



Bible Believers' Bulletin

Vol. 40 No. 5

“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17)

May 2016

The Missionary Call

By Brian Donovan

Any committed Christian will be constantly concerned about the call of God on his life as he goes about the business of daily living. To be in the will of God for your life and knowing that you are pleasing Him is the most satisfying and fruitful life known to mankind (Rev. 4:11). The Lord reveals His general will for any Christian throughout the Bible, and if a child of God wants to know the Lord’s specific call on his life, he must spend effort fulfilling God’s written revealed will. Many of the saints who worry about the unrevealed call of God for their lives never bother to try to fulfill the revealed will of God.

In Romans 12:1–2, the Lord gives some qualifiers to finding His good, acceptable, and perfect will. The first of these is to present the body “**a living sacrifice,**” which is only a “**reasonable service.**” The Christian must realize that the body is a tool to be used in the Lord’s service, and just because the flesh has nothing good in it of itself (Rom. 7:18) does not mean

the body cannot be turned over for the Lord’s use (Rom. 6:13).

The second thing in the passage for the saint to find the will of God is not to be “**conformed to this world,**” but “**transformed by the renewing of your mind.**” It is needful for the Christian to shut off the world’s voices (and there are many voices out there—1 Cor. 14:10) and refuse to allow them to influence his thinking. As we will see later, the will of God is often not found by using “common sense,” and the world’s voices will scream against the call of God on your life for that very reason.

Some of the other written, plain parts of the revealed will of God for every Christian include praying “**without ceasing**” and giving thanks in everything that happens (1 Thess. 5:17–18), suffering for doing right (1 Pet. 3:17–18), possessing your body in sanctification, including abstaining from fornication (1 Thess. 4:3–5), as well as submitting “**to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake**” (1 Pet. 2:13–15). The Bible gives an exception to that last one, whenever the “**ordinance of man**” goes directly against the commandments of God (Acts 5:29—“**We ought to obey God rather than men**”). If a child of God will not put effort into trying to fulfill these plain written parts of the

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The ESV, a Roman Catholic Bible

By Dr. Peter S. Ruckman

(Part Two of Three)

We have been submitting the *English Standard Version*, a “Conservative” revision of the Liberal *Revised Standard Version* and first published in 2001, to a test we put out back in 1970 in *The Christian’s Handbook of Manuscript Evidence*. Back then, we submitted 21 versions of the Bible, including the *RSV*, to a comparison to the Roman Catholic *Rheims* and *Confraternity Versions* in 51 passages to demonstrate that the modern translations follow a Roman Catholic, Dark Age text; sometimes they are actually *worse* than that text. We put the *ESV* to that same test and, so far, have found it just as wanting as its predecessor, the *RSV*. We continue here.

21) *Romans 13:9*. This time the *Douay-Rheims* Catholic Bible has the *King James* reading and retains the command not to “**bear false witness.**” The committees of the *ESV* and *RSV*, however, being made up of professional liars, cover up for their sin and remove that command.

21) *Acts 24:7*. Although the readings of the *AV* in verses 6–8 are found in the 1582 *Rheims* edition, the newer Catholic “Bibles” (*Confraternity*, *New American*, *Jerusalem*) alter the passage by eliminating part of verse 6, *all of verse 7*, and part of verse 8. The *ESV* and *RSV* jump on the bandwagon with the Catholic versions of the Twentieth Century and make the same deletions.

22) *John 9:35*. Another instance of the *ESV* and *RSV* being more corrupt than the Jesuit version of 1582. They convert “**the Son of God**” (*AV* and the *Rheims*) to “*the Son of Man*” (*ESV* and *RSV*).

23) *Colossians 2:8*. The *ESV* and *RSV* convert the *AV*’s “**rudiments of the world**” into “*elemental spirits.*” Nothing in the verse has anything to do with the “**principalities,**” “**powers,**” or “**rulers of darkness**” that run this world (Eph. 6:12). Everything in the passage deals with the way the world *thinks* (“**philosophy**”), the way the world *acts* (“**vain deceit**” and “**tradition of men**”), and *basic principles* that run the world (“**rudiments**”). Those “**rudiments**” have to do with the *flesh* (see 1 John 2:16). The apostates on the *ESV* and *RSV* committees, being too stupid to compare Scripture with Scripture (1 Cor. 2:13), missed everything, which is why they changed the verse.

24) *John 3:16*. Once more the Pope and his cronies (the Jesuits) had more sense than the Conservatives and Liberals who put out the *ESV* and *RSV*. The *Rheims* and *KJV* both translate the Greek word *monogene* correctly: “**only begotten.**” The committees of the *ESV* and *RSV*, not having the sense God gave a brass monkey, say God only had *one* Son. Why, God had thousands of *created* sons *before* the resurrection of His “**only begotten Son**” (Job 38:7) and thousands of *regenerated* sons *after* the resurrection of His “**only begotten Son**” (John 1:12). The thing that made Jesus Christ a unique Son is the fact that He was the only Son *begotten physically*.

25) *Mark 15:28*. The *ESV* and *RSV* don’t like Jesus Christ fulfilling Old Testament prophecy, so they remove the verse completely. Even the Jesuits who put out the *Douay-Rheims* “Bible” had more sense than that; that version reads with the *King James*.

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26) *Acts 9:5–6*. The “Conservative” *ESV* (along with the Liberal *RSV*) snatch salvation out of the Apostle Paul’s mouth, just as they did the healed blind man back in *John 9:35*. Both versions remove the conviction of the Holy Spirit in verse 5 (“**it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks**”) and Saul’s confession of salvation in verse 6 (“**Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?**”). The *Douay-Rheims* Catholic “Bible” won’t even do that.

27) *John 14:2*. The *ESV* and *RSV* want to convert your mansion in Glory (*KJV*) into just a “room.” The Catholic *Rheims* edition reads with the *AV*.

That reminds me of an incident over in a women’s prison in Texas. There were some saved black sisters over in that prison who had gotten a hold of some of my material and were holding a Bible study. Well, there was one black woman who came to that study with an *NIV*. The other women tried to give her a *KJV*, but that sister would say, “My Bible’s just as good as yo’ Bible.”

One day she came to that Bible study, and the other women started “razzing” her and saying, “We is betta than you is.” That sister said, “Yo’ is not; I’s just as good as you.” They replied, “We is too.” The woman said, “How’s dat?” They said, “When we get to Heaben, we’s gonna get a mansion; all you’s gonna get is a *room*.” That woman looked up *John 14:2* in her *NIV*, and sure enough, there it was: “*many rooms*.” She threw that *NIV* away and got her a *King James*. A lot of “Conservative” and “Fundamental” pastors these days don’t have the discernment God gave a saved black woman in prison.

28) *Luke 23:42*. The “Conservatives” on the *ESV* committee just couldn’t stand to see someone get saved in the Scriptures. Like the Liberals before them (the *RSV*), they altered the verse so that the dying thief isn’t calling on *Deity* to get saved (“**Lord**”); he’s only calling on a man (“*Jesus*”). The Jesuit *Rheims* is not that Liberal in its theology in this verse; it reads “*Lord*” along with the *King James*.

29) *Luke 9:55*. The *ESV* and *RSV* remove over half the verse while the Jesuit “Bible” reads with the text of the Protestant Reformation.

30) *Matthew 23:14*. Now here is an interesting case, for it shows that the *ESV* and *RSV* are more “Catholic” than the *Rheims* Catholic “Bible” of the Counter-Reformation. The verse speaks directly to Roman Catholic Priests charging widows to pray their dead husbands out of Purgatory through “high Masses.” The Catholic *Douay-Rheims* version *has* the verse; the *ESV* and *RSV* **DO NOT!**

31) *Romans 14:10*. The *Douay-Rheims* and *King James* have the believer appearing before the Judgment Seat of *Christ*. The *ESV* and *RSV* just have one last general judgment like the Moslems (“*the judgment seat of God*”—the White Throne Judgment).

32) *Luke 2:14*. This is a famous Roman Catholic reading quoted by the Pope every Christmas. It comes from a change made by Origen who could not understand why there was no peace on earth when the angels said God sent peace when he sent His Son. Add to that the fact that Christ Himself said He didn’t come to send peace (*Luke 12:51*; *Matt. 10:34*). Origen had no concept of the First and Second Advents being prophesied right together (see *Mic. 5:2–5*),

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nor did he seem to comprehend the spiritual application to the Pauline doctrines of reconciliation and propitiation which were offered to *all men*, not just “*men of good will*” (2 Cor. 5:19; 1 John 2:2).

Being rather stupid in those areas, Origen altered the verse to match his own stupidity. He limited the “*peace*” to a certain group of “*men*”—the ones “*of good will.*” The Catholic Church picked up the corruption, and Jerome stuck it in the Latin *Vulgate*. The Jesuits translated it into their *Rheims* “Bible” of 1582, and the translators and revisers of the *ESV* and *RSV* got the corrupt reading from the same place Jerome got it: *Vaticanus* and *Sinaiticus*, two *Roman Catholic* manuscripts.

Are you picking up the pattern here? Are you getting the “lay of the land?” The *ESV* is a *Roman Catholic* “Bible” in many verses peculiar to the Roman Catholic text. But the *ESV* goes far beyond that text and follows the Liberalism of the *RSV* text in many other passages where Jerome and the Jesuits were not as apostate as the “Conservatives” who worked on the *ESV*.

Next month, we will complete our study of the Catholicism and Liberalism of the *ESV* text.

(Editor’s note: The material in this article was adapted from chapter ten of Dr. Ruckman’s work *The Christian’s Handbook of Manuscript Evidence*, 1997 ed.)

The Gap Fact

By Perry Demopoulos

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This work is not a representation of the “creation (or theistic)—evolutionistic” position: that God created (Gen. 1:1) and after that, things began to evolve for millions of years. The young-earth “creation” movement makes an overanxious attempt to reject theistic evolution, unfortunately at the expense of sound Bible doctrine. With the simple methods of Biblical interpretation: repetition, comparison, and division of the words of the *King James* text, the Scriptures themselves prove, without any help of outward references, the plain truths of the doctrine of the gap fact in Genesis 1:2.

There is more Scriptural evidence for the gap fact—much more than modern “Christian science” (cf. 1 Tim. 6:20) would have you to believe (Luke 11:52). Scripturally, there is no worthy challenge to *THE GAP FACT*.

The Missionary Call

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revealed will of God, what would make him think the Lord would be interested in showing him the unrevealed will of God?

As the Christian seeks to know the specific will of God for his life, he must make a distinction between a burden and a call. The burdens should be numerous. Almost anywhere he turns, the saint must notice needs that become burdens. The Apostle Paul carried a great burden all his saved life for his **“brethren . . . according to the flesh,”** the Jews; he never could get that burden off his heart as he desired to see them saved (Rom. 9:1–4). But that heavy burden was not his calling; he was called to be the apostle to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:13).

In his desire to see Jews saved, Paul went to the Jews, beginning from the time he first got saved (Acts 9:20). This habit continued as he began his first missionary journey in Cyprus (Acts 13:4–5), to Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13:14), to Iconium (Acts 14:1), to Thessalonica (Acts 17:1), to Corinth (Acts 18:1–4), and to Ephesus (Acts 19:1–8). In each of those places, Paul went right into the synagogues, preaching and teaching Christ to the Jews, all the while continuing to see Gentiles saved and churches started. Paul carried this burden to the point of ignoring the warnings not to go to Jerusalem (Acts 21:4), and it cost him a couple of years in house arrest. The book of Acts closes with Paul still trying to reach the Jews with his burden (Acts 28:17).

In numerous missionary trips, I have seen tremendous burdens that caused me to pray that the Lord

would call me there (Thailand, Malawi, Mozambique, the Philippines, Brazil, and Italy, to name a few). But those burdens were not the call of God for my life, and I had to find and answer the specific call of God for my own life. This is part of the will of God that will not necessarily be found in writing in the scriptures, though the scriptures will point the child of God to that unwritten will. I can now thank God for allowing me to return from those foreign fields and be part of training some men who did answer the call and become full-time missionaries to each of those fields.

When it comes to the missionary call, it is very obvious that many Christians are not in close enough fellowship with the Lord even to hear His voice. Since we are speaking about the will of God, the Lord tells us His will in writing when it comes to the heathen. In 2 Peter 3:9, we are told, **“The Lord is . . . not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”** If you believe that statement and then look at a world with seven billion souls in it, with the majority of that population not having a preacher coming to them to give them the gospel, whose fault would you say that is? The Lord is no doubt doing a lot of calling that is not being answered.

Regardless of your opinion of Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Roman Catholics, and atheists, those groups represent a world population of about six billion souls, the vast majority of which are lost and on their way to hell. That number does not include the various cults (Mormons, JW's,

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etc.) or Sikh, Anglican, Episcopalian, and especially Jews. The **“still small voice”** of His call is going unheeded as fewer and fewer families go to the foreign field. Even among those who do make it overseas, there are staggering reports of figures being as high as 40% of those returning to America for good within four years. This is not a charge against those who have returned, but should bring a realization of how strong the spiritual battle for souls is actually raging.

The Lord Jesus told His disciples they need not wait four months for the harvest; it is already white (John 4:35). He also warned that although **“The harvest truly is plenteous,” “the labourers are few”** (Matt. 9:37). Part of the answer to the problem is given in the next verse: pray for **“the Lord of the harvest”** to **“send forth labourers”** (Matt. 9:38). How many more might hear the call to go overseas if they were praying in this manner?

Instead, a full-page ad is run in *Christianity Today*, calling for Americans to stay home and send money instead. The ad was titled “Thank You for Not Coming” and tells Christians it is basically a huge waste to send men instead of money. We are told that nationals can do the job much more efficiently, since they already know the culture and language, and can do it at a fraction of the expense. Over 140 organizations give money to nationals, with one claiming to support over 3,000 full-time national workers in over fifty countries! Evidently, the Lord Jesus Christ did not know about what He was talking, and must have been pretty ignorant of how much better

Laodicean Christians know how to do the work of missions. What these organizations do not tell you is how the Africans being given American dollars are only resentful that they are not being given more, and how churches in India are suing each other over control of buildings and land bought and built by American bucks. The Lord has, and always will, call men (not their money) to do His will. Any attempt to substitute money for a willing heart to go yourself will result in being out of the will of God.

Since the call to the mission field will always come down to a very personal, individual, and subjective call, no one else can answer that call for you. Nor can anyone else tell you whether it has happened or not, although many pastoral-authority types are out there who will not hesitate to dictate the will of God for the sheep. There are a number of things the Lord will use to make that call evident to His child, and we will now look at some of these.

1) *Daily Bible reading.* David said, **“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path”** (Psa. 119:105), and **“The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple”** (Psa. 119:130). The Lord speaks directly to His saints through His words. When searching the will of God for your life, you should never underestimate the power and direction that comes from daily Bible reading. Playing Bible roulette will not work; nothing can replace the discipline of staying in the Book. It should be plainly understood that the scripture will not contain the

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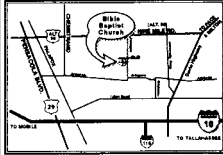
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words that directly call a man to Fiji or Senegal, but it does contain the light necessary to hear the voice of the Lord in His call and see His hand.

2) *Submitting to Bible-believing preaching.* The Lord uses the words of other Christians to show you His will. Paul was given the will of God through the preaching of some disciples (Acts 21:4), though he ignored it (Acts 21:13). Listening to preaching can give the right counsel in regards to the will of God (Acts 20:27; Prov. 19:20).

3) *Circumstances of open and closed doors.* Paul **“came to Troas”** and found an open door to preach (2 Cor. 2:12). He did not consider difficulties as a reason not to believe it was of the Lord; he told the Corinthians, **“For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries”** (1 Cor. 16:9). It seems Paul actually believed that having opposition was one of the ways to tell that the Lord was in it! Adoniram Judson headed for India, and the closed door there put him in Burma. He used the circumstances to follow the call of the Lord on his life. Paul prayed for an open door (Col. 4:3), as should a Christian today.

One of the major keys to open and closed doors is to be in the position and place the Lord wants you to be. When a Christian gets himself out of place, he simply misses the opening and closing of doors in his life. When the apostles had to replace Judas, they looked for someone who was in place. Matthias had followed with the disciples since **“the baptism of John”** (Acts 1:22), and he was overlooked when the Lord Jesus picked

the twelve. Rather than run down the road to another Baptist church that would better appreciate his talents, Matthias stayed in place and was there when the door opened (Acts 1:21–26). He stayed ready and became the twelfth apostle.

4) *The Lord speaks to your spirit directly.* While Paul was considering going east across Asia Minor into Bithynia, the Holy Spirit did not allow it. It wasn't a bad thing he was trying to do, but it was just not what the Lord wanted (Acts 16:7). Keeping in fellowship with the Lord and trying to please Him allows for the Lord to gently, and often unnoticeably, put us in the right places. I have heard of missionaries having their calling confirmed by some pretty wild circumstances that, to someone else, would sound spooky, but because of constant prayer and seeking of the Lord's will, those “spooky” circumstances were actually confirming calls to the one who was searching.

When the Lord calls and opens the doors, **“no man can shut”** them (Rev. 3:8). I am not a Calvinist, but men can only do what the Lord allows them to do. If the Lord puts you **“into the ministry”** (1 Tim. 1:12), it is a vain effort for others to try to stop you. The real problem will be ourselves, not others. Your reaction to the opposition and persecutions and troubles will be what is much more critical than what others do.

The call to the mission field should not be approached as one of “common sense.” These days, it has become fashionable to treat the ministry as if the pastor is the CEO of a

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business and needs to make sensible business decisions. As a result, it is “common sense” to send money, rather than men and their families, overseas, as it is much more feasible financially. The “return on investment” can be calculated as a good decision, versus sending the man. But the call of God will hardly ever make “common sense” or “financial sense” as the world looks at it.

When Noah was called to build an ark, it was not good common sense to build a huge boat on dry land. Anyone with any brains knew Noah was an idiot. When Abram was called to leave his family and head out to a place he did not know where, it did not make sense. When Nate Saint was called to reach cannibals with a taste for white meat, it did not make sense. When John Paton was called to land on New Hebrides in the Pacific without protection, it did not make sense. When a young man with a wife and infant children are called to malarial Malawi, it does not make sense.

But Noah saved his family and stepped onto a new world, having listened to the call of God. Abram’s children became as the stars of the sky and a people called by the name of the Lord, because he listened. Nate Saint was martyred with some friends, and he paved the groundwork for the Auca Indians of Ecuador to hear the gospel and be saved, because he listened. John Paton saw the island of Aniwa, with its infanticide and wife murder and cannibalism, turn to Christ to the point of becoming a majority-saved population, because he listened. Mike Fluech and David Robinson have seen churches established and native Malawian pastors become Bible believers “**apt to teach**” (1 Tim. 3:2), because they listened.

Thank God there are still a few who will not use common sense, but believe the scriptures and the call of the Lord Jesus Christ to “**Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.**”

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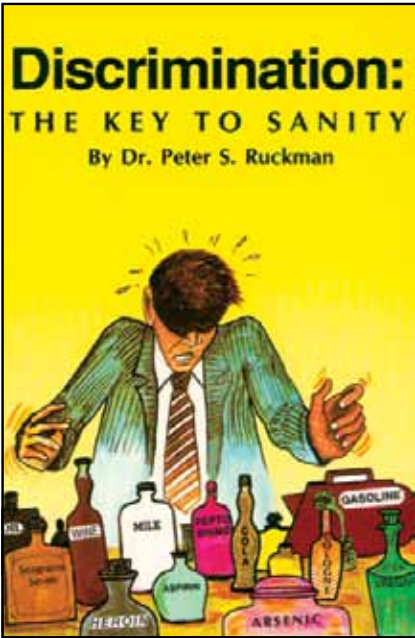
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The Great Woman Of Shunem

By Dr. Peter S. Ruckman

“And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread” (2 Kings 4:8).

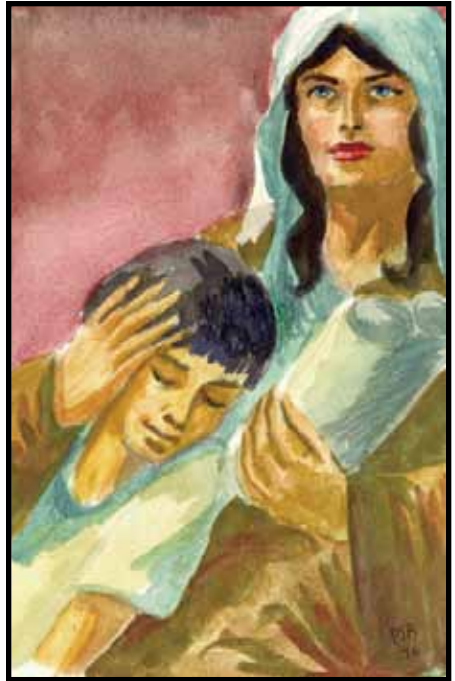
The Bible is a peculiar Book in that some of its most outstanding characters aren't even identified by name. Who was that **“lad”** who gave his lunch to Jesus to feed the multitude (John 6:9)? No one knows. How about the fellow who loaned Jesus his donkey to make the Triumphal Entry (Mark 11:4–6)? He's anonymous. But those people are famous in Heaven, even though you don't know their names.

That is the case of this woman in 2 Kings 4. She does something for God's prophet, and as a result, the Lord calls her **“great.”** As a matter of fact, she's the *only* woman about whom God says that; He doesn't even say that about *Mary*. Quite a breach of etiquette against the “Mother of God” and the “Queen of Heaven,” wouldn't you say?

If God calls you great, that is quite a compliment. A lot of people worry about what other folk think about them. Do you ever worry about what *God* thinks of you? If God were going to write an account of your life, would He call you great?

In God's Book, greatness isn't judged by the world's standards at all. The great men and women of this world—like the Pharaohs, the Caesars, the Popes, the Clintons, the Bushs, the Obamas, et al.—aren't anything in God's sight. He would

pass over the lot of them looking for greatness. That being the case, we are going to look in 2 Kings 4 and see why God calls this woman great.



She had *spiritual discernment*. She said to her husband, **“I PERCEIVE that this is an holy man of God”** (2 Kings 4:9). She had enough spiritual discernment to tell a **“man of God”** from a *religious faker*.

Unfortunately, a lot of women, especially Christian women, don't have any spiritual discernment. If Eve had had spiritual discernment, we wouldn't be in the mess we are now. Job's wife had no spiritual discernment whatso-

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ever; she had no idea what was going on with her husband. She thought the Lord was done with him; that's why she said, "**curse God, and die**" (Job 2:9).

Pontius Pilate's wife had some spiritual discernment. She told her husband of Christ, "**Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him**" (Matt. 27:19). If Pilate had listened to her, things would have turned out a lot better for him than they did.

The fact that people like Robert Tilton, Benny Hinn, Jim Bakker, Pat Robertson, and Jimmy Swaggart could make a living off Christians shows that at least half of the saved people in America are *demented*. I have always suspected the majority of the people who supported those "televangelists" were women. I just don't see how any male could watch sapheads like that on TV and think they were ministers or Bible teachers. But someone who doesn't have spiritual discernment enough to fill the eye of a blind mosquito sends them money and keeps them on the air.

This woman is great because she has spiritual discernment. That is exceptional for a woman. The woman is more susceptible to spiritual deception than the man is (1 Tim. 2:14). She wasn't deceived by religious frauds and fakes; she knew a "**man of God**" when she saw one.

Not only did she have spiritual discernment, she was *generous*. She set up a little room in which he could stay when he passed by, and furnished it with "**a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick**" (2 Kings 4:10).

Christian ladies reading this article, are *you* generous? A generous woman

helps folks out, whether she has money or not. If she doesn't have the money, she will find some other way to help. Over there in Acts 9, Dorcas made clothes for the widows (Acts 9:39). That "**virtuous woman**" over in Proverbs 31 stretched out her hands to the poor and needy (Prov. 31:20).

One time years ago around Christmas time, a Christian woman saw a shabby news boy out on the streets of New York City. She noticed he had no shoes on, and the weather was cold. So she called him over to her, took him into a department store, and bought him a nice, warm pair of fur-lined boots and a woolen sweater. That little boy was so taken aback by the kindness of that lady that he asked, "Are you God's wife?" Well, not personally she wasn't, but she was a member of Christ's Bride (Eph. 5:30–32), and that is how "**the Lamb's wife**" (Rev. 21:9) is supposed to act.

I understand that you have to be careful whom you help, these days. A lot of these folks holding up cardboard signs at intersections, begging for money, are just lazy. They have found out they can make more money begging than working, and a lot of times that money goes into booze and drugs; not clothes, food, and a place to stay.

I knew a fellow here in town who delighted in tormenting these beggars who hold up signs saying, "Will work for food." He went out around at 8:00 in the morning in a pickup truck, with pick axes, sledge hammers, and shovels in the back. He pulled up alongside those beggars and said, "Get in, man; I've got some land that needs clearing. I'll pay you the minimum wage in cash." All of a sudden, those bums decided they weren't as hungry as they thought

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The Great Woman of Shunem

Continued from 12
they were. After being turned down by one fellow, he took one of the employees from his business and paid him to follow that fellow around with a sign that said, "I offered this man work, and he turned it down."

The command of the Holy Spirit in that Bible is: "**if any would not work, neither should he eat**" (2 Thess. 3:10). So you have to be careful. Nevertheless, there are circumstances where an act of kindness and generosity can save someone's life, even when he doesn't deserve it.

Back around 1910, there was a drunken bum whose life got turned around by such an act, and he went on to become a famous Attorney General. It was a boiling hot summer day in Chicago, and he was passed out in the gutter. Some rich society woman passed by and took pity on him. She took out her best laced handkerchief and placed it on his face so he wouldn't burn.

A little later, when the police picked him up to haul him off to the "drunk tank," he asked them about that handkerchief, and they told him what that society woman had done for him. That touched him so much that he kept that handkerchief. Later on when he became Attorney General, he tracked that lady down and said, "Thank you for having mercy on an old drunken bum."

Another reason God called this woman great was that she was *humble*. When Elisha sent Gehazi to ask her if he could pay her back for her generosity by getting her "in" with the "high muckety-mucks" in Israel, she said, "**I dwell among mine own people**" (2 Kings 4:13). She hadn't done what she did for Elisha to get

fame or prestige. She was content to stay a "dark horse."

Queen Victoria was humble like that, even though she was a Queen of the greatest empire on earth in her day. She would often say, "I want to live until the Second Coming of Christ just so I can get off my throne and *place my crown on His head.*" Women like "Princess Di," Jackie Kennedy, and Hillary Clinton couldn't touch the hem of the garment of a women like that. I wouldn't hire those women to sweep my kitchen.

Folks, people don't change just because you put them in some exalted position; they are the same as they were when they were a "nobody." A woman doesn't become a "lady" just because you put her in the White

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Bro. Donovan's Meeting Schedule

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Pastor Paul Sherrouse
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August 12-14

Bible Believers Bapt. Church
1055 N.E. 25th St.
Hillsboro, OR 97123
Pastor John Robinson
503-706-7147

The Great Woman of Shunem

Continued from 13
House or Buckingham Palace. A tramp is still a tramp no matter where she lives; a dyke is still a dyke no matter what her surroundings. Your *location* doesn't change your *character*.

Don't you worry if the world doesn't have a high estimation of you. Jesus said, **"that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God"** (Luke 16:15). If the lost world thinks highly of you, chances are you stink in the sight of God, and vice versa (2 Cor. 2:16).

Next, this woman was great because she had *self-control*; she didn't get upset easily. As the account in 2 Kings 4 goes, the Lord gave that woman a son because she took care of God's prophet. That boy grew up, and one day, when he was out in the field working with his daddy, he had a heatstroke and died. That woman didn't become hysterical; she took the dead body of her boy, laid it on Elisha's bed, and sent for the prophet. She didn't "come apart at the seams." As far as God is concerned, any woman who can control herself like that is a great woman.

That brings me to my next point, she was a great woman because she was *hungry for the word of God*. She goes to Elisha to get the word of God on what took place.

Blessed is the woman or man who hungers and thirsts for what God says (Matt. 5:6; John 6:35, 63). **"Martha was cumbered about much serving"** (Luke 10:40); but Jesus said of her sister, **"Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her"** (Luke 10:42) because she **"sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word"** (Luke 10:39).

Did you ever notice how many *women* followed the Lord Jesus Christ? Luke lists Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna, and then he adds **"MANY others"** (Luke 8:1-3). Women seemed to know instinctively that Jesus had their best interest at heart. No other religious leader cared for them like the Saviour did.

Before some of you ladies get too "ecumenical," you had better research the status of women in Islam. Women are sex objects for Moslem men; they have *half* the legal status of a man in a Moslem court; Moslem women can't make it into paradise without the permission of their husbands and fathers, and then they have to compete with 72 supernatural "virgins" for the affections of a man. Mohammed thought women were so deficient in "religion" (meaning *his* religion) that he believed most of the inhabitants of Hell would be *women*. If you want the documentation for all that, get the book *Will the Real "Allah" Please Stand Up?* from the Bookstore (RK-139 @ \$9.95).

Buddhism, Hinduism, and Shintoism have *no plan of salvation for women*. No Buddhist woman ever attained "enlightenment." You might hear of some American shyster elevating one of his female disciples to "goddesshood" in order to fornicate with her, but no real Buddhist from India, China, or Japan would even think of such a thing.

Ditto Hinduism and Shintoism. Until Christian missionaries came along, the Hindus would *burn* a widow with her husband when he died. When you hear some infidel talking about religion making women "property," that is the case in paganism (Islam, Hinduism,

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The Great Woman of Shunem

Continued from 14

Buddhism, etc.), *not* Old Testament Judaism or Christianity. In that Book, women have rights and privileges that weren't afforded them under the pagan religions.

Another thing that made this woman great was that she was *persistent*. Elisha sent his servant, Gehazi, ahead of him with his staff to lay it on the face of the dead boy (2 Kings 4:29). The implication was that Elisha himself was not planning to go to the child and that the laying on of the staff would raise him back to life. But that woman wasn't about to leave Elisha until she got her prayer answered (2 Kings 4:30). That was persistence.

Persistence is sticking to a thing and not quitting. In the Bible, in regards to prayer, it's called "**importunity**" (Luke 11:8).

A good illustration of that is back in the days when pirates sailed the seas. A pirate ship had been sunk, and the crew had taken to the lifeboats. Well, the lifeboats went around picking up survivors until they couldn't hold any more. One of those pirates who was still in the water reached up and grabbed the gunwale of one of those boats. Someone in the boat took out his cutlass and cut off the fellow's hand so he wouldn't get in the boat and sink it. The pirate in the water grabbed the gunwale with his other hand and got that cut off too. Not to be denied, that pirate lunged up out of the water and grabbed that gunwale with his teeth. His shipmates figured if he were that persistent, they would take the chance and bring him into the boat. They decided he meant business.

The Shunammite woman determined she would get her prayer an-

swered, and she did. The story is told of a Christian lady down South who raised five boys after her husband died. Every one of them turned out right. When asked what she did to get those kind of results, she said, "I just made up my mind the Devil was not going to get them."

Do you know what that sister did? Every day, at 10:00 in the morning, she would leave her boys in the care of their oldest brother, and she would go next door to her neighbor. She and that neighbor lady had covenanted with each other that the Devil wasn't going to get their kids, so for thirty minutes every day, they would pray together for their kids. They did that for nearly fifteen years. *It worked*; the Devil didn't get those kids.

Over in the New Testament (Matt. 15:22–28), the Syrophenician woman was like that. She had a demon-possessed daughter, and she wouldn't leave the Lord or the disciples alone until her daughter was delivered. Even when Jesus seemingly insulted her by insinuating she was a female dog, she took it—*but she got her prayer answered*. She didn't let an insult stop her.

Not only was the Shunammite woman persistent, she was great because *she held God to His promise*. God had promised her a son, and now he was dead. She said to Elisha, "**did I not say, Do not deceive me?**" (2 Kings 4:28). She wouldn't leave Elisha because she expected God to keep the promise He made. No woman is a great woman in God's eyes if she doesn't claim the promises of God in prayer, because claiming the promises in the word of God is a

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The Great Woman of Shunem

Continued from 15

display of the kind of faith that pleases God (Heb. 11:6). This woman was persistent in prayer, claiming the promises of God and holding Him to His word.

Finally, this woman was great because she was *thankful*. In 2 Kings 4:37, when she received her son raised back to life, she fell at Elisha's "**feet, and bowed her to the ground**": an act of worship and gratitude.

Bob Jones Sr. used to say, "When gratitude dies in the heart of a man, that man is well nigh hopeless." The Apostle Paul wrote, "**be ye thankful**" (Col. 3:15). Before God turned those Gentiles "**over to a reprobate mind**" there in Romans 1:28, they became *unthankful* (Rom. 1:21).

The great woman of Shunem was grateful for what she had; that was why she was so content back up there in 2 Kings 4:13. Discontent springs from unthankfulness and ingratitude.

Haman was second in command of the entire Persian Empire. He had everybody bowing down to him but one man, and to get back at that one fellow (Mordecai), he tried to kill the guy's whole race. Discontent; unthankful.

Ahab was King over Israel. He owned all kinds of land and palaces, yet he pouted because he couldn't get the vineyard of one man (Naboth). He allowed his wife to murder that fellow over that. Discontentment; unthankfulness.

How thankful are you? That Bible says, "**In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you**" (1 Thess. 5:18). Could God call you a great woman or a great man based on your

thankfulness?

Back in the Nineteenth Century, the people of Vienna in Austria took their opera very seriously. At one time, there was a famous singer named Amelia Steiningger. She was gradually losing her voice and was to be replaced by a woman named Henriette Sontag. The first time Madame Sontag took Amelia Steiningger's place on the Austrian stage, the audience hissed her off the stage because she was taking the place of their idol.

Well, Amelia Steiningger finally lost her voice altogether. She cried so much over it that she literally "cried her eyes out" and went blind. She wound up a pauper and had to be led around by her daughter.

Years later, at the height of her operatic fame, Madame Sontag was riding in her carriage in Berlin when she saw a girl leading a blind woman down the street. She had her driver stop the carriage, and she summoned the girl over. Sure enough, it was Amelia Steiningger, her former rival. Madame Sontag held a benefit concert for her and took her to a doctor to see if anything could be done for her eyes. When the doctor told them nothing could be done to restore the woman's sight, Madame Sontag took her former enemy home with her and took care of her and her daughter for the rest of their lives.

You see, Madame Sontag was grateful for what God had done for her in making her a great operatic star. She showed her gratitude by loving her enemy, as Christ commanded (Matt. 5:44). That was the mark of a great woman.

Ladies, can God say that about you? Gentlemen, can God say that about you?

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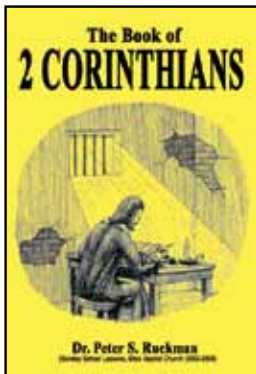
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Does Greek Help?

By Dean Hays

(Part Seven of Eight)

In this series of articles, I have asked the question, "Does Greek help?" So far, we have seen that Greek scholarship *doesn't help* to understand the text, and it *doesn't help* to get the text right.

To wrap up my examples of manuscript evidence, I want to show you some passages I call "landsides," or "slam dunks." These are places in the New Testament where the modern versions change the reading against the overwhelming evidence in support of the *King James* reading. In fact, the evidence for the altered reading is so meager, that it is actually kind of embarrassing for the scholars.

The first of these is Matthew 21:44.

"And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

It's a verse contrasting Christ's First and Second Advents. The new versions would like to get rid of the verse altogether, but they settle for this footnote instead: "Verse 44 is not in some manuscripts." Here are the "some manuscripts" it is "not in": ONE uncial (D); a "few" cursives—meaning ONE; Old Latin manuscripts a, b, d, e, ff1, ff2, r1, r2; and the Sinaitic Syriac. The editors of the new versions choose that evidence over this for the verse being legit:

Uncials: *Sinaiticus*, *Alexandrinus*, *Vaticanus*, C, E, F, G, H, K, L, M, S, U, V, W, X, Y, Z, *Gamma*, *Delta*, *Theta*, *Pi*, *Sigma*, *Phi*, *Omega*, and 0138. It is also extant in 047, 055, 0102, 0211, 0233, 0248, and 0257.

Cursives: The majority and both families (f1 and f13).

Latin: Old Latin manuscripts aur, c, f, g1, g2, h, l, q; and the entire witness of the *Vulgate*.

Syriac: The *Peshitta*, Curetonian, and Harclean.

Coptic: The Sahidic and Bohairic.

The Armenian and Ethioptic translations.

This time, the scholars dump their beloved *Sinaiticus* and *Vaticanus* for Codex D. They take the testimony of *one* cursive over the combined testimony of *all* the others. Why cast doubt on the verse based on TWO Greek manuscripts? You talk about being *deceived*! Someone is full of the Devil!

The next verse is Matthew 24:48.

"But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth HIS COMING."

The new versions don't like such an overt reference to Christ's Second Coming, so they get rid of it with: "*the master won't return until late.*" The evidence for doing that? *Sinaiticus*, a few cursives of so little consequence that they aren't listed, and the Sahidic and Bohairic Coptic translations. Compare that to this for the *KJV* reading:

Uncials: C, D, E, F, G, H, K, L, M, S, U, V, W, Y, *Gamma*, *Delta*, *Theta*, *Pi*, *Sigma*, *Phi*, *Omega*, 067, and 0133; as well as being extant in 047, 055, 0204, 0211, 0257.

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Does Greek Help?

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Cursives: The majority and both families (f1 and f13).

Latin: *Most* of the Old Latin manuscripts and the entire Vulgate testimony.

Syriac: The *Peshitta*, Sinaitic, and Harclean.

Coptic: Some Bohairic manuscripts and the Middle Egyptian.

The Armenian and Ethiopic translations.

Someone doesn't like the Second Coming of Christ. He doesn't like it so much that he will side with just a *couple* of manuscripts against the combined testimony of the *rest* of the Greek manuscripts. I wonder who that someone could be?

The next verse is Mark 13:33—“**Take ye heed, watch AND PRAY**”

The modern translations don't want you *praying* here while you watch, so they remove “**and pray**” from the verse. This is based on *two* uncials (B and D), a “*few*” cursives Nestle won't mention; *three* Old Latin manuscripts (a, c, k), and the Fayyumic Coptic. Compare that to these for the *KJV's* reading:

Uncials: *Sinaiticus*, *Alexandrinus*, C, E, F, G, H, K, L, M, S, U, V, W, Y, *Gamma*, *Delta*, *Theta*, *Pi*, *Sigma*, *Psi*, *Omega*, 0104, and 0116; as well as being extant in *Phi*, 047, 055, 0211, and 0233.

Cursives: The majority and both families (f1 and f13).

Latin: Old Latin manuscripts *aur*, *f*, *ff2*, *g1*, *g2*, *i*, *l*, *q*, *r1*; and the entire testimony of the *Vulgate*.

Syriac: The *Peshitta*, Sinaitic, and Harclean.

Coptic: The Sahidic and Bohairic.

Once again, this is an attack on the Second Coming—that is the context (Mark 13:32–37). Someone doesn't want you ready when the Lord comes back. Do you figure that would be God or Satan?

The next place is the last half of Luke 11:2, which reads in the *King James*: “**Thy kingdom come, THY WILL BE DONE, AS IN HEAVEN, SO IN EARTH.**”

The new “Bibles” get rid of everything after the word “*come*.” Luke 11:2 is part of Luke's account of the so-called “Lord's prayer.” In both cases where the “Lord's prayer” is recorded (Luke 11:2–4 and Matt. 6:9–13), the Millennial Kingdom that is set up at Christ's return is attacked in the modern versions. Someone *hates* Jesus Christ coming back to set up His kingdom, and here are the straws at which he will grasp to get rid of it: ONE papyrus (P75), *two* uncials (B and L), a “*few*” unnamed cursives and cursive family I, the Roman Catholic *Vulgate*, the Sinaitic and Curetonian Syriac, and the Armenian translation. Here is the *mountain* of evidence ignored for the mole hill:

Uncials: the original writer of *Sinaiticus* as well as a general correction to it, *Alexandrinus*, C, D, E, F, G, H, K, M, P, S, U, V, W, X, *Gamma*, *Delta*, *Theta*, *Lambda*, *Pi*, and *Psi*; as well as being extant in Y, *Xi*, *Omega*, 047, 055, 0211, and 0233.

Cursives: The majority and family 13.

Latin: The Old Latin manuscripts *aur*, *b*, *c*, *e*, *f*, *ff2*, *i*, *l*, *q*, *r1*.

Syria: The *Peshitta* and Harclean.

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Does Greek Help?

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Coptic: The Bohairic.

The Ethiopic translation.

Now for a change of pace, let's take a reference on the blood atonement—Luke 22:19–20, starting with the last half of verse 19: **“This is my body WHICH IS GIVEN FOR YOU; THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME. LIKEWISE ALSO THE CUP AFTER SUPPER, SAYING, THIS CUP IS THE NEW TESTAMENT IN MY BLOOD, WHICH IS SHED FOR YOU.”** The new “Bibles” would like to get rid of everything after **“body”** in verse 19 and all of verse 20 if they could get away with it, but their editors just do not have the guts. So instead, they settle for a note, like this one in the NASV: “Some ancient manuscripts omit the remainder of verse 19 and all of verse 20.” Well, here are the “some ancient manuscripts” which omit it: the D uncial, a “few” cursives that Nestle won't even cite, Old Latin manuscripts a, d, ff2, i, and l; and the Curetonian Syriac.

But two can play the “ancient manuscript” game. Here are “some ancient manuscripts” that *have* the KJV reading.

Papyrus: P75.

Uncials: *Sinaiticus*, *Alexandrinus*, *Vaticanus* (B), C, E, F, G, H, K, L, M, S, T, U, V, W, X, *Gamma*, *Delta*, *Theta*, *Pi*, *Psi*, and 063; it is also extant in Y, *Omega*, 047, 055, 0135, 0211, and 0233.

Cursives: The majority and both families (f1 and f13).

Latin: Old Latin manuscripts aur, c, f, q, and r1; as well as the entire *Vulgate* testimony.

Syriac: The *Peshitta*, Harclean, and Palestinian.

Coptic: Sahidic and Bohairic.

The Armenian and Ethiopic translations.

I like my “some” better than their “some,” meaning ONE uncial and whatever cursive Nestle is ashamed to admit. Now I ask you, was *that* any reason to put a note like that there to make readers doubt the verse? Why wasn't there a note like this instead: “Nearly ALL ancient manuscripts have the remainder of verse 19 and all of verse 20”? Because that wouldn't be “new” (see Acts 17:21). Publishers have to have something “new” (like the “*New International Version*,” the “*New American Standard Bible*,” the “*New King James Version*,” etc.) in order to boost their sales. You have to tear down faith in the “old” (the KJV) in order to replace it with the “new.”

In Luke 24:36, the NASV removes **“and saith unto them, Peace be unto you”** from the verse. This is based on ONE uncial manuscript (D), a “few” unnamed cursive manuscripts, and seven Old Latin manuscripts (a, b, d, e, ff2, l, r1). You are to accept that over this mountain of evidence to the contrary:

Papyrus: P75.

Uncials: *Sinaiticus*, *Alexandrinus*, *Vaticanus* (B), E, F, G, H, K, L, M, P, S, U, V, W, X, *Gamma*, *Delta*, *Theta*, *Lambda*, *Pi*, and *Psi*. It is also extant in Y, *Omega*, 047, 055, 0135, and 0211.

Cursives: The majority and both families (f1 and f13).

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Does Greek Help?

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Latin: The Old Latin manuscripts *aur*, *c*, *f*, *g*, *1*, and *g2*; as well as the entire *Vulgate* testimony.

Syriac: The *Peshitta*, Sinaitic, Curetonian, Harclean, and Palestinian; that is, the *entirety* of the Syriac witness.

Coptic: The Sahidic and Bohairic.

The Armenian and Ethiopic translations.

Once more, the new versions have dumped their beloved *Vaticanus* and *Sinaiticus* when they agreed with the *KJV* reading.

Let's try Luke 24:40.

“And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.”

A proof of the Resurrection (see Acts 1:3). So what does the *NASV*, put out by Conservatives and Fundamentalists, do with the verse? It takes it *out of the text* and moves it to the *footnote*. Why? Based on ONE uncial (D again), a “few” cursives that Nestle won't even bother listing (personally, I think he's bluffing; I don't even count such an obscure reference as “evidence” for changing the Bible), and six Old Latin manuscripts (*a*, *b*, *e*, *ff2*, *l*, and *r1*). And here is the massive amount of evidence proving your *King James Bible* is right:

Papyrus: P75.

Uncials: *Sinaiticus*, *Alexandrinus*, *Vaticanus* (B), E, F, G, K, L, M, N, S, U, V, W, *Gamma*, *Delta*, *Theta*, *Lambda*, and *Psi*. It is also extant in Y, *Omega*, 047, 055, 0135, and 0211.

Cursives: The majority and both families (*f1* and *f13*). That is basically the entire cursive testimony, since Nestle won't tell you what “few” cursives stand against them.

Latin: Old Latin manuscripts *aur*, *c*, *f*, and *g*; and the entirety of the *Vulgate* witness.

Syriac: The *Peshitta*, Harclean, and Palestinian.

Coptic: The Sahidic and Bohairic.

As we have seen before, when *Sinaiticus* and *Vaticanus* stand against the *KJV*, their readings take precedence. When they stand with the *KJV*, their readings are rejected for a manuscript of lesser “weight,” as far as the estimation of the scholars is concerned.

Moving on to Luke 24:52. The *NASV* removes “**worshipped him**” from the text and places it in the footnote. The evidence for this was much as it was back in Luke 24:40—the same uncial manuscript (D), the same nondescript cursive(s), almost the same Old Latin manuscripts (*a*, *b*, *d*, *e*, *ff2*, and *l*); but this time there is the addition of the Sinaitic Syriac. Of course, you are to get rid of worshipping Christ in Luke 24:52, even though it can be found in:

Papyrus: P75.

Uncials: *Sinaiticus*, *Alexandrinus*, *Vaticanus*, C, E, F, G, H, K, L, M, N, S, U, V, W, X, *Gamma*, *Delta*, *Theta*, *Lambda*, *Pi*, *Psi*, and 063; it also being extant in Y, *Omega*, 047, 055, and 0211.

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Does Greek Help?

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Cursives: The majority and both families (f1 and f13).

Latin: Old Latin manuscripts *aur*, *c*, *f*, and *q*; as well as the *Vulgate*.

Syriac: The *Peshitta*, Harclean, and Palestinian.

Coptic: The Sahidic and Bohairic.

The Armenian and Ethiopic translations.

What is going on here?! Why would Conservatives and Fundamentalists ignore all that evidence in support of worshiping the resurrected Christ, unless something of a diabolical spiritual nature is going on? (Editor's note: the evidence was so overwhelming that later editions of the *NASV* edited it back in.)

The *NASV* has a note casting doubt on "**And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!**" in John 19:5. Its note says, "Omitted from a few early manuscripts." Boy, is that an understatement! It is so "few" that it is only ONE papyrus (P66), NO uncials, those mysterious "few" cursives Nestle won't divulge, and THREE Old Latin manuscripts (*a*, *e*, and *ff2*). In the meantime, the reading is supported by *everything else*.

Papyrus: It is extant in P60.

Uncials: *Sinaiticus*, *Alexandrinus*, *Vaticanus*, D (!), E, G, H, K, L, M, N, S, U, V, W, X, Y, *Gamma*, *Delta*, *Theta*, *Lambda*, *Pi*, *Omega*; it is also extant in 054, 055, 065, 0141, 0211.

Cursives: *All the rest* of the cursive evidence—the majority and both families (f1 and f13).

Latin: The *Vulgate*.

Syriac: The *Peshitta* and Harclean.

Coptic: The Sahidic and Bohairic.

The Armenian and Ethiopic translations.

What?! Did I just see what I saw? After rejecting the *KJV* reading four times in a row—even over the evidence of *Vaticanus* and *Sinaiticus*—based on one Western uncial—D, this time, when D agreed with *Vaticanus* and *Sinaiticus* in favor of the *KJV*, the *NASV* dropped it like a hot potato. It took the word of ONE papyrus fragment over all the uncial evidence, even the "big four" (*Sinaiticus*, *Vaticanus*, *Alexandrinus*, and, in this case, D).

The new versions remove "**of God**" from "**the spirit OF GOD**" in Romans 15:19 based, *again*, on ONE papyrus fragment (P66), NO uncials, those unknown, unnamed "few" cursives, and the Armenian translation. On the *KJV* side, there is:

Papyri: P46 and extant in P60.

Uncials: *Sinaiticus*, the first corrector of D, L, P, and *Psi*; and extant in 054, 055, 065, 0141, and 0211.

Cursives: The *majority*.

Syriac: The *Peshitta* and Harclean.

The Ethiopic translation.

And although, this time, the Latin evidence has a completely different reading than either side ("*power of the HOLY SPIRIT*"), still, it shows you the "intent

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Does Greek Help?

Continued from 23

of the author”—the *KJV* reading “**spirit OF GOD.**” Essentially, this time, the evidence of ONE papyrus fragment booted “**God**” out of His own Book.

And finally, in the *NASV* and *NIV*, “**the wrath of God**” is not coming “**on the children of disobedience**” in Colossians 3:6, because that phrase is not in ONE papyrus fragment (P46), TWO uncials (*Vaticanus* and the original writer of D), those “few” unidentified cursives again, the Sahidic Coptic, and the Rome edition of the Ethiopic translation. But it is in:

Uncials: *Sinaiticus*, *Alexandrinus*, C, the first corrector of D, Dabs, F, G, H, I, K, L, P, and *Psi*; as well as being extant in 049, 056, 075, 0142, 0150, and 0151.

Cursives: The majority (of course!).

Latin: Old Latin manuscripts ar, c, d, dem, div, f, g, mon, t, x, and z; as well as the *Vulgate*.

Syriac: The *Peshitta* and Harclean.


Coptic: The Bohairic.

The Gothic and Armenian translations, and the Platt-Praetorius edition of the Ethiopic translation.

Of course, if you are one of “**the children of disobedience**” (see Eph. 2:2), I can see why you would want to take the evidence that is next to nothing for getting rid of a reference to *you* in scripture. The nature of these changes gives us real reason to wonder about the so-called Conservatives, Fundamentalists, and Evangelicals who put together the critical Greek texts and the English translations made from them.

Now those complete my examples of “light” from “the Greek.” Did you come away thinking Greek is the answer for figuring out your Bible? If so, please go see a shrink and get some help for your delusion.

Next month, in the final article to this series, not only will I draw conclusions on the evidence presented, I will also look at whether the *correct* Greek text is the answer.

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Family Problems

By Robert Militello

“For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law” (Matt. 10:35).

How's that for the Christian who measures his words in order to maintain peace and harmony among loved ones? A true disciple of Jesus Christ must be willing to pay a price in heartache and, at times, severe emotional distress. A popular song, years ago, had these lyrics in it: "I never promised you a rose garden." Love brings pain, or you have never really known love. **“Endure hardness,”** Paul wrote Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:3. That is not the kind of spiritual counseling today's Laodicean Christian wants to hear.

“He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me” (Matt. 10:37).

Note how selfish the Lord is in demanding that He own your heart and not just pieces of it.

“For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, WHOSE NAME IS JEALOUS, is a jealous God” (Exod. 34:14).

Laodicean preachers can't really preach this stuff. Their job is to make saved sinners feel comfortable in their lukewarm hearts. What would make these **“enemies of the cross of Christ”** (Phil. 3:18) want to come again Sunday after Sunday if the real demands of discipleship were pressed upon them?

“And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me” (Matt. 10:38).

What most believers seem to be searching for is some shortcut to spirituality. They buy books and hear preachers that give the impression that one can have rewarding fellowship with the Saviour without suffering the reproach of the cross. It is a satanic self-delusion brought on by fear of letting go. Losing control of his life and surrendering to the Lord terrifies the Laodicean believer.

How does one disguise his refusal to pick up the cross and yet appear spiritual? He joins a church where there are good works and various ministries with which to get involved, so the semblance of devotion to the Lord is carefully maintained. Who but the Lord knows when a heart has been really given over to Him? **“Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams”** (1 Sam. 15:22).

We need to remember that our Lord, as a man, grew up in a Jewish family. A knowledge of God's word, especially the Old Testament, will show you clearly that Jewish families can be dysfunctional. When you get to heaven, ask the patriarch Jacob about what he went through.

There were problems in the Lord's earthly family. He was on a mission to do the will of His Father. Luke tells us that Jesus, as a boy, gave His family evidence that loyalty to His Father's calling was going to put a strain in family relations. Although Mary and Joseph knew He was a special child due to the circumstances of His birth, they had trouble accommodating themselves

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to the disruption in family life caused by Jesus not joining the caravan back to Nazareth.

“And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing” (Luke 2:48).

How often has a Christian, determined to be a disciple, been told by loved ones: “How could you have done this to us?” How many marriages, engagements, and close relationships have been broken because of the call of God in a Christian’s heart?

“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3).

Certainly there was tension in the Lord’s family. Frankly, it is clear from John 7:1–10 that the Lord’s brothers provoked Him and cared little for His safety. Read that portion of scripture carefully and see what you make of it. There’s a lot of devilment there, and the enemy can skillfully use loved ones and family to derail a believer before he becomes fruitful in his Christian life.

“And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee. And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? And he looked around about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold, my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother” (Mark 3:32–35).

How’s that for a redefinition of what family is? Here is a rabbi using His words like knife thrusts to rattle, amaze, and confound His listeners. No wonder the officers of the chief priests sent to apprehend Jesus later in His ministry said, **“Never man spake like this man”** (John 7:46).

Jesus never hesitated to set the bar for discipleship at a very high level. To follow Him was to submit to a new way of thinking of how life ought to be lived. Being called a Christian today can mean anything. A Christian is a saved sinner who has entered the race rather than remain on the sidelines as a spectator. Does this describe you today?

John records something Jesus said to him just before dying. It reveals much concerning the Lord’s relationship with His earthly family.

“Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home” (John 19:25–27).

Those last minute instructions to Mary and John ran counter to everything that is noble and good in Jewish family life. The Lord’s mother is a widow at this time in her life. Mary had four other sons besides Jesus, and at least two sisters, according to Mark 6:3.

As a boy in Catholic school, I was taught that Mary had Jesus only and

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remained a virgin. Imagine telling an orthodox Jewish couple, after the birth of Jesus, to disobey the commandment to **“Be fruitful, and multiply”** (Gen. 1:28). For fifteen centuries, Rome has ignored every scripture that contradicts its traditions. To her, the Bible might as well be a coloring book for children.

So here we have the dutiful Jewish son instructing His mother, a widow with grown sons and daughters, to go off and live with John, who is outside the family circle. This is an instance of the most outrageous disrespect for the traditions of Jewish family life. The Lord, who no doubt loved His mother and kept the commandment to **“Honour thy father and thy mother”** (Exod. 20:12) because He was a Jew under the law, charged His disciple with the obligation of maintaining a widow. The brothers and sisters of the Lord were no doubt never consulted. They must have been beside themselves when they discovered that their mother was going off to live under the care of one of their brother's followers. This act could only be considered as a great shame and scandal among neighbors and friends of the Lord's family. The gossip in Nazareth must have been electric.

No Jewish son would think of such a thing. I'm sure those who knew Jesus but never believed on Him as Messiah thought that, in His agony, He took leave of His senses. This is certainly plausible considering what Mark wrote in chapter 3, verse 21.

“And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, HE IS BESIDE HIMSELF.”

Yes, it is not a stretch to assume that the Lord's brothers and sisters thought that Jesus may have been somewhat delusional.

How much did Mary reveal to her children about the strange birth of Jesus? We know from Luke 2:48 that she lied about Joseph being the child's father. Certainly this was a case of a mother and wife desiring to maintain family respectability. Mary may have told her children little or nothing about Jesus.

At Bethlehem, Mary experienced the fulfillment of what was told her in Nazareth by Gabriel. Luke records:

“But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart” (Luke 2:19).

Any Jewish maiden would have been overwhelmed by all that the God of Israel was doing and allowing to happen to her and Joseph. Later in that same chapter, Luke records a most interesting prophecy made by Simeon, a devout Jew who was promised by God the privilege of seeing the Messiah before dying. Joseph and Mary were at the temple to offer sacrifice and present Jesus to the Lord. Simeon was led by the Spirit into the temple to see the child and held Him and blessed Him. Then Simeon addressed Mary:

“. . . Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed” (Luke 2:34–35).

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This was a statement that had to be hard for Mary to process. In drawing some inferences from these scriptures, I realize that Mary may have thought it best to keep certain things from her other children. If that were the case, it is perfectly understandable.

There may well have been a sibling rivalry that existed among Mary's sons and Jesus comparable to that which existed between Joseph and his father Jacob's sons, with Benjamin excepted. Parents who have raised boys can attest to the frequent strains that erupt among brothers because of the competitive nature of most people. We really don't know what it was like in Mary's house, but John 7:2–5 make it clear that the Lord's brothers did not believe in their brother's anointing.

After Calvary, Mary is mentioned only once. She is at a prayer meeting with the apostles and the local church at Jerusalem in Acts 1:13–14. Jesus was concerned for His mother's spiritual well-being above all else, and not what the family, friends, or others thought about His wanting Mary to go off with John.

“James the Lord's brother” (Gal. 1:19) must have experienced a good deal of emotional turmoil after Calvary. The report that Jesus was alive and had appeared to the apostles, and later to over 500 disciples (1 Cor. 15:5–6) must have shook him to his core.

“After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles” (1 Cor. 15:7).

Whether this special appearance happened before James came to faith in his brother as the Messiah is not certain. It is more than likely that the special visitation granted James brought him to faith in the Lord, seeing that **“the Jews require a sign”** (1 Cor. 1:22). What we do know for sure is that James went on to become pastor of the local church in Jerusalem. Acts 15:13–21 show the key role **“the Lord's brother”** played in accepting the fact that the door of salvation was now opened to the Gentiles. Certifying that **“the gospel of the grace of God”** which Paul was given (Acts 20:14) was now sound doctrine may have been no easy matter for the Jewish believers in Jerusalem to accept. Remember, Gentiles were seen as dogs, and the Jews had been on board with that since the law was given to Moses.

Trouble in families goes back to Cain and Abel. It is a fact of life, and believers have to deal with it. Grace and wisdom are crucial in handling family eruptions. Differences in belief can be “papered over” or ignored, but eventually, the truth must be told.

Jewish family trouble is well documented in the Bible. It is there for all the Gentile world to read and to see what happens when the Lord's will is pushed aside. A 4,000-year-old “mistake” by Abraham's wife, Sarah, in giving Hagar to her husband is daily convulsing the world today. The children of Ishmael and the children of Jacob will be at each other's throats until the Lord returns. Family trouble almost cost Miriam her life when she came against Moses.

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She and her brother Aaron took issue with the new wife Moses had taken, an Ethiopian woman (read the account in Num. 12).

Knowing well the sorry record of family fights in the Old Testaments, do we wonder that Mary wanted to keep peace among her children, even more so after Joseph died. Because of the natural desire to protect family members and maintain good relations, believers will often quench the Spirit and deprive those they love of the truth that will set them free (cf. John 8:32).

John Bunyan's refusal to give up preaching landed him in jail. For twelve years, he had to commit his wife and six children to the Lord's care. He put the Lord's call before his family.

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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.

Family Problems

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Bunyan was very much aware of the great hardship through which he was putting his family. Members of the Bedford congregation, despite their poverty, did what they could to sustain Bunyan's wife and children. To the brothers in Christ, John Bunyan wrote, "Oh, I saw in this condition I was as a man who was pulling down his house upon the head of his wife and children; yet, thought I, I must do it, I must do it."

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it" (Matt. 16:25).

If we belong to Christ, He is our life; or is it our family, our ministry, our career, etc.?

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:1–3).

Time given us to surrender ourselves completely and obey the Lord in our hearts is about to expire. What is worth holding onto that you would have the Lord scold you at His Judgment Seat and put you with a bunch He calls **"unprofitable servants"** (Luke 17:10)? Is just being saved enough? Are you satisfied with just having a ticket to heaven in your pocket which the Lord gave you for free? Why not earn some spending money while you are still here so you'll have something to show the Lord when He calls you home?

Suddenly and totally by surprise, the Lord will call His church away. Live as though it may happen tonight.

"I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD. Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD, O ISRAEL" (Amos 4:11–12).

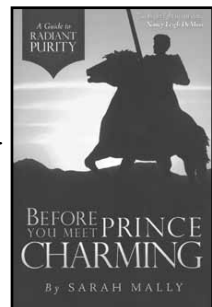
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by Sarah Mally



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