

## Modern English Bible Versions

Currently, we have **over two hundred** English Bible versions.

What version should I read? What is the best version? They are all just Bibles, right?

There are three major Greek New Testaments used for translation:

1. The *Textus Receptus* (TR), first published in 1516.
2. The Nestle-Aland Text (NA). It has been published in 28 editions from 1998 to 2012.
3. The United Bible Societies Greek Text (UBS). It has been published in 5 editions from 1966 to 2014.
4. 2 and 3 are called the *Critical Text* and are based on the Westcott and Hort Greek Text of 1881 (WH). In graphical form, the situation can be pictures as follows.

Full Translation from the TR	Hybrid Translations	Critical Text Translations (NA & UBS)
King James Bible	New King James Modern English Version	All other major modern versions

### Modern Versions Differ from the King James Bible

All of the following verses are in the KJB and the Textus Receptus but missing from the listed major versions (and others). In some versions, the verse may be in brackets indicating that it is most likely not genuine. The NASB is listed, but the NASB-1995 may have some of the same verses in brackets instead.

Verses Missing	Major Versions that Omit Them
Matthew 17:21	NASB ESV NIV CSB CEV ERV GW GNT HCSB (brackets) LSB (Brackets) MSG RSV
Matthew 18:11	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB (brackets) LSB (brackets) MSG NCV RSV
Matthew 23:14	ESV NIV ASV NASB CSB CEB CEV HCSB LSB (brackets) MSG RSV
Mark 7:16	ESV NIV ASV NASB CSB CEB CEV HCSB (brackets) LSB (brackets) MSG RSV
Mark 9:44	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB (brackets) LSB (brackets) MSG RSV
Mark 9:46	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB (brackets) LSB (brackets) MSG RSV
Mark 11:26	ESV NIV NASB (brackets) ASV CSB CEV HCSB (brackets) LSB (brackets) MSG RSV
Mark 15:28	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB (brackets) LSB (brackets) MSG RSV
Luke 17:36	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB (brackets) LSB (brackets) MSG RSV
Luke 23:17	ESV NIV NASB (brackets) ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB (brackets) LSB (brackets) MSG NCV RSV
John 5:4	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB (brackets) LSB (brackets) MSG NCV (brackets) RSV
Acts 8:37	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB (brackets) LSB (brackets) MSG NCV (brackets) RSV
Acts 15:34	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB LSB (brackets) MSG NCV (brackets) RSV
Acts 24:7	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB (+ Omit v.8) CEB CEV (+ portions of 6 and 8) HCSB (brackets + portions of 6 and 8) LSB (brackets + portions of 6 and 8) MSG (+ portions of 6 and 8) RSV
Acts 28:29	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB (brackets) LSB (brackets) MSG NCV (brackets) RSV
Romans 16:24	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB (brackets) LSB (brackets) MSG NCV (brackets) RSV
1 John 5:7-8	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB LSB MSG (completely corrupted) NCV RSV

All of these verses are significant doctrinally. You may be able to find most of these doctrines in the New Testament without the missing verses, but it is more difficult. All the missing verses weaken the doctrines they effect. One doctrine, however, may be totally wiped out by the removal of one of these verses. Acts 8:37 destroys the teaching of infant baptism all by itself, and it is missing in the modern critical text versions. Acts 8:37 says one can be baptized **only if** he believes. An infant cannot understand the gospel and cannot believe. An infant is unable to do so. Therefore, infants are not proper subjects for baptism. *One verse* makes this difference.

Verses Missing	Doctrine Affected
Matthew 17:21	Spiritual Warfare
Matthew 18:11	Salvation
Matthew 23:14	Christian living-greed, hypocrisy, lack of love.
Mark 7:16	Christian living-faithfulness to God
Mark 9:44	Hell
Mark 9:46	Hell
Mark 11:26	Christian living-forgiveness
Mark 15:28	Atonement, Crucifixion
Luke 17:36	Tribulation rapture
Luke 23:17	Crucifixion
John 5:4	Signs and wonders; God's power
Acts 8:37	Baptism; infant baptism
Acts 15:34	Creates inconsistent history
Acts 24:7	The truth of human deviousness
Acts 28:29	Witnessing to Jews. Shows affect of OT quotes on Jews.
Romans 16:24	Love for other Christians
1 John 5:7	Diety of Christ

**Every verse and word in the Bible is significant doctrinally.** "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine ..." (1Tim. 3:16). There are hundreds of other differences. Hundreds of *phrases* and other words are missing or added in the modern versions. Below, I show a few examples to give you an idea of how extensive the issue is.

Reference	Phrase	Omitted by
Mat. 20:16 (b)	for many be called, but few chosen.	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB LSB MSG NCV RSV +Others
Mark 6:11 (b)	Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB LSB MSG NCV RSV +Others
Luke 4:8 (a)	Get thee behind me, Satan:	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB LSB MSG NCV RSV +Others
Luke 9:55-(b)56(a)	Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB LSB (brackets) MSG NCV (brackets) RSV +Others
Acts 9:5(b)–6(a)	it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB LSB MSG NCV RSV +Others
Acts 23:9 (b)	let us not fight against God.	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB LSB NCV RSV +Others
Rev. 1:11	I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last:	ESV NIV NASB ASV CSB CEB CEV HCSB LSB NCV RSV +Others

Below are some other significant differences in the words, which change the meaning. Let's look at several detailed examples.

**Matthew 1:25 (KJB)** And knew her not till she had brought forth her **firstborn** son: and he called his name JESUS.

**Matthew 1:25 (NIV)** - But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

**Matthew 1:25 (ESV)** but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

The word firstborn is missing in the NIV, ESV, NASB, ASV, CSB, CEB, CEV, HCSB, LSB, NCV, RSV, etc. It is this word that disproves the Catholic doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary. Without it, an argument against the catholic doctrine is difficult.

**Matthew 6:1 (KJB)** - Take heed that ye do not your **alms** before men, to be seen of them:

**Matthew 6:1 (NIV)** - Be careful not to practice your **righteousness** in front of others to be seen by them.

The NIV, ASV, CSB, changed the word "alms" to "righteousness." The two words do not mean the same thing. "Righteousness" is to obey the law of God, while "alms" is to give love gifts (charitable donations) to the poor. Righteousness includes giving alms, but "righteousness" is not specific enough to communicate the right meaning. Additionally, the Greek word means *alms*, not *righteousness*. When modern versions change the Biblical word into a word that means something different, it is hiding the word God chose from people. It is hiding the Word of God from the people.

**Matthew 6:27 KJB** - Which of you by taking thought can **add one cubit** unto his stature?

**Matthew 6:27 NIV** - Can any one of you by worrying add a **single hour** to your life?

**Ditto:** ESV, CSB, CEV, NASB

This difference does not come from the Greek New Testament. The UBS, NA, WH, and the Textus Receptus all read the same. They all say, "one cubit unto his stature." This was deliberately changed by the translators.

**1 Peter 3:21 (KJB)** The **like figure** whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

**1 Peter 3:21 (ESV)** **Baptism**, which corresponds to this, **now saves you**, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

**1 Peter 3:21 (NIV)** and this water symbolizes **baptism that now saves you also**—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

The KJB agrees that it was a figure that Noah's family was saved by water (1 Peter 3:20), but it says that water baptism is also a figure like the water of Noah's flood. The KJB indicates that Baptism pictures our salvation, but salvation does not save us. However, the ESV and NIV (and others) clearly say that Baptism saves, thereby teaching baptismal regeneration.

There are several other things to notice about the way this verse is translated in modern versions. The word *body* is used in the NIV and ESV, and they speak of bathing the dirt off the body. However, the Greek word for body is *soma*. This word is *sarx*, which means flesh (not body) and is used of the old sinful nature of a human being. *Sarx* is also translated carnal and carnality in the KJB (Rom. 8:6-7). In the same verses, the ESV speaks of setting the mind on the flesh as opposed to setting the mind on the Spirit, showing that the flesh refers to something spiritual not just our body. The NIV does the same as the ESV. 1 Peter 3:21, according to the Greek and the KJB, is telling us that baptism does not clean us up morally and spiritually.

**Job 6:6 KJB** - or is there any taste in the **white of an egg**?

**Job 6:6 RSV** - or is there any taste in the **slime of the purslane**?

**Job 6:6 ESV** - or is there any taste in the **juice of the mallow?**

Which is it “white of an egg,” “slime of the purslane,” or “juice of the mallow?” What did God really say?

**Matthew 24:36 KJB** But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

**Matthew 24:36 (NIV)** But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, **nor the Son**, but only the Father.

The NIV adds the words “nor the son,” changing the meaning.

**1 Timothy 3:16 KJB** And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God** was manifest in the flesh,

**1 Timothy 3:16 ESV** Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: **He** was manifested in the flesh,

**1 Timothy 3:16 NIV** Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great:

**He** appeared in the flesh,

God is changed to He, destroying the doctrine of the Deity of Christ in this verse.

**John 1:18 KJB** No man hath seen God at any time; the **only begotten Son**, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

**John 1:18 LSB** No one has seen God at any time; the **only begotten God** ...

**John 1:18 NASB** the **only begotten God**

### Modern Versions Differ from One Another

Modern versions not only differ from the KJB, but they are also different from one another. Both of these conditions cause confusion. I have been in Bible studies where the individuals use several versions. These studies sometimes veer away from “what does the Bible says,” and degenerates to “I like how this version puts the verse.” The result can be that no one learns very much. Even preachers get caught up in *how much I like this version over how much I like that one*. This makes you the authority, not God.

#### Matthew 6:1

**CEB** “Be careful that you don’t **practice your religion** in front of people to draw their attention. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

**CEV** When you **do good deeds**, don’t try to show off. If you do, you won’t get a reward from your Father in heaven.

**ESV** “Beware of **practicing your righteousness** before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

**MSG** “Be especially careful when **you are trying to be good** so that you don’t make a performance out of it. It might be good theater, but the God who made you won’t be applauding.

**NIV** “Be careful not to **practice your righteousness** in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.”

**KJB** Take heed that **ye do not your alms** before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

All Greek texts read “alms.” Good deeds, being good, righteousness, and religion are not the same things. None of the modern translations specify what good or righteousness is meant. This variation can easily result in confusion. What did God *really* say?

**God is not the author of confusion (1 Cor. 14:33).**

## Matthew 6:27

**KJB** Which of you by taking thought can **add one cubit unto his stature?**

**NIV** Can any one of you by worrying **add a single hour** to your life?

**NASB** And which of you by worrying can **add a single day** to his life's span?

**CSB** Can any of you **add one moment** to his life span by worrying?

**CEV** Can worry **make you live longer?**

**ESV** And which of you by being anxious can **add a single hour** to his span of life?

What did God say? Was it single hour, single day, one moment, live longer, or one cubit? Confusion is not from the Lord (1 Cor. 14:33).

## Zechariah 13:6

This prophecy is one of the best to show from the Old Testament that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah.

**KJB** And one shall say unto him, What are these **wounds in thine hands?** Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.

**NKJV** And one will say to him, 'What are these **wounds between your arms?**' Then he will answer, 'Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'

**NIV** If someone asks, 'What are these **wounds on your body?**' they will answer, 'The wounds I was given at the house of my friends.'

**ESV** And if one asks him, 'What are these **wounds on your back?**' he will say, 'The wounds I received in the house of my friends.'

**CSB** If someone asks him, 'What are these **wounds on your chest?**'—then he will answer, 'I received the wounds in the house of my friends.'

**CEB** Someone will say to him, "What are these **wounds between your hands?**" And he will say, "These happened when I was hit in my friends' home."

**NASB** And someone will say to him, 'What are these **wounds between your arms?**' Then he will say, 'Those with which I was wounded at the house of [b]my friends.'

**MEV** If someone asks, "What are these **wounds on your arms?**" he will say, "I was struck in the house of my close friends."

**MSG** And if someone says, 'And so where did you **get that black eye?**' they'll say, 'I ran into a door at a friend's house.'

**CEV** And if any of them are asked **why they are wounded**, they will answer, "It happened at the house of some friends."

What did God really say in Zech. 13:6? Was the Lord Jesus wounded in his hands, on His body, on His back, on His chest, between His hands, between His arms, on his arms, or did He just get a black eye? Or, why was he wounded anyway? Which was it? Modern Christians cannot tell. *God is not the author of confusion (1 Cor. 14:33).*

The Lord Jesus was nailed to the cross in His hands. Zechariah 13:6 ties that event to the Old Testament Messiah, if one reads the KJB. However, that truth is lost in the verse, if one reads modern versions.

## Do Modern Versions Tell Lies?

What if modern Bible revisions insert lies into the Bible? What will it do to the glory of God's name?

**Mark 1:2-3 KJB** As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

**Mark 1:2-3 ESV** As it is written in Isaiah the prophet

**Mark 1:2-3 NASB** just as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

**Mark 1:2-3 MSG** following to the letter the scroll of the prophet Isaiah.

**Mark 1:2-3 NIV** as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

Modern versions tell us that the quote in Mark 1:2-3 is from the book of Isaiah. However, the quote is from two prophets, not one. The quote in Mark 1:2 is from Malachi 3:1, and the quote in Mark 1:3 is from Isaiah 40:3. The statement in the modern versions is not just wrong. It is a lie passed off as the Word of God.

**NKJV** – John 5:24 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into **judgment**” (the ASV, NIV, ESV, CSB, CEB, HCSB, LSB, NASB, and RSV say the same).

Really? Is this true?

**NKJV** – 2 Corinthians 5:10 “For we must all appear before **the judgment** seat of Christ” (the ASV, NIV, ESV, CSB, CEB, HCSB, LSB, NASB, NCV, and RSV say the same).

We *won't* be judged...BUT... wait ... we *will* be judged? This is a true contradiction in the NKJV.

The King James Bible gets this right.

**KJB** – John 5:24 “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into **condemnation**”

The saved will be *judged* but will not be *condemned*.

Let's try another, shall we?

**CEV** – 1 Samuel 17:4, 50, 51 “4 The Philistine army had a hero named Goliath ... 50 David defeated Goliath with a sling and a rock. He killed him without even using a sword. 51 David ran over and pulled out Goliath's sword. Then he used it to cut off Goliath's head.”

**CEV** – 2 Samuel 21:19 “A soldier named Elhanan killed Goliath from Gath”

Who killed Goliath? This is a genuine contradiction in the Contemporary English Version. Again, the ASV, CSB, ESV, HCSB, LSB, MSG, NASB, and NCV also say Elhanan killed Goliath. The NIV says Elhanan killed the brother of Goliath, but it has a footnote casting doubt on the reading.

As usual, the KJB gets it right, as do a few others.

**KJV** – 2 Samuel 21:19 “Elhanan the son of Jaareoregim, a Bethlehemite, slew the brother of Goliath the Gittite”

The inconsistencies and omissions in the modern English versions do not give God's name glory. They cast doubt on the Bible, and take away God's glory.

**Revelation 22:16 (KJB)** I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and **morning star**.

**Revelation 22:16 (NIV)** “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you[ this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright **Morning Star**.”

Revelation 22:16 identifies the “morning star” as the Lord Jesus Christ in both the KJB and the NIV. However, notice the change in Isaiah 14:12.

**Isaiah 14:12 (NIV)** How you have fallen from heaven, **morning star**, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations!

**Isaiah 14:12 (KJV)** How art thou fallen from heaven, **O Lucifer, son of the morning!** how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

The KJB differentiates between the Morning Star and Lucifer as two different beings in Isaiah 14:12, giving his name and calling him simply “son of the dawn.” The NIV, however, gives the the Lord Jesus’ title to Satan!

This is repeated by the CEV, LSB, NASB, and others. The ESV does not make this mistake, but it makes a different one.

**Isaiah 14:12 (ESV)** “How you are fallen from heaven, **O Day Star**, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low!

**2 Peter 1:19 (KJB)** We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and **the day star** arise in your hearts:

The ESV calls Satan the “Day Star,” while the KJB calls Jesus the “Day Star.” The ESV translated *fosforos*, the Greek word in 2 Peter 1:19, as “morning star.” The word means *light bringer*, and to the ancient Greeks, it originally referred to Venus when it precedes the sun in the morning, thereby heralding the morning light. The Greek word means *both* “Day Star” and “Morning Star.” *Neither* is a name that properly applies to Satan! The ESV got it wrong.

### The Hybrid Versions

The NKJV (New King James Version) and the MEV (Modern English Version) present themselves as true revisions of the King James Bible, because they claim to have used the same original language source texts as the KJB. Unfortunately, they both show the influence of the other modern versions. The source-text claim for the NKJV is not entirely true and the claim of the MEV is uncertain. The following is what they say. The information on the NKJV is from the Preface of the 1982 edition of the New King James Version. The information on the Modern English Version is from the home page of the website, “MEV | Modern English Version Home - MEV | Modern English Version.”

1) The NKJV says its source text for the New Testament is the Textus Receptus, without specifying which edition. However, the text used for the NKJV Old Testament was not the same as that used for the KJV. The KJV used the Hebrew text edited by Jacob Ben Chayim. The NKJV used the 1967/1977 Stuttgart edition of Biblia Hebraica, which is close, but it is not the same text. They also used the Septuagint, the Latin Vulgate, and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

2) The MEV says its source text for the New Testament is the Textus Receptus, without identifying which edition. The source text of the Old Testament is said to be the Jacob Ben Chayim Hebrew OT. And, finally, they say they used the King James Version “as the base manuscript,” whatever that means.

### The New King James Version

First, we will take a brief look at the NKJV. We have already seen that there is a poor translation in the NKJV in John 5:24, which creates a contradiction, that is a lie, in the text. We have also seen how that the NKJV helps to create confusion with its translation of Zechariah 13:6. An article appeared in the Quarterly Record of the Trinitarian Bible Society entitled “An Examination of the New King James Version” that gives this introductory summary.

In the New Testament, the NKJV presents a textual apparatus, alongside its translation, with readings from the Nestle-Aland critical Greek text, the text from which the New International Version, the New American Standard Bible, the Revised Standard Version and the vast majority of modern versions are translated. The textual apparatus also includes variant readings from the so called Byzantine majority text which is an edition of the Greek text edited by Zane Hodges and Arthur Farstad (Dr Farstad was also the editor of the New King James Version). **The presentation of these variant readings would make it appear that the Textus Receptus is not reliable, and that therefore, by implication, the Authorised Version, which used the Textus Receptus in Greek for its New Testament translation, is itself suspect.** Instead of staying as close to the text of the Authorised Version as possible, as the guidelines originally stated, the New King James translators made many unnecessary translational changes and mostly for the worse, as we shall demonstrate.

Contrary to what the original purpose was stated to be, the NKJV is a new translation, not a mere language update. Not only that, the translation changes impact key doctrines of the Scripture, such as the eternal punishment of the lost in hell. The doctrinal impact of the changes made by the NKJV is heightened when one considers the inclusion of the readings of the Nestle Aland/UBS text in the NKJV margin. These marginal readings make potential doctrinal impacts upon key doctrines such as the incarnation of Christ and His eternal Godhead, as we shall itemize. <sup>1</sup>

Several things stand out in Mr. Hembd's analysis. I have listed some of them below along with my own comments and the comments of others to show that the NKJV is a compromise version.

1. James Price, the executive editor of the NKJV Old Testament is not a TR advocate and prefers the Critical Text.

We have corresponded with the executive editor of the Old Testament portion of the NKJV, Dr James Price. In April of 1996 he admitted to me that he is not committed to the Received Text and that he supports the modern critical text in general: 'I am not a TR advocate. I happen to believe that God has preserved the autographic text in the whole body of evidence that He has preserved, not merely through the textual decisions of a committee of fallible men based on a handful of late manuscripts. The modern critical texts like NA26/27 [Nestle-Aland] and UBS [United Bible Societies] provide a list of the variations that have entered the manuscript traditions, and they provide the evidence that supports the different variants. In the apparatus they have left nothing out, the evidence is there. The apparatus indicates where possible additions, omissions, and alterations have occurred... I am not at war with the conservative modern versions [such as the New International Version and the New American Standard Version]'. (James Price, e-mail to David Cloud, April 30, 1996).<sup>2</sup>

2. Authur Farstad was the overall principal editor of the NKJV. He was also co-editor with Zane Hodges of an alternate Greek text, *The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text*, which varies from the TR in about 1,900 places. Therefore, he was also negative toward the TR.

3. The New King James Version has footnotes which present alternative readings from the Critical Text and the Majority Text. These are the texts advocated by the chief editors of the NKJV. In the preface to the NKJV, Farstad says the following.

Today, scholars agree that the science of New Testament textual criticism is in a state of flux. Very few scholars still favor the Textus Receptus as such, and then often for its historical prestige as the text of Luther, Calvin, Tyndale, and the King James Version. For about a century most have followed a Critical Text (so called because it is edited according to specific principles of textual criticism) which depends heavily upon the Alexandrian type of text. More recently many have abandoned this Critical Text (which is quite similar to the one edited by Westcott and Hort) for one that is more eclectic. Finally, a small but growing number of scholars prefer the majority text, which is close to the traditional text except in the Revelation. <sup>3</sup>

4. From these things, we can conclude that the core endeavor of the NKJV translation was not to produce a pure TR translation, but to promote the Critical and Majority texts along with it. The footnotes and the comments of the Preface actually undermine the authority of NKJV text, casting doubt on many of the English readings and on the entire Textus Receptus.

5. David Cloud further stated this concerning Dr. Price.

With men like this in charge, it is not possible that the New King James Bible could be merely a simple revision of the KJV. I do not know of one man involved with the translation of the NKJV who had a conviction about the authority of the Old and New Testament texts underlying the KJV. Dr. Price also told me that the NKJV translators did not solely follow the Masoretic Hebrew text in the



Old Testament of the NKJV, but that they introduced textual changes. This is born out in the Preface to the NKJV, which says the New King James Bible modifies the Masoretic Hebrew with the Septuagint, the Latin Vulgate, “a variety of ancient versions,” and the Dead Sea Scrolls.”... The NKJV Makes thousands of unnecessary changes. There are an estimated 100,000 changes, averaging 80 per page. This was probably done for copyright purposes. <sup>4</sup>

These men grab textual material from here and there and somewhere else, then put whatever they wish into the Bible text.

6. You have already seen some examples of mistranslation in the NKJV. Let’s take a look at more examples.

### Hebrews 2:16

**KJV** - For verily **he took not on *him the nature*** of angels; but **he took on him** the seed of Abraham

**NKJV** - For indeed **He does not give aid** to angels, but He does **give aid** to the seed of Abraham

The difference is obvious. It is important that a translation gives the true words God spoke. What does the Greek Received Text (TR) really say?

**Greek TR:** For truly (verily He did not take on ... of angels, but He took on of the seed of Abraham.

It should be clear that the Greek requires some thought because something needs to be added to make complete sense in English. The second part of the verse tells us that when Jesus came, He took on himself human nature of the seed of Abraham. Therefore, the first part of the verse is also speaking of taking on “the nature” of angels, so the KJV adds the words “the nature.” However, the Greek does not contain or imply the words “give” or “aid.” The new KJV is not justified in using these words. The translation as it is in the NKJV weakens the teaching of the Deity of Christ in the Scriptures. Also, the statement that Christ does not give aid to angels after His resurrection does not seem to be a true statement.

### Hebrews 3:16

**KJV** For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

**NKJV** For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses?

These two statements are the opposite of one another. One starts out with a statement, and the other starts out with a question. The KJB says *not* all rebelled. The NKJV says it *was* all who rebelled. Therefore, the NKJV places another false statement in Scripture. Old Testament history makes it clear that *all did not* rebel. Joshua, Caleb, Moses, and Aaron did not rebel.

### Philippians 1:7

**NKJV** - just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, **you all are partakers with me of grace.**

**KJV** - Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, **ye all are partakers of my grace.**

This verse in the NKJV exhibits a change in wording that destroys a wonderful truth. Verses 3-6 teach that Paul is thankful for their fellowship in the gospel, he prays for them often, and he is confident that God will continue His work in them. Verse 7 tells us why he is confident. It is because he has them in his heart. What? Their continued growth depends on Paul? Not in the Lord? Yes, of course it depends on the Lord. But what has the Lord done? He has given Paul grace (my grace) and that grace has put the believers into Paul’s heart with the result that Paul prays for them. In response to prayer, God continues His work in them. It is not a matter of experiencing grace **with** Paul. It is a matter of experiencing blessings flowing from the grace God had specifically given Paul. Any time one Christian ministers to another, the second is benefiting from the grace God gave the first. The NKJV is a weak translation that hides this truth from believers.

7. The NKJV substitutes the word *hades* in the place of *hell* in the following verses: Mt. 11:23; 16:18; Lk 10:15; 16:23; Acts 2:27; 2:31; 1 Cor. 15:55; Rev. 1:18; Rev. 6:8; 20:13; and 20:14. The MEV also uses *hades* in these verses except Lk. 10:15, where it says *hell*, and 1 Cor. 15:55, where it says *grave*. First, this weakens the doctrine of *hell*. Second, it obscures the meaning of *hell*. *Hades* is a word that is steeped in Greek mythological stories. *Hell* is a concept very familiar to those who speak English as a place of punish for sinners. Lastly, *hades* is not a translation. It is a Greek word put into English letters. The translation of *hades* is *hell*.

8. The NKJV was designed to be a bridge to modern version based on the Critical Text. The following information came originally from a pastor who attended Thomas Nelson planning meeting for the NKJV.

Kirk DiVietro, pastor of Grace Baptist Church in Franklin, Massachusetts, attended one of the Thomas Nelson planning meetings that prepared the way for the publication of the New King James. He testified to me that the Thomas Nelson representative plainly stated that their goal with the NKJV was to create a bridge to the modern versions, to break down the resistance of those who still revere the KJV. Following is Bro. DiVietro's testimony as he gave it to me by e-mail on January 9, 2005: "Over 20 years ago I attended a pre-publication meeting of the NKJV held by the Thomas Nelson People and hosted by the Hackman's Bible Bookstore in Allentown, PA. I am personal friends with the owners who took great delight in seating me next to the brother of the main translator of the NIV. The meeting was attended by over 300 college professors and pastors. At the meeting we were treated to a slide presentation of the history of the English bible and in particular the King James Bible and its several revisions. During the presentation of the NKJV the Thomas Nelson representative made a statement which to the best of my memory was, 'We are all educated people here. We would never say this to our people, but we all know that the King James Version is a poor translation based on poor texts. But every attempt to give your people a better Bible has failed. They just won't accept them. So we have gone back and done a revision of the King James Version, a fifth revision. Hopefully it will serve as a transitional bridge to eventually get your people to accept a more accurate Bible.' Because of the years, and because I did not write it down, I cannot give you the speaker's name and I cannot promise you that this is word for word correct, but the meeting so seared my spirit that I have never picked up and opened a NKJV. I can tell you that this is absolutely the substance and nearly the exact words of what was said."<sup>5</sup>

9. I will give you one final quote from Brother David Cloud's article, regarding the footnotes in the NKJV.

Though the editors of the NKJV claim they are honoring the Received Text with their New King James Bible, they have given credibility to the corrupted UBS text by placing its doubt-producing readings in the margin of their version.

**The following study is based on the margin of the New King James Version, Thomas Nelson, copyright 1984.**

44 ENTIRE VERSES ARE QUESTIONED IN THE MARGIN OF THE NKJV ON THE BASIS OF THE UNRELIABLE UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES TEXT

Matthew 17:21; 18:11; 21:4; 23:14; 24:6

Mark 7:16; 9:44; 9:46; 11:26; 15:28; 16:9-20

Luke 17:36; 22:43; 22:44; 23:17

John 5:4; 7:53-8:11 Acts 8:37; 15:34; 24:7; 28:29

Romans 16:24

1 John 5:7

PORTIONS OF 95 OTHER VERSES ARE QUESTIONED IN THE MARGIN OF THE NKJV ON THE BASIS OF THE UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES TEXT ... Those who use the New King James Bible are therefore subjected to the same onslaught of confusion and doubt as those who use the New International

Version or some other modern edition of the Bible. Many claim that the critical notes that question the authenticity of the Bible text are not harmful to readers. We believe this is nonsense. I saw the fruit of this questioning in my own life before I was grounded in the understanding of God's preserved Scripture and before I was aware of the unbelieving foundation of modern textual criticism. Before I went to Bible College, I read my Bible carefully, word by word, and I did not doubt or question anything. After I completed a course in New Testament Greek and was taught that the Received Text and the KJV "are not based on the most dependable scholarship," I found myself questioning large portions of the Bible. I would like someone to explain to me how such confusion builds strong Christian lives and churches ... As the late Evangelist Lester Roloff said, "We don't need to re- translate the Bible; we need to re-read and re-study the excellent one we have." Amen. <sup>6</sup>

### **The Modern English Version (MEV)**

Basic information about the Modern English Translation is below.

#### **MODERN ENGLISH VERSION (MEV)**

Publisher: Military Bible Association

#### **Version Information**

The Modern English Version (MEV) heralds a new day for Bibles with the most modern translation ever produced in the King James tradition, providing fresh clarity for Bible readers everywhere with an updated language that doesn't compromise the truth of the original texts. The MEV maintains the beauty of the past, yet provides clarity for a new generation of Bible readers.

The MEV is a translation of the Textus Receptus and the Jacob ben Hayyim edition of the Masoretic Text, using the King James Version as the base manuscript.

The MEV is a literal translation. It is also often referred to as a formal equivalence translation.

The Committee on Bible Translation began its work on the MEV in 2005 and completed it in 2014.

#### **Principles for Translation:**

**Clear:** The MEV is a literal translation (word-for-word), with capitalized references of God. The intent was to translate historical facts and events without distortion while translating in a way that readers of all backgrounds may understand the message that the original authors were communicating to the original audience.

**Reverent:** Every effort was made to ensure that no cultural or theological agenda was allowed to distort the translation.

**Accurate:** The goal was to translate Scripture accurately without loss, change, compromise, embellishments or distortions of the meaning of the original text.

The chief editor is James F. Linzey who conceived the MEV and is a graduate of Fuller Theological Seminary. The MEV is a modern translation by 47 translators from a wide range of denominations.<sup>7</sup>

All of this sounds like proper motivations. But, how does it work out in reality? As usual, let's look at some examples of differences from the KJB. We have already seen that the MEV varies from the KJB in Zechariah 13:6, and it also varies from the NKJV. The MEV says the wound was on His arms, but the NKJV says it was between His arms. Both cannot be right. They are different. The MEV also translates certain passages in agreement with how the modern versions translate rather than how the KJB translates.

**1. 1 John 5:7, 8** are key verses that is almost always missing in modern versions. It is present in the NKJV and the MEV. However, the MEV has a footnote on verse 8. It says, "The earliest Greek manuscripts lack *in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and the three are one. There are three that testify on earth.*" (The NKJV also has a similar note.) This is a sure indication that the translators, editors, or somebody responsible for these versions are infected with at least some of the unbelieving liberal attitudes of modern textual critics.

## **2. 2 Corinthians 2:17**

MEV (also NKJV) - For we are not as many are who **peddle** the word of God. Instead, being sent by God, we sincerely speak in Christ in the sight of God.

KJV - For we are not as many, which **corrupt** the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

Is the word of God being corrupted or peddled? "Peddling" is the general way modern versions, based on the Critical Greek text, translate the word. Therefore, there is a tendency in the NKJV and MEV to follow modern critical scholarship. Some commentators try to make this "peddling" sound bad by saying it is to huckster. However, the definitions of huckster do not make it necessarily have anything to do with corrupt goods. Nevertheless, the Greek word does have a connection to selling and to merchandising. Thayer's dictionary says it means both to sale and to corrupt the goods. The Greek word, kapēleúō, is a Greek idiom meaning to corrupt something. Originally it was used for true merchandising. Over time, some of them would try to increase their profits by reducing the quality of the product. For example, they would overly water down their wine to be able to sale more. As a result, the word came to stand for someone who corrupted his product and tried to sale sub-quality goods. It finally became an idiom to mean corrupted goods. By Paul's day that was its meaning.

## **3) John 20:17**

**MEV** Jesus said to her, "**Stop holding on** to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father. But go to My brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.'"

**KJV** Jesus saith unto her, **Touch me not**; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

To touch is not necessarily to hold. This verse teaches a profound truth. After Jesus' resurrection, He had become our high priest, a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec (Heb. 5:6; 7:21). As such, He was to present the blood of the covenant in the holy place of the tabernacle in Heaven (Heb. 9:1-14). When verse 17 took place, the Lord had not yet ascended to perform this service and he did not want to be touched by sinful people first. However, a short while later, the women were allowed to touch him (Matt. 28:9). In between time, He had been to Heaven and returned. The Greek word, haptomai, means to touch. When the MEV translates it as "hold" and the NKJV as "cling," they indicate that Mary was touching Him, thereby destroying this entire truth and hiding it from God's people. The word, haptomai, occurs 35 times in the NT, according to the e-sword software. In every other place, the MEV and NKJV translate the word as touch, touched, or touching. *They only changed it in this one place, the most doctrinally significant place.*

## **4) Luke 23:53**

**MEV** – Then he took Him down, and wrapped Him in linen, and placed Him in a hewn tomb, where no one had ever been buried.

**KJV** – And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

The KJB translation of this verse is more literal than the MEV. I take issue with the description of the tomb. I know this is a small issue, but God wrote it the way he did in the TR for a reason. The Greek word, *laxeutos*, specifically means cut out of stone. The KJB says this, but the MEV simply says “hewn.” The English word “hewn” means to cut or chop, but it does not automatically imply that the cut material is stone. So, the MEV left out the stone. God placed it there. Therefore, the KJB translation is superior. Remember. All Scripture is given for *doctrine* including this word.

### 5) Philippians 1:3

**MEV** - 3 I thank my God **for** every reminder of you.

4 In every prayer of mine for you all, I have always made requests with joy,

5 **due to** your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now.

**KJV** - 3 I thank my God **upon** every remembrance of you,

4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

5 **For** your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

The MEV completely obliterates teaching on prayer in these verses by mistranslating a two small word. The MEV translated verse 7 correctly, but there is an issue in verse 3. The preposition in verse three has been changed: MEV=for, KJV=upon. The tiny difference between these makes a huge difference in meaning. First, verse three in the MEV ends in a period making it a self-contained thought. What it says in the MEV is that Paul is not thanking God for the Philippian Christians, but simply for the fact that he occasionally remembers them. The KJB says that when Paul remembers them, he is reminded to pray for them. The KJV translates the preposition “upon,” indicating it is the memory that motivates him to be thankful for the believers in Philippi. The KJB ends verse 3 with a comma, which connects the thought of verse three with verse 5. The intervening verse (verse 4) is a parenthetical thought. Verse four shows that Paul also makes requests for them when he thanks God. If you temporarily remove verse 4, you will learn why Paul thanks God for them. Let’s look at it. “3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you 5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now.” Paul thanks God for their fellowship in the gospel. The MEV entirely obliterates this truth and indicates that Paul makes requests because of (“due to”) their fellowship in the gospel. It completely twists the meaning of the verses.

### 6) Romans 10:9-10

**KJB** —That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth **the Lord Jesus**, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

**MEV** — that if you confess with your mouth **Jesus is Lord**, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

The translation in the MEV is incorrect. A true word-for-word translation of the Greek TR text is this, “that if you will confess with the mouth of you **Lord Jesus** and believe in the heart of you that the God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.” There is a rule in Greek grammar called the attributive and predicate use of the adjective. It basically says that 1) if an adjective has a definite article in front of it and the noun has no article, you translate it as a true adjective, *the Lord Jesus*; 2) if the adjective has no article and the noun does, you translate it by adding “is,” *Jesus is Lord*. The MEV translated it as an attributive adjective even though there is no article with the noun. In reality, Romans 10:9 does not fall under this rule. First, the attributive and predicate use usually includes the noun or both the noun and article in nominative case. In Romans 10:9 they are in the accusative case. Second, they are used as a compound name. Therefore, the right translation is simply *Lord Jesus*.

Also, we must define what it means to confess someone. After Jesus was arrested Peter *denied* the Lord. Denial is the opposite of confession. When Peter denied the Lord, he said, "I know not the man" (Mt. 26:74). To confess, then, means to acknowledge that you know Him. Also, in two other places we learn that the word confess means to publicly acknowledge that you believe in Him.

**John 12:42** Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

**Matthew 10:32** Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

## 6. Romans 13:1

**KJB** — Let every soul be subject unto the **higher powers**. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."

**MEV** — "Let every person be subject to the **governing authorities**, for there is no authority except from God, and those that exist are appointed by God."

"The King James Bible says Christians are commanded to submit to the HIGHER POWERS, not the governing authorities. The U.S. Constitution is a higher power than the U.S. government." <sup>8</sup>

## 7. 1 Corinthians 1:18

**KJB** - For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us **which are saved** it is the power of God.

**MEV** - For to those who are perishing, the preaching of the cross is foolishness, but to us who are **being saved** it is the power of God.

This is a very common corruption in all of the modern Bible revisions. It is in the CSB, CEB, CEV, ESV, LSB, NASB, NIV, and others. As believers WE ARE saved, we are not BEING SAVED. This turns the Gospel into a process, a life which must be faithfully lived. The moment that someone receives God's free gift of eternal life by faith, that individual is forever born-again. (Romans 5:15-18; 6:23).

## 7. Hebrews 4:12

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

**MEV** For the word of God is alive, and **active**, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intents of the heart.

The difference between the KJB and the MEV here are the words "powerful" and "active." They do not mean the same thing. According to the American Heritage Dictionary the definitions of these words are as follows.

**Active**=Being in motion; functioning or capable of functioning; marked by energetic activity; busy <sup>9</sup>

**Powerful**= Effective or potent; Having or capable of exerting power - the ability or capacity to act or do something effectively<sup>10</sup>

The two words do not mean the same. *Active* means energetic motion, and *powerful* mean effective and potent. The Greek word is *energes* (in both the TR and UBS). According to Thayer, it means *active*, but according to Mounce it means *efficient, energetic, adapted to accomplish a thing, and effectual*. He also says it means *active*, but he refers to Philemon 1:6 where the KJB translated it *effectual*. The Word Study Dictionary says it refers “to energy, i.e., engaged in work, capable of doing, active, powerful, effective.” What is clear is that *energes* refers to far more than simply being active. The best words to translate the meaning of energy is *powerful* or *effectual*. The word *powerful* carries the full meaning, but *active* is a puny word to describe the effect of the Word of God.

All Bibles are not the same. Even the popular modern Bibles that are translated from the TR are infected with the philosophies behind the critical text modern translations. These are just a few examples of the little foxes that have spoiled the vines of the NKJV, the MEV, and the other modern Bibles (Song 2:15).

One of the basic problems with all modern English translations is copyright laws. As you may know, such a translation is a “derivative work.” A derivative work of a new version of an existing work. It cannot get a new copyright unless there are “substantial” and “creative” changes from its predecessors. “Substantial and creative” does not mean cosmetic changes, such as changes in word order and spelling updates. Rather, many of the words themselves must change. So, a new version may use the KJV as its base, but it cannot get a new copyright unless there are a great many changes in the words themselves. That means it must differ from ALL the previous 200+ versions. This must require some measure of paraphrasing, because surely most of the synonyms have been used by now.

## Notes:

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<sup>1</sup> A. Hembd, MACS, (Reformation International Theological Seminary A consultant to the Society). An Examination of the New King James Version. Trinitarian Bible Society, Quarterly Record, Issue 581. October-December, 2007. <https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.tbsbibles.org/resource/collection/D4DCAF37-AEB6-4CEC-880F-FD229A90560F/An-Examination-of-NKJV-Part-1.pdf>. Accessed 2023.

<sup>2</sup> David Cloud, What about the New King James Version? <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbns/whatabout-nkjv.html>. Cited by Hembd. P. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Farstad, New King James Version, p. vii. Cited by Hembd. P. 11.

<sup>4</sup> David Cloud. What About the New King James Version. Way of Life Literature. 2022. [https://www.wayoflife.org/database/what\\_about\\_new\\_king\\_james\\_version.html](https://www.wayoflife.org/database/what_about_new_king_james_version.html)

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Bible Gateway. <https://www.biblegateway.com/versions/Modern-English-Version-MEV-Bible>.

<sup>8</sup> David J. Stewart. Beware of the Modern English Version (MEV). [http://www.jesusisprecious.org/bible/mev/satanic\\_counterfeit.htm](http://www.jesusisprecious.org/bible/mev/satanic_counterfeit.htm)

<sup>9</sup> American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.