisemitic theological biases" from the Bible. For some reason he does not have a similar concern when it comes to Jewish persecution of the Church. The stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:58), the imprisonment of believers (Acts 8:3), and the pursuit of Paul from city to city (Acts 17:13) are found even in his translation. In Stern's translation the books of the Bible are lumped together without any distinction between the Old and New Testaments. This is an ideal Bible for those who cannot accept the doctrine of justification by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ without the works of the law and through faith alone. Where Paul says, "Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Romans 3:28), Stern's version reads, "Therefore, we hold the view that a person comes to be considered righteous by God on the ground of trusting, which has nothing to do with legalistic observance of Torah commands." And where Paul says, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth" (Romans 10:4), Stern's translation reads, "The goal at which the Torah aims is the Messiah, who offers righteousness to everyone who trusts." In fact, Stern renders the words "believe" and "faith" as "trust" throughout Paul's epistles. In Romans 4:3 he translates Paul's quotation from Genesis 15:6 as "Avraham put his trust in God, and it was credited to his account as righteousness." Yet when we turn in his Bible to the passage in Genesis that Paul is quoting, we read, "He believed in Adonai, and he credited it to him for righteousness." In Galatians 3:6 the same passage is inflated to, "He trusted in God and was faithful to him, and that was credited to his account as righteousness." However, in James 2:23 we read, "Avraham had faith in God, and it was credited to his account as righteousness."

### ***Saul's Reign***

We read in the King James Version in I Samuel 13:1,2: "Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel, Saul chose him three thousand men of Israel." In the margin of the King James Version we read in regard to the one year of Saul's reign that the Hebrew original can also be translated, "the son of one year in his reigning." The actual Hebrew words are "ben shanah," which would usually be translated as "one year old." Critics, knowing that the text is not speaking of Saul as an infant but as an adult, assume that numbers are missing from the text. The New Revised Standard Version reads "Saul was . . . years old when he began to reign," and "he reigned . . . and two years over Israel." The New International Version, applying guesswork, has

Saul being thirty years old and reigning forty-two years. The New American Standard Bible gives forty years old for his age and thirty-two years for his reign. The revisers fail to realize that Saul had not only reigned one year but that one year had passed from his new birth, which is described in I Samuel 10.

### ***The Virgin Birth***

Not surprisingly, the doctrine of the virgin birth is assailed in the new translations. In Isaiah 7:14, we read in the King James Version the following words spoken by the Prophet to King Ahaz: “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” The new versions render the Hebrew word “almah” not as “a virgin” but as “the young woman,” ignoring the fact that the word is never used to refer to a married woman. Furthermore, the context, which calls for a sign or miracle, is rendered meaningless if the birth is not to be miraculous. The Septuagint uses here the Greek word “parthenos,” which can only mean “a virgin,” and the same word is used in the citation of the passage in Matthew 1:23. Although the translators of the King James II and New King James versions claim to have followed the same original texts as the King James translators, they cannot resist obscuring Isaiah 7:14 by adding the article “the” in front of the word “virgin,” which implies that the virgin in question is not the mother of Christ but one known to Isaiah and Ahaz.

### ***How to Identify a Real Bible***

Phony Bibles have been concocted for nearly every taste, but it is still relatively easy to identify a real Bible. The title page of a true English-language Bible will inform the reader that it is the Authorized or King James Version. The cover of a true English-language Bible is usually, though not always, black. It is the one that people are ashamed to read on a park bench or in a bus. It will be identified on its cover as The Holy Bible, not as The Bible, The Holy Scriptures, The Book, The Living Bible, The Amplified Bible, God’s Word, New International Version, New English Version, Jerusalem Bible, Revised Standard Version, New American Standard Bible, Good News Bible, Today’s English Version, Reader’s Digest Bible, Blue Denim Bible, nor by any other title. It should not contain a copyright notice, for it is not man’s word but God’s Word and was translated before copyright laws were enacted. Any copyright notice that may be added by some publishers is applicable only to Bible helps, maps or other such material that may be included. In England the Bible is printed only by license from the Crown, which owns the rights of publication. However, it is printed without license in other countries and, unlike modern translations, it may be freely used and quoted. A true Bible will not contain pictures of gender-neutral stick figures. There will be no guesswork in I Samuel 13:1 as to Saul’s age or any ellipsis indicating that numbers are missing in the original Hebrew. I John 5:7 will not be omitted, and Mark 16:9-20 and John 7:53-8:11 will be neither bracketed nor omitted. In Revelation 22:19, the warning against omitting any words will read, “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 this book.” The words “book of life” will not be changed to “tree of life.” The Bible will end precisely with the words, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all,” not “with all,” “with the saints,” nor with any other variant.

Readers should also note that some so-called King James Bibles contain unjustified variants and omissions. In a New Testament published by the American Bible Society the spelling of names has been changed to agree with the spelling used in the Old Testament. Thus, for example, Osee and

Booz become Hosea and Boaz. However, the editors were inconsistent, for Rachab is not changed to Rahab in Matthew 1:5 and “Jesus” is not changed to “Joshua” in Hebrews 2:9. The Gideons have disseminated a King James Bible, which was once common in hotel rooms, in which the subscriptions are omitted from Paul’s epistles. These subscriptions, which have always been an integral part of the New Testament, are unnumbered verses at the end of Paul’s epistles that provide information about them, such as where they were written and who carried them. Scholars do not like these subscriptions because they have their own ideas about such matters. For example, the subscription to Galatians tells us that it was written in Rome. Thus it could only have been written in about 63 A.D., when Paul was in Rome. This is later than the date scholars have assigned to the writing of this epistle. An erroneous date is assigned to Galatians even in the old system of chronology found in the margins of older Bibles. Though generally helpful, this chronology, commonly attributed to Bishop Ussher and agreeing largely with his calculations, is not always accurate. Modern dating systems, which contradict the biblical age of the world of about 6,000 years, are, of course, much worse. A new chronological system for the Hebrew kings is presented by Edwin Thiele in his book *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*. It turns out that his system, which at first glance appears quite innocent, proceeds on the assumption that the Bible should be corrected on the basis of a new scheme of chronology concocted by scholars on the basis of so-called archeological discoveries. This new chronology is readily identifiable by checking the date given for the accession of Rehoboam in I Kings 11:43, which, according to the margins of older Bibles, occurred in 975 B.C., but, according to Thiele, in 930 B.C.

### ***Marginal Notes***

The King James translators have, in some cases, added marginal notes that explain certain words that appear in the original text. In recent editions of the Bible these notes have been replaced by notes of modern editors. Unfortunately, it has become difficult to find new editions of the King James Version in which the original notes are retained. In undoctored Bibles, such notes are found, for example, in connection with Acts 13:18, where, if we transliterate the Greek words into our own alphabet, we read, “Gr. *etropoforesen*, perhaps for *etrofoforesen*, bore, or, fed them, as a nurse beareth, or, feedeth her child, Deut. 1:31 according to the LXX and so Chrysostom.” This means that the Greek word *etropoforesen*, which is translated in Acts 13:18 as “suffered he their manners,” should be compared with *etrofoforesen* in Deuteronomy 1:31 in the Septuagint (Seventy), the latter being the word used by Chrysostom in citing the passage in Acts 13:18. Another note on the Greek text is found in connection with verse 34 of the same chapter, which reads, “Gr. *ta osia*, holy, or, just things: which word the LXX both in the place of Is. 55:3, and in many others, use for that which is in the Hebrew, *mercies*.” This note explains why the Greek words “ta osia,” which normally mean “holy or just things,” are rendered as “mercies” in Acts 13:34.

### ***Conclusion***

Christ says, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Matthew 24:35). The Word that created and redeemed the world remains with us today in written form in the Holy Scriptures as the only infallible and immutable rule of life and doctrine. This Word lives and works without defense or apology from us, convincing even unreasonable and recalcitrant persons of the truth of its testimony: “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:17).” All the strivings of flesh and blood against the Word of God serve only to purify it, as

David says, “The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever” (Psalms 12:6,7). Christ also says, “Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled” (Matthew 5:18). Most of those who devoted their lives and energy to perverting the Holy Scriptures are now receiving their just reward in the hell in which they did not want to believe. We do not know whether they share there the missionary spirit of the rich man of Luke 16:19-31, who wanted to warn his five brethren who were still on earth, lest they too come into the same torment, and who heard Abraham say, “They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.” Neither do we know whether they, like the rich man, still reject the power of the Word of God, saying, “Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.” In any case, the reply of Abraham is still valid today, “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.”

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