

WHEN THE KJV DEPARTS FROM THE "MAJORITY" TEXT

J. A. Moorman

**WHEN THE KJV DEPARTS
FROM THE “MAJORITY” TEXT**

*HOLDING TO EVERY WORD OF OUR
STANDARD BIBLE*

WITH MANUSCRIPT DIGEST

J. A. Moorman

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Jeremiah 6:16

DEDICATION

It is my pleasure to dedicate this volume to Dr. H.D. Williams, M.D., Ph.D. whose considerable writings have strongly defended the Text and Translation of our Authorized Bible, and whose publishing expertise have *multiplied the seed sown* (II Corinthians 9:10) in spreading abroad works dedicated to this cause. Without his skill and labors the publication of this book would not have been possible.

J. A. Moorman,
London, England, October 19, 2010

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

(Matthew 24:35)

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PREFACE

The debate over the King James Bible is as crucial as any we face today. A nation, church, individual is only as strong as its Bible and view of the Bible. If the Bible in hand is no longer seen as a final court of appeal, then *the foundations have been removed and what can the righteous do*. Psalms 11:3. “What does God’s Word say,” has now been replaced by an anemic, “How does this version render the passage.” Replacement bibles are no longer extensively read, study-worn and memorized. They have not remotely achieved the stature of a “standard”. A spiritual poverty now ensues.

It is a fact that believers holding to the AV and its underlying Text will generally have a conviction and confidence in their Bible that those using the modern versions simply do not have. Detractors may say it is “misguided”, but the heartfelt conviction is there all the same. There is an inbred assurance that in the Standard Bible we possess the Words of God. For the other side it is far more tentative. They are still looking. They have still not after these millennia come up with a finalized Text of Scripture. That our confidence is not misguided is demonstrated by the many Biblical promises that God would preserve His Words throughout the passage of time. That: *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away*. Matthew 24:35. Christ here promises *verbal* preservation of His Words for all time!

The true historical outline of the key epochs in the Bible’s transmission history is self-evident. And, it is evident that this transmission history will be in complete accord with His promises of the preservation of His Words. Given the nature of the subject before us it is crucial that this be clearly set forth.

KEY EPOCHS OF THE BIBLE’S PRESERVATION HISTORY

The promise from Matthew 24:35 along with a significant number of other passages state clearly that the written Words of God would be verbally preserved. That these Words would be available for every generation, and that despite corrupting influences these Words would be kept pure and could be readily recognized. This principle was set out at the beginning.

For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. Deut. 30:11-14.

In line with this promise we will find these Words in the commonly received, traditionally accepted, generally available, and widely dispersed Text.

We therefore **do expect** to find the Words that our Lord promised would not pass away in those Old Testament Scriptures long guarded over by the Hebrew scribes and culminating in the work of the later Masoretic scribes.

We do expect to find these Words in the early missionary centers of manuscript proliferation such as Antioch. The Traditional Text has been rightly called the Antiochan Text.

We do expect to find these Words in the “sectioned” Scriptures, known as lectionaries, and read daily throughout the year in early Greek churches. The standardized formatting of the lectionary manuscripts is now known to be very old, likely before 300AD, and probably earlier. This, because of its textual implications, is a fact grudgingly admitted by modern textual criticism, (See “The Greek Lectionaries of the NT”, *The Text of the N.T. in Contemporary Research*, pp. 63,64). If the formatting is early there is every likelihood that the Traditional Text contained in existing lectionary manuscripts is also just as early. The two were never separated. Much like the work of the Masoretic scribes, the lectionary system placed a preservative fence around the inspired New Testament Words. An Aleph-B kind of text was never used in lectionary services.

We do expect to find these never to pass away Words during the 8th Century changeover from uncial to minuscule script. Nearly every minuscule manuscript is of the same kind that underlies our King James Bible. Modern textual critics as Barbara Aland and Klaus Wachtel are at a loss to explain this. (“The Greek Minuscule Manuscripts of the NT”, *The Text of the N.T. in Contemporary Research*, p. 44). The scribes who undertook this laborious and meticulous work were obviously convinced as to what constituted the True Text. Would not their vantage point give them a nearer and clearer view into the previous textual history than that of Aland and Wachtel – 1200 years later?

We do expect to find these Words in the 16th Century, when printing presses across Europe began publishing large numbers of Bibles based on the newly printed Traditional-Received Text. During those days an Aleph-B kind of Bible was never brought to the press in Europe’s publishing houses. In the providence of God the great Reformation Bibles based on the Traditional Text would be the first to be widely published. They were given the right to speak first!

We do expect to find these Words underlying that Bible which by every standard became the Standard Bible, and that for the last 400 years. Apart from the Authorized Version there is no other Bible in English or in any other language that has even remotely achieved its status as a Standard.

We do expect further, that these are the very words that will be preserved intact through the ages, and will be the basis of the judgments both of the saved (II Cor. 5:10) and of the lost (Rev. 20:10-12) at the end of the ages. See John 12:48.

This is the only transmission history of the Text that accords with the promises of God to preserve verbally His Words. There is none other!

Therefore **we do not expect** to find these Words in the modern Critical Text, for that text is a product of theological rationalism. It is an attempt to resurrect the corrupted text of Alexandria, a text that historically did not spread much beyond the sands of Egypt, nor for that matter from one of its long secluded resting places in the Vatican Library or a monastery at the foot of the traditional Mount Sinai.

We do not expect to find the Traditional Text in the Latin Vulgate, for that version was locked away in Catholic churches, kept from the people, and read by only a very few priests. God's Words were not preserved in their being hid but in their being dispersed abroad.

And now coming to our subject **we do not expect** that the time-honored Words of our Traditional Text will in any way be superseded by recent attempts to publish a new so-called majority text edition – editions which are shown to depart from the Traditional Text in some 1800 places. This would mean that after so long a time God's people have been wrong as to the identity of a significant number of God's Words, and that the promises of preservation have had no exactitude for previous generations. Further, if these recent attempts did in effect represent the "final form" of God's inspired and preserved Words, we would expect to see some acknowledgement on the part of believers in the publication of translations based on these editions. The printing presses have been silent, none have thus far been published.

Therefore when we consider these matters we have good grounds when we say: We believe the Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic Words that underlie the King James Bible are the very words inspired by the Holy Spirit and preserved verbally across the centuries. We believe that the transmission history briefly stated here accords perfectly with our Lord's promise in Matthew 24:35 that *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away*.

Regarding the subject of this book, *WHEN THE AUTHORIZED VERSION DEPARTS FROM THE "MAJORITY" TEXT*, it goes without saying that the Authorized Version is practically always the Majority Text. In contrast with the modern translations, the KJV has numerically overwhelming manuscript support. It is, of course, known that a number of passages, e.g., Acts 8: 36 ,37; 1 John 5: 7 do not appear to have majority support in the extant manuscripts. But what are we now to say when evidence is brought forward which purports to show that in nearly 1800 places the AV is based upon a Text containing minority reading? And, of these 1800 differences nearly one third directly affect the KJV translation. See page 14.

A great deal is available demonstrating how the KJV lines up against the sparsely supported readings of the Alexandrian Text, but not so much concerning this other side. Two more recent publications call for a closer look at the matter: the Hodges and Farstad *Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text*, and the Robinson and Pierpont *New Testament in the Original Greek: Byzantine Textform*. Some have suggested that with these publications a key area in our defense of the Standard Bible has been breached. The following pages give detailed evidence that this is definitely not the case.

Much of the following material was gathered in the years from 1986 to 1988, this revised edition takes into account the more recent work by Robinson and Pierpont. The author gratefully acknowledges his debt to those who have labored in the defense of the Authorized Version and Received Text. It is hoped that this study will give assistance in one area of that defense.

J. A. Moorman
London, England October 2010

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

(Matthew 4:4)