Things a Christian Should Learn

By Dr. Peter S. Ruckman

“A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels” (Prov. 1:5).

“It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me” (John 6:45).

And then, speaking of Christ—“Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered” (Heb. 5:8).

You just read that “a wise man . . . will increase learning,” and that if you have learned from God the Father, you will come to His Son for salvation. Everybody needs to learn something. Even Jesus, as a man, had to learn “obedience.”

The problem is what you learn and how you learn it. God told those Jews through the prophet Isaiah, “cease to do evil; Learn to do well” (Isa. 1:16–17). Paul says “that in the last days” (2 Tim. 3:1), men would be “Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” (2 Tim. 3:7). “The truth” is Jesus Christ (John 14:6) and the word of God (John 17:17). So you are living in a day where, for all the education, men are ignorant of Jesus Christ as the way of salvation, and they are ignorant of that Book. Romans 1:22 describes them this way: “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.”

That’s highly educated folks for you. Those are the very kind to whom God won’t show anything.

Luke 10:21—“In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast HID these things from the WISE and PRUDENT, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.”

Now, every Christian is a learner, even if he does not go to school. When a sinner experiences the New Birth, he becomes a babe in Christ, and as anyone knows, babies have to learn things to grow up. As a Christian grows up in Christ, he Continued on 6
In one of the most important prophetic chapters of the Bible (Dan. 10), we are shown there is a representation of world Gentile governments in spiritual high places above. When Cyrus, king of Persia, makes a decision to allow the Jews to return to their land after their seventy years of captivity in Babylon (Ezra 1:1–4), this decision is discussed and fought over in the spiritual world. The prophet Daniel resorts to prayer, mourning, and fasting for three weeks as he attempts to understand the vision given to him that will cover the events of world importance for many years to come beyond his lifetime (Dan. 10:1–2, 14).

When Gabriel shows up to strengthen Daniel and answer his prayer, Gabriel explains that he had been held up and withstood from reaching Daniel for the three whole weeks, until Michael the archangel came to help Gabriel against “the prince of the kingdom of Persia” (Dan. 10:12–13). Obviously, no earthly human prince has the power to withstand even a single angel (2 Kings 19:35); this shows that “the kingdoms of this world” (cf. Rev. 11:15) have spiritual representation above. As Cyrus was making decisions regarding “the people of God” (Judg. 20:2; 2 Sam. 14:13), the principalities and powers of the air (Eph. 6:12) were entering into the fray.

This implies that when men such as Netanyahu (Israel), Putin (Russia), Khamenei (Iran), and other world leaders try to make decisions, especially regarding Israel, they are spiritually led and urged by powers unknown to themselves. When political blanks in America (such as the Clintons, the Bushes, Jimmy Carter, and the Muslim-leaning Obama), with visions of grandeur dancing in their heads, decide that they want to bring peace to the Middle East, they are being led by those “higher than they” (Eccl. 5:8). When a world leader like Nebuchadnezzar decides to take over Israel and bring the nation into captivity, what he thinks is merely his own plan is, in reality, a fulfillment of prophecy (Jer. 25:9–12). The same is true of Cyrus when he decides to allow the Jews to return to their land after the seventy years in Babylon; he is fulfilling scripture given in detail 100 years before the idea comes to his mind (Jer. 25:11).

The Bible is clear about the “spiritual wickedness in high places” (Eph. 6:10–17). As a matter of fact, it is this very domain we enter whenever we begin to pray according to the will of God. The saint in prayer has spiritual company against which he must wrestle (Eph. 6:12), and these beings are much higher than the clowns in the White House (Isa. 24:21). The fact that the child of God may be ignorant of this will not change the facts anymore than Nebuchadnezzar thinking he had an original thought changed the fact that he was merely a pawn in the hand of Almighty God (Jer. 25:12). The lack of spiritual discernment regarding the wrestling prayer

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life of the saints will only result in prayer that is not according to God’s will. For the student of the Bible, Persia (modern-day Iran) is extremely important when it comes to the end times and the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Daniel chapter 10, it is “the prince of the kingdom of Persia” that tries to withstand the angel from getting to Daniel that he might understand the vision. Gabriel then reveals “the scripture of truth” (Dan. 10:21) to Daniel that includes minute details of the coming antichrist in chapter 11.

From Persia comes the origination of the Muslim Shiites, who claim to be direct descendants of the killer Mohammed. Though they comprise a minority of the over one billion Muslim population today, the majority population of both Iran (Persia) and Iraq (Babylon) are Shiites. The imams of any importance come from the Shiites, with the belief that each of these twelve imams were chosen by Allah to rule by example of a sinless life. The last ten of eleven of those imams met with a poisoned fate (through one of their wives) by order of an opposing caliph. The twelfth imam is believed to be still alive since A.D. 872. This fanatical religion not only believes in killing anyone who does not convert to their beliefs, but also believes there will be a return of the Twelfth Imam to rule the world.
(They will soon have their wish in the form of Satan incarnate.) These are not a “minority, extremist group,” as the lying media continually refers to them, but simply devoted Muslims who believe their Q’uran as it is written.

Right now, America and Europe are being flooded with killer Muslims, under the guise of being “refugees.” Being completely ignorant of what Muhammad taught, both European and American politicians are accepting hundreds of thousands of these killers, who are simply obeying the founder of their religion. Muhammad taught the doctrine of immigration, called “Hijrah”; it has been a well-established doctrine for the last 1,300 years. Muslims are commanded to immigrate to a non-Muslim country, remain segregated, keep their own laws (sharia), and eventually force the host country to comply with their rules of religion. These are the folks to whom Obama caters and is allowing to help destroy this country even faster. This Muslim-sympathizing president told the world just prior to their Paris attacks that ISIS was contained and that they were a JV operation.

But all this is simply fulfillment of the scripture found in Galatians 6:7. The good old USA has a history, for the last seventy years, of overthrowing and assassinating world leaders that did not comply with our ways. The present Muslim invasion is only more proof of the text of scripture. Back in the 1950s, Persia elected a national hero by the name of Mossadegh as their prime minister. This man threw the English out of their dominance of Persian oil, raised the standard of living for the common Persian man, introduced better working conditions, gave a better life to the women of the country, and began making great strides in the infrastructure of his country. This infuriated Winston Churchill, who vainly looked for help from the lame-duck American President Truman. He told the British it was none of our business. Winnie simply waited a few months for the inauguration of Eisenhower (1953) to get the help he desired. Under the leadership of the Dulles brothers (Allen—CIA; John Foster—Secretary of State), “I like Ike” pushed the foreign policy of America from one of neutrality to one of intrusion. The news media term for this is “liberation,” meaning that if you do not do as we say, we will liberate you from your present leaders and put in puppets who will do our bidding.

The CIA went into Persia, overthrew Mossadegh, and replaced him with the Shah Reza Pahlavi. This man cared nothing for his own people, but did he ever love American moolah. Keeping his people in bondage and the oil in American and British hands, the Shah became a billionaire, spending a few billion bucks on American arms. Over the next 25 years, this puppet of the West did exactly as he was told, and the fact that he tortured and imprisoned many of his own folks was not our business.

Forgetting that there is a God in heaven, one day the Shah became
deathly ill, and the Persian Muslims said, “Enough is enough,” and began an Islamic Revolution in 1979. The Shah found refuge in America under Jimmy Carter. The Muslims realized that they had to act, or the American CIA would repeat what they had done repeatedly in the past in overthrowing foreign governments. The Muslims stormed the American embassy and took 52 hostages. For 444 days, Carter wrung his hands, unable to save the hostages. One attempt ended the lives of a number of American servicemen, without coming close to getting to the hostages.

During this whole ordeal, the American people were never told what got them into this mess to start with. The media talked about those “Muslim extremists” who were very bad and dangerous folks. Finally, Ronald Reagan took office, and within minutes, the hostages were set free. To this day, the average American wonders why we are so hated by these people. In their imbecilic and ignorant attempts to placate Muslims, they pretend there should not be any problem, and with enough understanding, we can all get along. It is the American government that is responsible for the Islamic Revolution in Iran!

But this interference in a foreign government is not an isolated case. From 1956–58, the USA, in a failed attempt, helped rebels against Sukarno in Indonesia. The USA again failed in 1961, under JFK, to overthrow Castro in the infamous Bay of Pigs invasion, but succeeded in overthrowing the democratically elected leader of the Congo, Lumumba. They replaced him with the killer Mobutu, who finished his life with about a $4 billion fortune, thanks to the CIA (but at least he did our bidding when it came to the Soviets). America is simply beginning to reap what she has been sowing.

As you read this, Muslims are plotting their next attack from within the USA, as “refugees” pour across the borders. The lying media continues to talk about a “few Muslim extremists that make it bad for all the good Muslims,” and the American populace goes back to making money, ignorant of the fact that there is a God in heaven. The God of the Bible has been told to shut His mouth by Americans, and that His Book (KJV) is not wanted here. Instead, billions of dollars are spent on “national security,” and slogans such as “Proud to be an American” lull Americans into spiritual sleep. Each time the Lord God gives this country a warning, Americans get scared for a few moments, wonder “why a good God would allow something like this to happen,” and then go back to sleep. The responses to the wake-up calls are pitiful (Twin Towers—“We Will Never Forget,” Newtown, CT—“God Bless Newtown,” Boston Marathon—“Boston Strong,” etc.). The attacks are about to get stronger and bigger and better as the Lord begins to flex His holiness against “a crooked and perverse nation” (Phil. 2:15), and begins to allow a nation that kicked Him out to experience “whatsoever a nation sows, that she shall also reap.”
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learns some things. You don’t have to go to Bible school to learn, as a Christian; there are some things that you will learn if you do any growing in grace at all.

Number one: You have to learn to trust God. You will get in situations where you can’t trust anyone else—including yourself. You had better learn to trust the Lord.

I understand you have already learned to trust God with your soul; you wouldn’t have gotten saved, otherwise. But have you learned to trust Him with other things? Have you trusted Him with your money? Let me ask you something: which is worth more, your soul or your money? Why, your soul, of course (Mark 8:36). Well, if you have trusted the Lord to take care of your soul, can’t you trust Him to take care of your money?

A pastor went to visit a rich member of his church to “hit him up” for a missionary offering. After talking with the pastor for a bit, that rich man exclaimed, “As far as I can tell, this Christian business is just give, give, give, give.” That pastor retorted with: “Thank you, sir, for the best definition of the Christian life I have ever heard.”

“He does not lead me year by year, Nor even day by day; But step by step my path unfolds, My Lord directs my way.

“Tomorrow’s plans I do not know; I only know this minute.

But he will say, ‘This is the way, By faith now walk ye in it.’

“And I am glad that it is so, Today’s enough to bear; And when tomorrow comes, his grace Shall far exceed its care.

“What need to worry then, or fret? The God who gave His Son Holds all my moments in his hand And gives them one by one.”

Number two: You need to learn how to “burn your bridges.” That means forget the past. The Apostle Paul said, “forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13–14).

Learn to take what’s behind you and dump it. Years ago, there was a song called “Whispering Grass.” In that song there is a line about something in the past of the life of the singer. It goes like this: “Whispering grass, don’t tell the trees ‘cause the trees don’t need to know.” That is a poetic way of saying the past is over and done and gone, so forget it.

Another poem says, “But where are the snows of yesteryear?” Where are the snows that fell on Ontario or Calgary or Montana or Buffalo, New York last year? They’re gone; you can’t find them.

The old saying is: “Time and tide wait for no man.” It’s brutal, I know.
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but it is so. When we came into this world as children, we were filled with ambition, imagination, and drive. But the longer you live the more corruption you see; the more corruption you see, the more cynical and apathetic you become. You can’t make time go back, so leave the past in the past.

Some Christians never learn that. Something bad happens to them, and they let it eat on them interminably. If you have been through a hard place in your life, a catastrophe, or a bitter experience, it’s in the past now. It’s over; it’s done; it’s gone. Move on; don’t dwell there. Time is going forward whether you do or not. The sun is still going to come up in the morning; the moon will still wax and wane; the tide will still come in and go out. Nothing that happens to you will change any of that. You might as well leave the bitterness, sorrow, and regret behind you and advance.

Number three: Learn to hunger for the word of God. You had better feed on the bread of life and feast on its riches while you can. The Bible says a time is coming that there will be “a famine in the land . . . of hearing the words of the LORD” (Amos 8:11).

Jesus said, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matt. 4:4). How is your appetite for that Book? Job said, “I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food” (Job 23:12).

There was a Christian woman up in her nineties who spent most of her time reading her Bible. One of her grandchildren asked her why she read it so much. She said, “I’m going to school; I’m boning up for my finals.”

The closer we get to the Rapture of the Church, the less real Bible teaching and preaching you will find. Europe today is a continent of pagans nearly devoid of the word of God. It’s filled with Moslems, Catholics, atheists, and queers. With my eyes the way they are, I can’t answer letters like I used to, but I used to get letters all the time from Christians across the country, saying, “Dr. Ruckman, Where can I find a church that believes the Bible? The church I attend has a pastor who graduated from . . . (Bob Jones, Tennessee Temple, Hyles Anderson; you fill in the school), but he corrects the King James Bible. Where can I find a church that won’t do that?”

You had better get what good Bible teaching and preaching you can while you can.

In Canada and Sweden, men have been arrested just for reading Romans 1. Do you know what’s in Romans 1? Well, get out your Bible and read verses 26–27 if you don’t know. Now that the Supreme Court has legalized queer “marriage,” you are going to see pastors arrested, jailed, and tried in this country for believing what that Book says. They already did it in the case of Lester Roloff and that fellow Sileven in Nebraska before any of this came up.

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It’s about to “kick into high gear” over the issue of the sex perverts.

Number four: Learn to get rid of bitterness. Husbands can be especially prone to that, which is why Paul commands men not to be bitter against their wives (Col. 3:19).

A husband and wife were coming up on their ten-year wedding anniversary, so the wife said, “We’ve been married ten years; we’re supposed to have a duck for dinner to celebrate it.” Her husband said, “What’s the sense in killing a duck for something that happened ten years ago?”

One woman’s husband was very sick. As she was telling one of his friends about his illness, she said, “I know he’s terribly sick because I talk to him for hours and hours and he doesn’t hear a word I said.” Her husband’s friend said, “That’s not a sickness; that’s a gift.”

A guy called the doctor and said, “Doc, my wife dislocated her jaw. Could you please come by in a couple of weeks and look at it?”

It’s not just the men; Christian women can have a time of it too. A woman can get bitter over a lazy husband who won’t work. If she has to pick up the pieces after her husband has broken up the home because of infidelity, that can be rough too. Women have a terrible time forgiving and forgetting stuff like that, but if you are a child of God, that is what you are advised to do. The commandment is:

“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Eph. 4:32).

Forgive, forget, make up, and go forward.

Bitterness is contagious. The writer of Hebrews warns, “lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled” (Heb. 12:15). All the church trouble I have ever experienced has been the result of frustrated ambitions. Someone gets their feelings hurt and won’t forgive. They murmur and gripe until they attract a following.

Number five: You need to learn how to ignore ridicule, opposition, and discouragement.

I don’t consider ridicule any kind of opposition at all. When I was a boy, we had a saying: “Stick and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me.”

Real opposition can be pretty rough. I have had one of these Fundamental “big wigs” stop me from holding a revival in a juvenile detention center. One hundred-forty teenage boys asked to have me come in and preach to them three times a day. When that “good, godly” fellow heard I was the one who would be preaching to those kids, he told one of the members of his church, who worked there in some position of authority at that facility, “You can’t have Ruckman preach to those kids; he’s been married more than once.” Those two shut that meeting down before it ever got started, and those
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kids got nothing, spiritually.

Now that’s opposition: it actually resulted in something. You say, “What do you do when that happens, Ruckman?” I ignore it and move on. If you can’t do anything about the thing, don’t get hung up on it; move ahead to something else.

When discouragement takes place, learn to deal with it without ignoring reproof or rebuke. Figure out whether the discouragement is the Devil trying to get you to quit, or if it is God trying to teach you something or change something in your character in the midst of the trial. If it’s the latter, get the lesson God is trying to teach you, apply yourself to it, and move on. But the hardest thing you will ever face in a trial is figuring out whether it’s Satan trying to mess you up, or if it is God trying to warn you about something or testing you to see if you’ll do the right thing.

The author of Hebrews wrote, “My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him” (Heb. 12:5). Don’t turn up your nose at the Lord’s chastisement, but don’t let it get you so down that you quit.

“One day at a time, with its failures and fears,
With its hurts and mistakes, with its weakness and tears,
With its portion of pain, and its burden of care;
One day at a time, we must meet and must bear.

“One day at a time, to be patient and strong,
To be calm under trial, and sweet under wrong;
Then its toiling shall pass, and its sorrow shall cease;
It shall darken and die, and the night shall bring peace.

“One day at a time—but the day is so long.
And the heart is not brave, and the soul is not strong.
O piteous Christ, be near all the way;
Give courage and patience, and strength for the day.

“Swift comes His answer, so dear and so sweet:
‘Yes, I’ll be with you, your trouble to meet;
I will not forget you, nor fail you, nor grieve.
I will not forsake you; I never will leave.’

“Not yesterday’s load, we are called on to bear,
Nor the morrow’s uncertain and shadowy care;
Why should we look forward, or back with dismay?
Our needs, as our mercies, are but for the day.

“One day at a time, and the day is His day;
He has numbered its hours, though they haste or delay.
His grace is sufficient, we walk not alone;

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As the day, so the strength that He gives His own.”

(Annie Johnson Flint)

Number six: You need to learn to hate evil. These days, nobody teaches you to hate anything; all that is being pushed is “love” morning, noon, and night. But brethren, love without hate is a twisted emotion. You can’t love a garden without hating weeds. If you love God, you are going to hate evil, and if you don’t, you don’t have the right kind of love.

“The fear of the LORD is to hate evil” (Prov. 8:13).

“Ye that love the LORD, hate evil” (Psa. 97:10).

“Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way” (Psa. 119:104).

“Hate the evil, and love the good” (Amos 5:15).

“Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good” (Rom. 12:9).

Look at that. You are to hate some things. You are to hate evil.

The English poet Alexander Pope wrote:

“Vice is a monster of such awful mien
That to be hated needs but to be seen;
But seen too oft, familiar of face
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.”

Admittedly that has some archaic words and ways of stating things, but it simply means this. Sin, in reality, has a monstrous appearance. We ought to hate it, but just can’t help looking at it. But if we look at it too much, we grow used to it, put up with it, feel sorry for it, and finally accept it.

That is exactly how sex perversion progressed in this country. As a country, the populous used to abhor it as a heinous sin, but with the advent of Playboy magazine and the Supreme Court decision in 1973 to allow pornography, that sin was publicized. Television and the movies took up the torch and put it before the eyes of the public more and more. The sex perverts called for you to tolerate them; then they wanted you to feel sorry for them because they were “born that way”; and finally they demanded the nation, and the world, accept and promote their sin.

Haven’t some of you seen how sin has ruined your children, your family members, your friends, your community, and your country? Do you appreciate what sin did to them? Then why don’t you hate it as you should? Will it take sin ruining your life to make you hate it?

Most people sow their wild oats and then pray for a crop failure, but the harvest comes in, anyway, doesn’t it? Bob Jones Sr. said, “Every dissipation of youth must be paid for with a draft on old age.”

You are not to love sin; you are to hate it, like you would a poisonous...
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spider or a venomous snake. That doesn’t necessarily mean you hate the people who commit the sin, but if you hate sin as you should, you aren’t going to hang around those who practice it flagrantly, without trying to restrain their baser passions.

“Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord” (2 Cor. 6:17). “A companion of fools shall be destroyed” (Prov. 13:20). Learn to say NO when sinners try to get you to go along with them.

“Be careful in choosing companions; Seek only the brave and the true; And stand by your friends when in trial,
Ne’er changing the old for the new.
And when by false friends you are tempted
To do things wrong, which you know,
With firmness, with patience and kindness,
Have courage, my boy, to say, ‘No!’”

Proverbs 1:10 says, “My son, if sinners entice thee, CONSENT THOU NOT.”

Finally, number seven: You need to learn how to win souls. Learn the “mechanics” of soulwinning: how to get the sinner’s attention, how to show him the need, how to offer him the cure, how to invite him to receive Christ, how to pray with him, how to give him assurance of salvation. Some of you, if you had a lost soul before you right now, wouldn’t know what to do or how to start the conversation. That’s because you haven’t taken the time or effort to learn what to do and how to do it, and then to practice what you’ve learned.

God has taken some of the most unlikely characters and made soul-winders out of them. You take “Uncle Bud” Robinson. He was the son of a moonshiner in Tennessee. He didn’t have any education to speak of. He stuttered and lisped. He traveled two million miles, preached 33,000 sermons, and led over 100,000 souls to Christ. If God can use someone like that, He can use you.

“And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful” (Tit. 3:14).

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Does Greek Help?

By Dean Hays

(Part Three of Eight)

We have been discussing the “original Greek” and whether it actually gives “light” on the English text. We have been looking at Greek scholarship; now we want to examine manuscript evidence.

There are 5,800 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, in whole or in part. There are dozens of Greek texts that have been published, based on those manuscripts. So when someone talks about the “original Greek text,” the question that should immediately come to your mind is: “Which Greek text?”

The first manuscript evidence at which we will look is that behind 1 Timothy 3:16. The verse is one of the greatest proof texts on the Deity and incarnation of Christ. The pertinent part of the verse says, “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: GOD was manifest in the flesh . . . .” For the alternative reading of the modern versions, I have picked two representatives: the New American Standard Bible (referred to henceforth as the NASV) and the New International Version (the NIV). The NIV says, “He appeared in the flesh,” and the NASV says, “He who was revealed in the flesh.” Those readings are taken from Novum Testamentum Graece, Nestle’s Greek text.

Now Nestle’s Greek text has, at the bottom of each page, what is known as a “critical apparatus.” The critical apparatus gives the reader the manuscript evidence not only for the reading the editors chose, but also for any alternative readings rejected by the editors. The reading of the NIV and NASV, in the instance of 1 Timothy 3:16, is the reading chosen for Nestle’s text, and the KJV reading is the reading rejected by Nestle’s text.

What I am about to give you is about twice the manuscript evidence given by Nestle, because he doesn’t care to give you the right reading in his text. He won’t give you all the evidence because it will prove he’s lying.

Most of what I am about to give you comes from a book by Jack Moorman entitled Early Manuscripts, Church Fathers, and the Authorized Version. It is available from the Bookstore if you would like to put in extra study on the subject (KJ-1835 @ $25.00).

The manuscript evidence for both readings is broken down into four categories: uncial manuscripts written in block capital letters, cursives (Greek manuscripts written in lower case letters), manuscripts written in other languages, and citations from Church Fathers. Generally speaking, the uncial manuscripts are usually older than the cursives, but more than the age of a manuscript must be considered when evaluating a reading.

The KJV reading is found in a correction of Codex Sinaiticus (“Aleph”), a correction of Codex Alexandrinus, the second corrector of Codex D; plus the K, L, P, and Psi uncials. It is also contained (“extant”) in uncial manuscripts 056, 061, 075, 0142, 0150, 0151, and 0241. The majority of cursive manuscripts, that have the passage, read “God.” An early manuscript of the Latin Vulgate supports the KJV reading. And the Church Father Gregory of Nyssa (A.D. 335–394), in his work Against Eunomius (III 5:101, 155, 176, 232), quotes the
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King James reading.

The altered reading of the new versions is supported by the original writers of Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, and Codex C; plus the Greek of bilingual manuscripts G and F. It is also found in a few cursives, the Old Latin manuscripts ar, c, d, dem, div, f, g, mon, x, and z; as well the bulk of the Vulgate manuscripts have it. Both the Peshitta and Harclean Syriac translations, and the Sahidic and Bohairic Coptic translations, read with the NASV and NIV; along with the Gothic, Armenian, and Ethiopic translations. Among the Church Fathers, Hilary of Poitiers (A.D. 300–368), in his work The Trinity (III 9:198, 205), sides with the reading of the modern translations. Interestingly enough, the manuscript Hort said was to be given precedence when deciding a reading—Codex Vaticanus (“B”)—doesn’t even show up in support of the “He” or “He Who” reading because the Vatican manuscript doesn’t even have the chapter in it!

Now before going on to examine the three main witnesses used to destroy the Deity of Christ in this passage, I want to go back and cover the cursive evidence for the reading. I passed over the import of that evidence by saying, “The majority of cursive manuscripts . . . read ‘God.’” That really doesn’t tell you the sheer numbers of manuscripts that support the reading. Whenever you hear someone talk about “the majority of manuscripts” or “the majority text,” he is referring to as many as 874 manuscripts among the cursives alone, Nestle’s critical apparatus symbolizes this text with å. Space does not permit, here, to list those manuscripts, but if I did, the list would take up two full pages of type. That is how many of them there are. Of these 874 manuscripts, 250 have 1 Timothy 3:16. That’s 250 manuscripts against 3 manuscripts; that’s the evidence supporting the KJV reading.

Now back to the three main manuscripts used to change the King James’ reading in the new “Bibles.” They are: Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Alexandrinus, and Codex C (“Ephraemi Rescriptus”). But Moorman said (pg. 274), “We have placed A and C on the revised side only because textual criticism INSISTS in telling us that this is where they belong. In fact, that most careful of scholars, H. Hoskier, believed the first hand of Palimpsest C read ‘God,’ and of Codex A, Scrivener wrote during the latter Nineteenth Century: ‘Codex A, however, I have examined at least twenty times within as many years . . . seeing (as every one must see for himself) with Berriman and the early collators that Codex A reads THEOS” (F. H. A. Scrivener, A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament for the Use of Biblical Students, 1883, pp. 639, 640 note).

Let me show you with what we are dealing here. I am going to show you how similar the Greek words for “God” and “Who” are so you can see from where the confusion came.

In Greek, the word for “God”—Theos—looks like this: qeo̱. But when writing in block capital letters (uncials), the scribes, in order to save space, would abbreviate words. The old-time sigma (the “S” in Theos) looked like a “C,” so qeo̱ was shortened to Q C, and to show you what they were doing, the scribes Continued on 16
Continued from 15

would put a line over the two letters so: Q . That practice is called “Nomina Sacra” (nomen sacrum—singular), which means “sacred names” in Latin.

The Greek word for “Who” looks like this: OC. Very similar, aren’t they? Two little lines change the word entirely: the middle bar of the theta (θ) and the indicator line over the abbreviation.

Now I am going to show you a picture of Codex A, with the word in question in 1 Timothy 3:16.

Although the letters have faded over the centuries, one can still make out what Scrivener, Berriman, and the early collators saw: ⊙ C. Of course, the scholars who want to get rid of the Deity of Christ claim the two lines are smudges or bleed-throughs from the backside of the manuscript. But that’s not all the evidence.

Let’s look at Codex C. Codex C is what is known as a “palimpsest” manuscript. A palimpsest is a manuscript from which a text had the original writing washed off in order to record another text on it. In the case of Codex C, it is called “Ephraemi Rescriptus” because a Fifth-Century manuscript of the New Testament was washed off in order to record a Greek translation of the treatises

of Ephraem the Syrian in the Twelfth Century, thus forming a palimpsest. Here is a picture from Codex C.

As you can see, the manuscript is a mess, but you can still make out the original writing. Here is a closeup picture of the word in question in 1 Timothy 3:16.

Remember, “Hoskier believed the first hand of this palimpsest manuscript, the background hand, read ‘God.’” It looks like there’s an abbreviation line on top, and you can see the middle bar of the theta. It certainly looks more like a ⊙ C than a OC to me. So at least two of the main three manuscripts are very much in question when it comes to verifying the reading of the new versions.

That being the case, let’s look at the third witness: Sinaiticus. Here is a picture of the reading.

As you can see, it has the wrong reading in its original writing, but then, Continued on 19
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somebody came along, recognized the wrong reading, and put the correct reading over it. So all three manuscripts are questionable when it comes to destroying the Deity of Christ in 1 Timothy 3:16. So when you hear a professor, teacher, or preacher say, “The older and better manuscripts don’t say ‘God’ here,” mark it down, they are LIARS, plain and simple. You have seen it with your own eyes.

Have you ever wondered why Dr. Ruckman gets so testy about these things? I did, until I got into manuscript evidence. People spout this stuff off without ever examining the evidence. Why? Because some scholar has more experience at it than they have, and they figure he must know about what he’s talking—just like I pointed out in the first article in this series.

And it’s not just here in the United States, either. I had a friend call me from Costa Rica wanting to know if I had anything on Greek. He had a native pastor friend there with some guy in his church trying to correct his Bible with the Greek and undermine his authority as a pastor. That pastor was just some uneducated guy who believed his Bible and was trying to do something for the Lord Jesus. He didn’t know what to do about that troublemaker.

When I heard that, I became so aggravated that I was ranting and raving around the house, saying, “Are you kidding me?! Some jerk can’t even let a poor guy in a third-world country trust his Bible! He’s got to come and undermine it!”

But the manuscript evidence is not the only place where the translators of the new versions are crooked. Having changed the theos (God) to a hos (who or he who), you are left with a peculiar phenomenon found nowhere else in the New Testament: a sentence without a subject. Who is a relative pronoun that links information to a noun in the sentence. It can’t be the subject of a declarative sentence. If you translate the hos as “He who” like the ASV does, there is no noun to which “He who” refers; thus, no subject.

Seeing the absurdity in such a construction, versions like the Holman Christian Standard Bible, the NIV, the RSV, and the ESV won’t even translate hos. They simply ignore hos altogether and take the subject from the verb: “He was manifest.” They are so crooked that they won’t even translate their own Greek manuscripts.

When you examine the evidence for those things firsthand, you are forced to conclude one of three things:

1. The scholars are IGNORANT;
2. The scholars are LIARS;
3. The scholars are deceived by the Devil.

The men behind these attacks on your Bible are too brilliant to be ignorant, so they must be either liars or deceived. That’s the work of the Devil (John 8:44). The Devil’s job is to question what God said (Gen. 3:1) and corrupt what God said (2 Cor. 2:17) so he can destroy the Bible and destroy people’s faith.
Does Greek Help?

Continued from 16

in the Bible.

Now before wrapping up our discussion on 1 Timothy 3:16, I want to compare the evidence once more. On the side of the new versions, you have Sinaiticus—corrected later on; you have a questionable reading in Alexandrinus—corrected later on; you have a questionable reading in C—corrected later on. Beyond that, you have two Greek readings from bilingual manuscripts, implying that the Greek didn’t match the Latin across the page from it, and you have a few cursive manuscripts.

Do you remember what I told you earlier about the majority of cursive manuscripts? Well, “out of more than 250 cursive manuscripts containing 1 Timothy 3:16, all but two or three have ‘God’ in the verse” (Moorman, p. 274). Add to that the additional eleven uncials that have it as well, and things become a little lopsided, don’t they? The majority text of the KJV sits like an elephant against three mice on a seesaw. And to all of that, Scrivener adds that Ignatius in A.D. 110 and Hippolytus in A.D. 235 quote 1 Timothy 3:16 with “God” in it, as well. Both those citations are 100–200 years earlier than Sinaiticus.

I have shown you the overwhelming evidence for the KJV reading; it is now up to you to make up your mind about it. Who is right and who is wrong? Is the King James Bible right, or is modern Christian scholarship right? That’s the issue.

In succeeding articles, we will examine the manuscript evidence for other key passages.
The year was 1969; the place was the T-Heart Arena in Grand Junction, Colorado. I was (and still am) a cowboy, by birth and ancestry. (My grandfather ran over 5,000 head of cattle, and his horses all bore the now fifth-generation “T-Heart.” Because of that, my letterheads bear the quote from Proverbs 3:5–6, “(T)rust in the LORD with all thine HEART,” etc.)

It was there, in September, that I got out of bed and, in tears, knelt beside it and cried out to Jesus Christ to save me. It was, and still is for me, indescribable what took place in those next few minutes; however, it will never happen again, unless the experience is similar when He comes and we Christians are translated into the air (1 Thess. 4:13–18).

I went downtown and bought a Bible. I started reading it around the clock, night and day; falling asleep, then waking to feed my horses, and then returning again to reading. I went to the city’s main street and started telling others about the Bible.

There was a Baptist church in town holding meetings with a preacher named Phil Shuler, son of “Fighting Bob” Shuler who pastored Trinity Methodist Church in Los Angeles. He wrote a letter to Bob Jones University to send material for me to go there. I sold the arena, my quarter horses, and all my belongings except for my calf-roping horse (a son of the world champion calf-roper at that time) and my saddle.

At Bob Jones University, I was a thirty-year-old man in the midst of a bunch of snot-nosed kids whose folks wanted them to get this “Christian” schooling. I was married and had a child on the way. I worked at construction when I did not have classes. My trailer was just feet away from Oliver B. Green’s Gospel Hour headquarters.

During my first year, I went out with an old street preacher on the weekends to preach on the streets. The next year, I took a church bus each week with “my boys”—young fellows from BJU. I enjoyed “preacher boys” under Dr. Gilbert Stenholm the best.

In my classes, I would sometimes stand and ask if I could read a text from the Bible that was applicable to the immediate subject. In several cases, the professor did not like my approach. He would jerk his Nestle’s Greek New Testament from his coat and show the class where I was not correct and “the Greek” was.

I, of course, didn’t know why the two books did not agree, but I was just a babe in Christ. I was in wonderment about a lot of the professors. I would say to myself about Fred Afman, “How can this Roman Catholic defender be saved?” I was convinced that several of the others were not.

This went on until one weekend, when I was preaching up in Greer, South Carolina, my guys and I got locked up in jail for preaching on the street. It was January, and I had just finished my last final exam for the semester when I got a notice that I was to appear before the “discipline committee.” The five “doctors” on the committee worked me over good. I didn’t know I was so terrible!

The worst of the charges was I
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had brought “reproach” on “their name” (i.e., the name of Bob Jones University). A Dr. Lewis said he had seen me down on the streets waving a Bible in the air, screaming, “You are going to Hell; you are going to Hell!” He told me, “You do not do it that way!” I was expelled (“shipped”), and I still had a bill at the University’s Barge Memorial Hospital from the birth of my son, Levi Daniel. I sold my rope horse back home to pay the bill.

The next Wednesday night I was to preach for “Big Bob” Persson, who had been Dr. Ruckman’s song leader when he was in evangelism (I had never even heard of “Ruckman” at that time). Well, up shows “Big Bob” at the trailer court as I was hooking up my travel trailer to go enroll in Harold Sightler’s school (Tabernacle Baptist College). Bro. Bob said, “Chuck, I can’t let you preach Wednesday night. BJU called me and said if I did, any of my people would no longer be allowed at BJU.” It was then I knew why Bob Jones Jr. played the role of Inquisitor General in “Flame in the Wind.”

Bro. Bob went on to say, “Chuck, just go down to Pensacola, Florida; go to Pete Ruckman’s school. Don’t call him; just go.” So I did. Although my wife was pregnant with my second son and still healing from the cesarean section from Levi’s birth, I put her back in the trailer and left for Pensacola, Florida.

When I got there, I stopped at Arlin Horton’s Pensacola Christian College and asked, “Do you know where I can find Dr. Ruckman?” They said, “Ruttman?” “No,” I said, “RUCKman.” “No, never heard of him,” they told me. The house where Dr. Ruckman lived at that time was right next door to their property. In fact, they ended up buying Dr. Ruckman’s property. They knew who he was and where he lived.

To make a long story short, when I finally got ahold of Dr. Ruckman, he took my family, that evening, to one of his member’s home for supper. That was the beginning of what became me knowing the truth about God Almighty’s Book. When my second son, Paul Judah, was born, Pastor Ruckman came to the hospital that night and in prayer asked that the Lord might use that boy to serve Him. Forty-something years later, he is the pastor of Bible Believers Baptist Church in Naples, Idaho, which I started and pastored for many years.

Time has come and gone, and now, there are thousands of Bible believers out there fighting the “end time” battle of defending the Book. However, most of them don’t know how it was 45 years ago. Back then, there were just a few in the battle. J. J. Ray gave me my personal copy of his book God Wrote Only One Bible, as did David Otis Fuller with his two books: Which Bible? and True or False?. I was at BJU when they ran Perry F. Rockwood off. And of course, there were others, like Edward F. Hills, but friend, there is no man on this earth who has entered the battle, let alone done the work of a five-star general, like Peter S. Ruckman. He took the onslaught of ridicule, harassment, untruth, and vile hatred from a world that he was only trying to help “see the light”
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(Psa. 119:105). If God hadn’t given him several “thorns in the flesh,” he would probably have a right to glory (2 Cor. 12:7), but from my viewpoint, the Lord did it for good (“endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ”—2 Tim. 2:3).

I “missionaried” for a while in Canada. I preached on several radio stations and finally got kicked out of Canada for not having enough “dinero” for them. When I came down to Idaho and started Bible Believers Baptist Church, things were tough. My family and I lived in an Indian teepee tent for a short time by a creek. My wife washed the kids’ diapers in the creek on a scrub board.

We started at the bottom. I sold my “ropin’” saddle. None of those things hurt us. They helped us understand what it was like here so we could help others. We were, and still are, “bad-mouthed” about our stand for that God-honored, blessed Book that is “For ever . . . settled in heaven” (Psa. 119:89). I am personally working with the Spanish folks in Oregon. Thanks to a “Ruckmanite” with his book on the 1960 Reina Valera, I am battling that issue with these people.

I didn’t do all I could have done or all I should have done, but I thank God I have done something for Him. I have some beautiful quarter horses; perhaps in the Millennium the Lord will let me run the horse stables. I am still just a cowboy, but I thank the Lord a million times over that I’m a SAVED ONE!

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By Robert Militello

“I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: AND GOD DOETH IT, THAT MEN SHOULD FEAR BEFORE HIM” (Eccl. 8:14).

If men were really able to learn from history, they would be searching the scriptures to discover what is yet to come. If Christians were to apply themselves to a careful study of the book of Esther, they would know where they are today spiritually and what is about to happen prophetically.

The year 2016 should hold no surprises for those believers who have set aside their own hopes for the future in favor of hastening the Lord’s agenda: the “blessed hope” of Titus 2:13. If your longing for the Lord to come does not lay on your head and heart like a heavy wet blanket, 2016 will add nothing substantial to your spiritual growth. How many in Christ’s own Body will be taken by surprise if He should suddenly appear in the heavens above us?

“Therefore be ye also ready: for in such a hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh” (Matt. 24:44).

What is the spiritual condition of the Body of Christ at the beginning of this new year? Is it lively and still able to serve as salt in the fast decaying society around it (Matt. 5:13)? Obviously, the Church in America has been, for quite some time, hooked up to a “life support machine” called “Your Best Life Now.” Thousands show up each Sunday morning to “fill their tanks” with motivational feel-good exhortations disguised as Bible preaching. Success, goal setting, personal well being, and self-esteem are “preached” to these Christian suckers who have only one authority in their lives—their feelings.

Thus, these “enemies of the cross” (see Phil. 3:17–19) happily eat from this tray of treats and sweets; the Bread of Life, preached with power from a 1611 King James Bible, would have them choking in their seats. What little truth these believers can swallow must be saturated in marmalade. American Christianity has been diabetic for years.

Esther chapter 1 reveals, in the behavior of Queen Vashti, the condition of the Church in America today. Vashti’s rebellion against the word of the king sent shock waves among the Persian nobles: “For this deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes” (Esth. 1:17).

The authority of King Ahasuerus was flagrantly challenged. Vashti’s contempt for the King’s word was put on public display.


Rebellion just doesn’t pop up overnight. It simmers in the heart and mind, often hiding behind a false humility or outward piety. Vashti did not wake up one morning determined to ridicule, in public, the authority of her king. Questioning the veracity of and ridiculing the authority and power of, the King James Bible has been a fact of life for the Body of Christ in America these past six

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decades. The spirit of Vashti came to America in 1901 with the publication of the American Standard Version (ASV). Congregations in America would now be gradually exposed to a hissing sound coming from the pulpit: “And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said . . . ?” (Gen. 3:1). Destroying the power and authority of the King James text would, over time, lead to the Holy Spirit having to knock on the door of His own church to gain admittance (Rev. 3:20).

“Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, where-with shall it be salted? it is thenceforth GOOD FOR NOTHING, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men” (Matt. 5:13).

Vashti made herself “good for nothing,” useless to the King. She was to be “transitioned” and, thus, make room for a new “first lady.” This new year may find the Church set for its “transition” (Tit. 2:13). Considering the spiritual degeneration of the Church today, as described in Revelation 3:15–18, are we going to check the rising tide of moral filth in America? If we are yet to remain here a while, in what kind of society will our children and grandchildren be living?

“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry” (1 Sam. 15:23). Queen Vashti’s rebellion toward her king was a scandal in the royal house. Overnight, she had become the champion for “women’s lib.” “For this deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes” (Esth. 1:17).

Every time I hear of another woman being ordained to the ministry, Vashti comes to mind. Pentecostalism, when examined carefully exhibits much of the spirit of Vashti, although Pentecostals would deny this vehemently. Bible colleges in America where the King James text is chewed upon like ravens picking at roadkill are hothouses for Vashti-like clones. Is the Lord about to cut short His longsuffering and call the Church out of here this year? Perhaps.

“Vashtiism” is a communicable disease spread primarily through so-called “Christian scholarship.” It aims to undermine the authority of God’s word by watering down and diminishing the savor of our salt—the fear of the Lord. Fear is fear, NOT reverential trust. Vashti lost her fear of the king. That cancer of soul is always terminal. Lose that and you are spiritually in a hospice, waiting to die. That is where the Church is today: resting comfortably at the “Laodicean Medical Center and Hospice.”

Note that Esther, book number seventeen in your King James Bible, precedes Job, book number eighteen (6+6+6), a type of the devil attempting to destroy Israel. Thus, just before the “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7), you find Persia, which is modern-day Iran, manifesting itself as Israel’s chief enemy. That is where we are today. Haman sought to destroy the Jews, and today, the leadership of Iran daily repeats its goal to one day destroy the Zionist entity, Israel. Our Bible has been written by Someone who has viewed human
A Biblical Forecast

history from a place far above time and space. Here on earth, we are playing out in time what has already been recorded in heaven long ago. Ancient Persia and modern Iran bear witness to the truth of what Solomon wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit:

“The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is now? it hath been already of old time, which was before us” (Eccl. 1:9–10).

Anytime now, the departure of Vashti to make room for Esther will play out again with the sudden withdrawal of the Lord’s Church and the emergence of a Jewish remnant that will survive the Great Tribulation. Biblically and geopolitically, a page in God’s Book is about to be turned. An age of grace, during which the Lord opened His arms to all that would come to Him, will close after almost 2,000 years. Vashti didn’t leave her luxurious, worldly comforts with the music playing and singers singing. The Laodicean church long ago withdrew from the battle it was called to fight, and thus became “enemies of the cross of Christ” (Phil. 3:18). Will there be a heroes’ welcome for this bunch when they arrive in heaven? Don’t hold your breath!

“And anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see” (Rev. 3:18). This year will see a further marked deterioration of the ability of Chris-

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tians to discern the difference between truth and error. To be blunt about it, the overwhelming majority of Christians in America will actually become dumber when it comes to spiritual things. Reading from modern “Bibles” will greatly accelerate this phenomenon.

“My son, ATTEND TO MY WORDS; incline thine ear unto my sayings. Let them not depart from thine eyes: keep them in the midst of thine heart” (Prov. 4:20–21).

Going back to believing the words God gave in 1611 (in a language that would dominate the modern world) “are pure words” (Psa. 12:6) would clear up the eye infection in the Laodicean church. Clearly this is not going to happen. England and America gave the King James Bible its walking papers years ago.

Not only does the last-days church have an eye problem, it also has a hearing problem. “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: IF ANY MAN HEAR MY VOICE . . .” (Rev. 3:20). This world and its incessant noise have made it almost impossible to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit speaking to the hearts of God’s blood-bought saints. Expect more and more churches to embrace contemporary Christian music, which is about as spiritual as Easter eggs on Resurrection morning.

There is a reason why the Laodicean church has lost its spiritual eyesight. In these last days, the enemy of truth has new weapons at his disposal by which he can waste the spiritual muscle of today’s Christian. Modern inventions, particularly hand-held devices, are powerful, satanic snares that trap even mature saints in a cycle of wasteful diversion, helping to smother any desire to meditate on God’s word. Spiritual victories will be few and far between for those who have come to rely so strongly upon these devices. To gain victory over the enemies of the Lord, Moses was given this charge:

“And the LORD spake unto Moses in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye are passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan; Then shall ye drive out all the inhabitants of the land before you, and DESTROY ALL THEIR PICTURES, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places” (Num. 33:50–52).

Laodicean Christians have failed to cleanse the temple. They will not kick over “the tables of the moneychangers” (Matt. 21:12; Mark 11:15), and they would gasp in horror if the Lord should take whip in hand and chastise His flock. There is a price to pay when the sword of the Lord, His word, is kept in its sheath.

“But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell” (Num. 33:55).
THE CREED OF
THE ALEXANDRIAN CULT

1. There is no final authority but God.
2. Since God is a Spirit, there is no final authority that can be seen, heard, read, felt, or handled.
3. Since all books are material, there is no book on this earth that is the final and absolute authority on what is right and what is wrong, what constitutes truth and what constitutes error.
4. There WAS a series of writings one time which, IF they had all been put into a BOOK as soon as they were written the first time, WOULD HAVE constituted an infallible and final authority by which to judge truth and error.
5. However, this series of writings was lost, and the God who inspired them was unable to preserve their content through Bible-believing Christians at Antioch (Syria), where the first Bible teachers were (Acts 13:1), and where the first missionary trip originated (Acts 13:1-52), and where the word “Christian” originated (Acts 11:26).
6. So God chose to ALMOST preserve them through Gnostics and philosophers from Alexandria, Egypt, even though God called His Son OUT of Egypt (Matthew 2), Jacob OUT of Egypt (Genesis 49), Israel OUT of Egypt (Exodus 15), and Joseph’s bones OUT of Egypt (Exodus 13).
7. So there are two streams of Bibles. The most accurate—though, of course, there is no final, absolute authority for determining truth and error; it is a matter of “preference”—are the Egyptian translations from Alexandria, Egypt, which are “almost the originals,” although not quite.
8. The most inaccurate translations were those that brought about the German Reformation (Luther, Zwingli, Boehler, Zinzendorf, Spener, et al.) and the worldwide missionary movement of the English-speaking people: the Bible that Sunday, Torrey, Moody, Finney, Spurgeon, Whitefield, Wesley, and Chapman used.
9. But we can “tolerate” these if those who believe in them will “tolerate” US. After all, since there is NO ABSOLUTE AND FINAL AUTHORITY that anyone can read, teach, preach, or handle, the whole thing is a matter of “PREFERENCE.” You may prefer what you prefer, and we will prefer what we prefer. Let us live in peace, and if we cannot agree on anything or everything, let us all agree on one thing: THERE IS NO FINAL, ABSOLUTE, WRITTEN AUTHORITY OF GOD ANYWHERE ON THIS EARTH.

This is the Creed of the Alexandrian Cult.
Continued from 28

There it is; you can’t miss it! Failure to cleanse the temple, teach sound doctrine, and come down hard on personal sin will give you spiritual glaucoma before you reach middle age. Pictures, pictures, pictures—do you get it? They lead to vain imaginings and all kinds of mental devilment. Learning how to take down an enemy and disarm him will keep you alive if you wish to be a sheriff’s deputy. The Jewish army advancing into Canaan was ordered to destroy all the pictures they found there. Canaan is America today.

Vashti, like the Laodicean church, had need of nothing and enjoyed a life of comfort. She was beautiful, and the King was keen to show her off to those who attended to his every wish. While King Ahasuerus was enjoying his men’s-only feast, Queen Vashti “made a feast for the women in the royal house” (Esth. 1:9). Notice the last part of verse 9: “the royal house WHICH BELONGED TO KING AHASUERUS.” Why did the Holy Spirit make a point of where Vashti was having her banquet? The word “belonged” is in italics. Godly men were led by the Holy Spirit to insert that word in order to make the last part of the verse even more noteworthy.

In these very last days, Laodicea has rebelled against the Lord’s authority because it has forgotten that, as a purchased possession, we are not our own. We are brought, and we serve at the Lord’s pleasure, not our own (1 Cor. 6:19–20). “In the royal house” belonging to Ahasuerus, Vashti was allowed to have her banquet with her maidens. It doesn’t appear that she was deprived in any way. Somehow Vashti forgot, amidst all the comforts and wealth surrounding her, that she served at the King’s pleasure and not her own.

Paul had to remind the carnal Corinthian believers of this because their understanding of the relationship between themselves and their Lord was seriously flawed. Like the Laodiceans, their carnal mentality helps support the notion that God exists for their enjoyment and not the other way around. Vashti saw her King as the helper of her happiness, but not the owner of her heart.

Imagine how Ahasuerus looked in front of his nobles and chamberlains when Vashti’s refusal to come to his feast buzzed around the royal palace. Verse 12 in Esther 1 says he was “very wroth, and his anger burned in him.” My advice to those who are saved and do not want to travel down the road that Vashti took is to spend time studying the Judgment Seat of Christ. We will all come face to face with a Jew expecting and looking for a decent return on His investment in us. Each week that passes brings us closer to that encounter. Did Vashti get to the place where she could not conceive of her king burning in anger toward her? “God is love” (1 John 4:8), and we thank God He is; but does that mean we will not be terrified at the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:11)?

Somehow, somewhere, Vashti lost the fear of her lord. She was abruptly dismissed. Laodicea has also lost the fear of the Lord. We will leave suddenly without warning, maybe this year. Salt that is no longer salty does not need to stay on the table, amen?
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