

The Translation Model Predicted by Scripture

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INTRODUCTION

The Lord Jesus Christ recognized that the Scripture attested to its own bibliology. When He was tempted by Satan He answered and said, “*It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*” (Mt. 4:4). The Lord affirmed several bibliological truths self-attested by Scripture. He affirmed that Scripture was authoritative because God was its source (“*proceedeth out of the mouth of God*”).¹ He affirmed that it was verbally and perfectly inspired because of its extent (“*every word*”). He affirmed that it was verbally and perfectly preserved because it was still extant (“*it is written*”).² Following the Lord’s example, the Bible believer must look to Scripture to develop a scriptural bibliology. The Bible as the ultimate Christian authority does self-attest to its doctrines of inspiration, of preservation, of translation practices, and of the local church responsibility. This essay is an effort to demonstrate what translation model the Scripture predicts relative to the aforementioned rubrics for bibliological self-attestation. The models³ tested are the *Textus Receptus*/King James Bible (TR/KJB [=KJV=AV]) and the Critical Text/Modern Versions (CT/MV).⁴ The Bible predicts that the best translation model will be the one that demonstrates the biblical view of perfect inspiration, perfect preservation, accurate translation, and local church responsibility.

THE SCRIPTURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR INSPIRATION

Introduction

The Bible attests to its own inspiration. Inspiration is the process whereby the Holy Spirit led the writers of scripture to record accurately His very words; the product of this process was the inspired original. The Bible is permeated with the teaching of this

¹The Lord believed the written Scripture of the Old Testament was more authoritative than His own spoken word, harmonizing His belief and practice with Psm. 138:2, “*I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.*”

²The perfect tense of *gegraptai* could be rendered “it was written and still is written.”

³“Model” includes the men and their principles relating to the respective Greek editions and resultant translations.

⁴Representatives of the CT/MV model are the ASV (American Standard Version, 1901), RSV (Revised Standard Version, 1952), BV (Berkeley Version, 1959), NWT (New World Translation, 1961), JB (Jerusalem Bible, 1966), NEB (New English Bible, 1970), LB (Living Bible, 1971), NASB (New American Standard Bible, 1971), TEV (Today’s English Version: Good News for Modern Man, 1976), NIV (New International Version, 1978), and NRSV (New Revised Standard Version, 1989).

inspiration in numerous passages. The most significant and specific passage is the *locus classicus* passage of inspiration--II Tim. 3:16.

The *Locus Classicus*—II Timothy 3:15-17

Paul gave these verses to Timothy in Ephesus so he would know the Lord's antidote for apostasy—His inspired *autographa* (cf. II Tim. 3:1-9). This classic and crucial passage is the clearest statement in the Bible declaring its own inspiration. Key to the exegesis of II Tim. 3:16 are several words and their respective syntax. The *Authorized Version (AV)* renders this verse, “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.*” The key words for proper bibliological understanding are “all” (*pasa*), “Scripture” (*graphe*), and “is given by inspiration of God” (*theopneustos*).

Pasa

Although *pasa* as an adjective is used with an anarthrous noun, it should not be translated “every [scripture].” The focus of Paul does not seem to be on the individual words of the whole in a partitive sense, but on the whole of Scripture itself. *Pasa* may be translated as “all” when it is used with technical nouns as in the case of Acts 2:36, which reads “all the house of Israel.” Some other places in the Bible where *pasa* qualifies anarthrous nouns and should be translated “all” are Mt. 3:15 (“all righteousness,” not “every righteousness”), Acts 7:22 (“all the wisdom,” not “every wisdom”), and Col. 4:12 (“all the will of God,” not “every will of God”).⁵ When *pasa* is used with an anarthrous noun that is technical, it should be translated as “all.” The expression “all Scripture” declares the inspiration of all the words of the Bible, whereas the expression “every Scripture” inspired by God suggests that some Scripture may not be inspired.⁶

Graphe

The word *graphe* is a technical noun in the Bible for “Scripture.” Sometimes the biblical writers used *graphe* to refer to the whole collection of OT books. For instance, the Apostle John challenged the Jews concerning their OT to “*search the Scriptures (graphas)*” (Jn. 5:39). Luke recorded Paul's synagogue practice of expositing “*out of the scriptures*” at Thessalonica (Acts 17:2). Paul referred to the canonical OT in Rom. 1:2, stating “*Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures (graphais hagiais)*,” and Peter assured “*that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation*” (II Pet. 1:20).⁷

The Biblical writers also used *graphe* to refer to individual portions of the Bible. Matthew recorded Christ's testimony that the verses of Psm. 118:22-23 were “*the scriptures*” (Mt. 21:42) and John revealed the Lord's citation of Psm. 41:9 as “*scripture*”

⁵Cf. also Acts 7:22; Rom. 11:26; Eph. 2:21, 3:15.

⁶The *New English Bible (NEB)* wrongly translates the verse “Every inspired scripture has its use for teaching the truth and refuting error, or for reformation of manners and discipline in right living” (II Tim. 3:16).

⁷Cf. also Rom. 15:4, 16:26; Gal 3:8.

(Jn. 13:18). Furthermore Paul cited the individual reference of Gen . 21:10 asking “*what saith the scripture*” (Gal. 4:30) and James referred to Gen. 15:6 as “*scripture*” (Jam. 2:23).⁸ The Apostle Paul called Lk. 10:7 “*scripture*” along with Dt. 25:4 in I Tim. 5:18. All of the NT references to *graphe* refer either to part or the whole of the OT and/or the NT. The Bible writers treated *graphe* as a technical word for God’s special revelation, either in part or whole.

Graphe is distinct from *gramma* (cf. “the holy scriptures [*he hagia grammata*]” in v. 15) in that the latter may refer to non-canonical literature. Although John used *grammata* to refer to Moses’ pentateuchal writings (Jn. 5:47),⁹ Luke used *gramma* to refer to a non-canonical collection bill (Lk. 16:6-7). *Graphe* always refers to the autographical scripture whereas *gramma* sometimes refers to non-canonical literature. This distinction between these words might help one to recognize that Paul probably referred to the temple writings or scriptures (*apographa*) in v. 15 and the original *autographa* in v. 16.

Theopneustos

The word *theopneustos* is translated with 6 words in the *KJB*, including the verb: “*is given by inspiration of God.*” Since *theopneustos* is a verbal adjective (cf. *pneustos* compound) and has a passive sense, grammatically it may be translated as the *KJB* rendering “*is given by inspiration of God.*”¹⁰

Deciding where to place the “is” affects the meaning of the verse. If *theopneustos* is translated as an attributive adjective,¹¹ then the “is” would come after *theopneustos* and be rendered “every God inspired scripture is profitable,” suggesting that some scripture might not be inspired. If *theopneustos* is translated as a predicate adjective then the “is” would be placed before *theopneustos* and rendered “all scripture is God inspired and is profitable.” Since *graphe* is a technical term and therefore treated as a definite noun, the Greek construction adjective (*pas*) + noun (*graphe*) + adjective (*theopneustos*) must be understood as predicate, placing the “is” prior to the second adjective. Paul’s technical expression of inspiration demands a technical translation and application of *theopneustos*. All the original autographs (from Genesis to Revelation) were inspired, but **only** the original autographs were inspired. “Inspired” may not be applied to the original writers, the non-canonical words of Christ or the apostles, to any Hebrew or Greek manuscripts, or to any Bible translations. The *KJB* rendering of this verse is both accurate and specific. The Bible self-attests to verbal, plenary (full) inspiration of the *autographa*.

Other Passages on Inspiration

Numerous other passages in the Bible self-attest to the inspiration of Scripture. For instance, Peter declared “*For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man:*

⁸Vide Jn. 7:38; Acts 1:16, 8:32, 35; Rom. 4:3, 9:17.

⁹Cf. also Lk. 23:38; Acts 26:24; Rom. 2:27; Gal. 6:11.

¹⁰Literally “is God breathed.”

¹¹An attributive adjective modifies the noun with which it is associated, whereas a predicate adjective asserts something about its noun.

but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” II Pet. 1:21). The Holy Ghost came upon holy but fallible men so that they were divinely moved (*pheromenoi*)¹² in the process of inspiration to produce the product of inspiration, namely the *autographa*. This verse teaches that the Holy Spirit led His human instruments to produce the perfect originals. Paul acknowledged that the words he wrote were the Holy Spirit’s words, stating “*Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual*” (I Cor. 2:13). Peter confirmed Paul’s evaluation, stating “*As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction*” (II Pet. 3:16).

Christ and the Biblical writers believed the very words of Scripture would be fulfilled precisely. The Lord Jesus Christ said “*Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle*¹³ *shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled*” (Mt. 5:18). He believed the continuity of inspiration of the OT connected to that of the NT stating, “*Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are Gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken*” (Jn. 10:35). The Apostle Paul believed the very words he spoke and ultimately inscripturated were the words of the Holy Ghost: “*Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual*” (I Cor. 2:13). Paul believed that nouns were inspired, stating “*Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.*” (Gal. 3:16). Christ believed that verbs were inspired, carefully choosing the verb “am” (*[ego] eimi*) in contrast to “was” in defending the doctrine of the resurrection against the Sadducees. He said, “*I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*” (Mt. 22:32; cf. Ex. 3:6).

The Lord God commanded the Biblical writers to write the words of the Lord. The Lord commanded Moses to write, saying “*Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven*” (Ex. 17:14; cf. also Jer. 30:2). He commanded Habakkuk, saying “*write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it*” (Hab. 2:2). He instructed the Apostle John to write his visions and send the book to the seven churches in Asia (Rev. 1:11)¹⁴ and once not to write (Rev. 10:4).

The Biblical writers quoted other Scriptures. The Lord Jesus Christ cited Ex. 20:12 in Mt. 15:4 and Paul said that the Holy Spirit spoke through Isaiah citing Isa. 6:9-10 (Acts 28:26-27). Daniel claimed that the word of the Lord came to his contemporary Jeremiah who predicted the seventy year exile (Dan. 9:2; cf. Jer. 25:12). Paul held Luke’s written word (Lk. 10:7) on the same level as Moses’ Scripture (Dt. 25:4), stating

¹²The verbal root of this present passive participle is *phero* and Luke used this same root to demonstrate the influence of the wind on the ship upon which Paul was imprisoned (“*And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive [epherometha]*”) in Acts 27:15.

¹³The jot is the *yod* or smallest consonant of the Hebrew language and the *tittle* (literally “horn”) is the overhang on some Hebrew letters.

¹⁴Cf. Rev. 1:19; 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7; 3:14; 14:13; 19:9; 21:5.

“For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward” (I Tim. 5:18).

The Biblical writers believed the precise predictions of the Scripture as “thus saith the Lord” and interpreted them literally. Matthew understood that the precise fulfillment of the virgin birth promise the Lord gave the house of David was in Jesus of Nazareth (Mt. 1:23; cf. Isa. 7:10-14). Peter believed that the prophecy found in Psm. 109:8 was fulfilled by Judas (Acts 1:20).¹⁵

The severe warnings in Scripture about tampering with the written word demand the view that the Lord did not want any of His inspired words changed. John’s colophon predicted a terrible destiny for anyone tampering with the text, stating *“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book”* (Rev. 22:18-19).¹⁶

The Model Example

The Lord revealed the model example of the process of inspiration in Jer. 36:1-32. In 605 BC, the year that Nebuchanezzar became ruler of Babylon, won the battle at Carchemesh, and deported Daniel, the Lord God spoke to Jeremiah. The Lord commanded Jeremiah to record his previous sermons (essentially chapters 1-35) in a book. The prophet obeyed and verse 4 records the inspiration process, stating *“Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah: and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book.”* The scribe Baruch inscripturated each word accurately from the mouth of Jeremiah who received each word from the Lord accurately.¹⁷ God used fallible human instrumentality to record accurately all of Jeremiah’s preached words up to that juncture. Later when Jehoiakim cut up and burned the scroll of Baruch (v. 23), the Lord instructed Jeremiah to write again the same words (vv. 27-28). Jeremiah gave the same words to Baruch who wrote them again and added the account of chapter 36 (v. 32) to the previous writing. The Lord inspired and preserved His very words.

Corollaries to Inspiration

Both infallibility and inerrancy are corollaries to the doctrine of inspiration. Infallibility refers to the belief that God was incapable in producing erroneous Scriptures. Inerrancy means that, in fact, the *autographa* does not contain any errors.¹⁸ The

¹⁵Cf. Psm. 69:25.

¹⁶Cf. Dt. 4:2, 12:32.

¹⁷There is absolutely no warrant to suppose that Baruch edited Jeremiah’s words, because the prophet received his words directly from the Lord..

¹⁸This definition includes the rejection of errors in grammar, history, morals, science, and prophecies, etc.

aforementioned Scriptures teach the trustworthiness of God, the accuracy of Christ, and the divine influence on the very words of prophets and apostles. If the *autographa* is God-breathed as II Tim. 3:16 teaches, then it is infallible and inerrant. Although some passages may have apparent discrepancies suggesting textual errors (I Sam. 13:1), historical errors (II Chron. 22:2), scientific errors (II Chron. 4:2), moral errors (Judges 11:29 ff.), or errors in prophecy (Isa. 7:14), there are satisfactory solutions to many. In the others, the believer must give the Lord the benefit of the doubt. Apparent errors and seeming inconsistencies are man's problems and not the Lord's.

The Models Tested

The OT and NT Scriptures self-attest to verbal plenary inspiration. The corollaries of the infallibility (the divine author is incapable of error) and of the inerrancy (the Scriptures are in fact without error) of the *autographa* harmonize consistently with the teaching of the God-breathed originals. The TR/KJV model reflects the Biblical doctrines of inspiration, infallibility and inerrancy because the translators gave tacit affirmation to these doctrines, the underlying Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts declare these doctrines for the original language texts, and the words and phrases of the KJV teach inspiration, infallibility and inerrancy. The TR/KJV model fits the model predicted in Scripture.

The CT/MV model includes conservative/liberal translations and paraphrases.¹⁹ The conservative translations (ASV, NASV, and NIV) reflect the Biblical doctrines of inspiration, infallibility and inerrancy²⁰ inasmuch as the translators tacitly affirm belief in these doctrines and the translations themselves have the wording and phraseology to fit this model. On the other hand, the liberal translations (BV, NWT, JB, RSV, NEB, and NRSV) utilized scholars with questionable orthodoxy, and their respective translations reflect this cacodoxy with suspect phraseology. The CT/MV model does not fit the model predicted in Scripture.

THE SCRIPTURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PRESERVATION

Introduction

The Bible self-attests not only to perfect inspiration, infallibility and inerrancy but also to perfect preservation. The Scriptures teach both implicitly and explicitly the doctrine of verbal, plenary preservation as a fundamental truth.²¹ For instance, the Lord promised the preservation of His Word for a thousand generations, stating, "*He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations*" (Psm. 105:8). The following are some of the numerous passages, which

¹⁹Paraphrases such as the TEV, LB, and the Black Chronicles Bible (the Hip-Hop Bible) are really contemporary commentaries and will not be considered in this study.

²⁰Great concern is registered for those scholars of the CT/MV persuasion who favor an errant variant in manuscripts such as *aleph* or B instead of an inerrant reading of the original writer (cf. Mt. 1:7-8 and Mk. 1:2-3 in CT).

²¹Men, movements and churches, which are bereft of the fundamental doctrine of perfect preservation, can hardly be called "fundamentalist."

teach either directly or indirectly the doctrine of perfect preservation of Scripture, and the corollary truths of the necessity of receiving God's preserved Words and rejecting false readings.

The *Locus Classicus* Passages

Passages from both the OT and NT teach the nature and means of the preservation of Scripture. The *locus classicus* passages include Psm. 12:6-7, 119:111, 152, 160; Isa. 40:8; Mt. 5:17-18, and 24:35.²²

*Psm. 12:6-7*²³

The Psalmist bemoaned the impact of the ever-prevalent words of evil men. Of the seventy nine Hebrew words in this Psalm, thirteen relate to the words of the wicked. The ungodly speak vanity (*shawe'* v. 2) and proud things (*medabereth gedoloth* v. 3) with their flattering lips (*sephath chalaqoth* v. 2) and double heart (*belev walev* v. 2) to puff (*yaphiach* v. 5) at the righteous. In sharp contrast, the Psalmist rejoiced in the purity and presence of the Words of the Lord (*'imeroth yehowah*). He likened God's pure Words (*'amaroth tehoroth*) to precious silver which is purified through the seven-fold process of refining. The Psalmist declared that not only were God's Words pure but also that they were preserved from that generation forever (*le'olam*). He stated "*thou shalt keep them*" (*tishemerem*), referring back to the closest antecedent which is "*words*" (*'imeroth*) of the Lord. Even though "*words*" is f.p. and the pronominal suffix on the verb "*thou shalt keep them*" is m.p., this gender discordance is not uncommon, especially with reference to the writer's apparent effort to "*masculinize*" this extension of the patriarchal God—His Words (cf. Psm. 119:111, 129, 152, and 167 for the emphasis of this gender discordance). God's perfectly preserved Words are the only antidote to man's evil words.²⁴

Psm. 119:111

The Psalmist rejoiced in the testimonies²⁵ of the Lord and he took them as his everlasting heritage. Clearly the Psalmist declared the preservation of the Lord's testimonies (*'edeothecha* literally "*thy testimonies*") forever (*le'olam*) since they (*hemmah*) were a joyous presence to him as well as future generations. Again the man of God referred to the f.p. noun ("*testimonies*") with the m.p. pronoun ("*them*") to masculinize this extension of God (cf. Psm. 12:6-7).

²²Cf. also Psm. 78:1-8; 105:8; 119:89; Mt. 4:4; Jn. 10:35; and I Pet. 1:23-25.

²³In the Hebrew Masoretic text the verses are 7 and 8 because the title is counted as verse one.

²⁴Jeremiah's last message to Judah was the challenge that they "*shall know whose words shall stand, mine, or their's*" (Jer. 44:28). This represents the perennial question of the ultimate authority, man's words or God's.

²⁵The Psalmist used 10 different words as synonyms for the Word of God, including law, testimonies, ways, precepts, statutes, commandments, judgments, word, path, and word (utterance).

Psa. 119:152

The Psalmist had knowledge that God's testimonies were founded (*yesadetam*)²⁶ for preservation forever. The plural use of testimonies indicates that the very words and not merely concepts of God would be preserved. Again the Lord refers to the f.p. testimonies with m.p. pronominal suffix on the verb to stress the importance of this grammatical anomaly for theological purposes.

Psm. 119:160

The same Psalmist connected the Lord's true (*'emeth*)²⁷ Word and every one of His righteous judgments (*mishepat*) with forever (*le`olam*). The Lord declared through the Psalmist that all of His words of truth and every one of His judgments would be preserved forever. One must conclude that the theological expression for these aforementioned promises is the perfect, verbal, plenary preservation of the *autographa*.

Isaiah 40:8

Isaiah contrasted the frailty of man with the permanence of God's Word when uttered "*the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever*" (40:8; cf. v. 7).²⁸ Surely Isaiah alluded to the very words which he preached and ultimately inscripturated in his book. Isaiah could write (8:1), was commanded to write (30:8), and did write (34:16). Isaiah taught the perfect, verbal, plenary permanence of Scripture.

Matthew 5:17-18

The Lord Jesus Christ had just announced that He came not to destroy but to fulfill the law (v. 17). His fulfillment of the law would be so precise, He promised, that He would not just fulfill the thought of the law and the prophets (OT Scripture), but the very Words of the law, down to each letter or "*jot*" (*iota*; e.g., the smallest Hebrew letter) and to the distinguishing marks on the consonants or the "*tittle*" (*keraiia*; e.g., "horns") of the law.²⁹ The smallest marks of the very letters or the very words of the very sentences of the very prophecies would be fulfilled, the Lord promised. Taken at face value, His promise was that He would fulfill the very Words of prophecy and not just general truths about prophecy, for how would one know if He had indeed fulfilled Scripture, if the very words of prophecy were not fulfilled?³⁰

²⁶The root of this 2ms verb is *yasad* meaning "to found, establish, fix."

²⁷Truth can only be conveyed through words and not through concepts.

²⁸Peter used Isa. 40:8 to affirm the perfect, verbal, plenary preservation of his words in sermons inscripturated in his epistles (I Pet. 1:23-25).

²⁹The Lord used the double negative *ou me* for the emphatic negation of any loss of words.

³⁰There is no warrant for assuming this promise applies only to the precise fulfillment of prophecy and not to the perfect preservation of all of the Scripture.

Matthew 24:35

The Lord Jesus Christ made the literal³¹ promise about the permanency of His words, stating “*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*” He used the same root verb “shall pass away, perish, vanish” (*pareleusontai*) for the subjects “generation,” “heaven and earth,” and “words.” He specifically stated His Words (*logoi*), not merely His thoughts (cf. *noema* in II Cor. 10:5 or *logismon* in Rom. 2:15), would be preserved indefinitely. The words to which He was referring must be His canonical words since they will be the basis for judging mankind. After all, the Lord said “*He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day*” (Jn. 12:48). His preserved Words are the standard for Christian living in every generation and will be the basis for His righteous judgment in the future. All of the Lord’s spoken words³² cannot be in view here since not all of His words have been preserved and consequently His non-canonical words (*agrapha*) have no Biblical authority. There is one example of the Lord’s supposed *agrapha* and God had it inscripturated in Acts 20:35, consequently making “*it is more blessed to give than to receive*” Biblically authoritative.

The Received Bible

Since the Bible teaches that God has preserved His OT and NT Scriptures both verbally and plenary, mankind has had the basic responsibility to receive God’s permanent revelation. Beginning with God’s oral revelation to Adam (Gen. 2:16 ff.) and ending with the inscripturation of Christ’s Words (Heb. 1:1-2), man has had some or all of the Lord’s progressive revelation up until and after the close of the Canon of Scripture. Man has been at the mercy of a gracious God, trusting that He will reveal all truth man needs for time and eternity. When God reveals His truth, man should receive this truth, and apply it accordingly. The Lord Jesus Christ taught and expected that man receive His revelatory truth. Indeed, the first generation Christians, fulfilling their responsibility, received the oral revelation (apostolic preaching and teaching) as well as the inscripturated Words of the NT Scripture.

The Teaching of Christ

In the Lord’s Prayer (Jn. 17:1-26), the Lord revealed that God the Father gave words (*remata*) to God the Son. Presumably these Words would be the “all scripture” of II Tim. 3:16. Certainly the process to which the Lord Jesus Christ alluded was the process of inspiration, wherein the Father breathed out His Words to the Son, who in turn breathed out these inerrant and authoritative Words to His Biblical writers. The Lord’s Biblical writers, in turn, received the Words and inscripturated them in the Canonical

³¹Nothing in this verse is allegorical or hyperbolic since Scripture promised that heaven and earth will pass away (cf. II Pet. 3:10-13) and that God’s Words will be preserved (cf. Psm. 12:6-7).

³²Although not all of the Lord Jesus Christ’s deeds and presumably words were recorded (Jn. 21:25), man is only responsible for the Lord’s canonical words found in the OT and NT Scripture.

writings which were passed on to future generations which would believe on the Savior through their writings (cf. v. 20).

This passage teaches several important bibliological truths. First, the Lord inspired (v. 8) and preserved (v. 20) His Words. Second, man's responsibility was to receive God's inspired and preserved Words. Christ stated that believers "have received them." The word "received" translates *elabon* which is a 3rd person, plural, 2nd Aorist, indicative, active verb from *labano* and it means "to take" or "to receive." The Lord has required and believers have expected to receive God's preserved Words. The received text mindset did not originate with Erasmus, but with God, Who does not allow the continuity of the preservation of His Words to be broken! The fact that believers in the first century, in the 17th century, and in the 21st century have had a received text mindset,³³ demands that this mindset is built upon Scriptural teaching, not historical necessity.

The Practice in the Churches

Jews who rejected Jesus as their Messiah heard the preaching of Peter about repentance and remission of sins, and received (*apodexameno*) his authoritative words (Acts 2:41). They did not try to change or ignore Peter's preaching, but simply and gladly realized their responsibility before God and received the truth. Peter realized that the first response for these sinners was to receive the divine revelation that they were sinners who needed the Savior. Christians begin the Christian life with the *received text* mindset, and must maintain this mindset their entire lives.

Philip preached the word of God in Samaria and Samaritans were saved. The apostles at Jerusalem sent Peter and John to help the church when they heard that Samaritans "*had received the word of God*" (Acts 8:14). The church in Samaria was established because Samaritans, or half-Jews, had received (*dedektai*) the Word of God preached by a Jew. Again, sinners, in this case, Samaritans, realized their responsibility before God to receive His salvic revelation.

The Scripture states "*that the Gentiles had also received the word of God*" (Acts 11:1). They realized their responsibility before God was to receive His revelation, just as the Jews and Samaritans did. Likewise, the Bereans received the word of God and searched the Scriptures daily. Furthermore, the Thessalonians "*received the word of God...as it is in truth, the word of God*" (I Thess. 2:13).

The teaching of the Bible is clear that man has the responsibility to receive God's revelation. The Lord has revealed Himself through the media of oral and written communication. The Bible teaches that ancient man received the oral preaching and teaching of the prophets and apostles. Furthermore, the Bible teaches that man received the written inscripturation of the revelation of God in the form of the Old and New Testaments. The Bible teaches that the Lord condemns those who reject His revelation and blesses those who receive His revelation. Modern man must receive what God has preserved—the verbal, plenary, written revelation of God.

³³ Believers in 1633 confirmed their belief in receiving the providentially preserved Scripture by naming the common Greek text the *textum...nunc ab omnibus receptum* ("the text now received by all").

The Presence of Some False Readings

The early Christians knew from principle and fact that false readings would circulate in their midst. The OT predicted the occurrence of supposed revelation within the sovereign plan of God. Moses warned the Jews about false prophets who would prophesy and confirm their prophecy with signs and wonders, stating “*If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee...*” (Dt. 13:1-2). These false “revelations” would contradict the Lord’s previous revelation and would prove if the Jews would hearken unto the false prophets or God. The Lord in His sovereign plan allowed false “revelation” to prove His people, “*to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul...and keep his commandments, and obey his voice...*” (vv. 3-4). Rooting out revelation which contradicted the Lord’s previously given revelation, was an exercise in spiritual discernment.

Likewise, NT Christians recognized the fact of false readings that were foisted upon NT Scripture. Peter warned that the text of Pauline literature had been tampered with in the same way as other NT Scripture had by pernicious heretics, stating “*Paul...as also in all his epistles...which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction*” (II Pet. 3:15-16). Since the first century local churches were the initial divine guardians of the NT canon and text (Mt. 28:19-20; I Tim. 3:16), they had the responsibility to compare false readings with the *autographa* and reject heretical tampering (I Thess. 5:21). Furthermore, the early churches had the responsibility to recognize pseudo-canonical literature and reject it, as Paul warned the Thessalonians: “*That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand*” (II Thess. 2:2). The Lord requires believers to discern between the true and false canon and text of Scripture.³⁴

The Models Tested

The OT and NT Scriptures attest to the promise of verbal, plenary preservation of the Lord’s words. The Lord Jesus Christ not only promised to preserve His Words but also expected His churches to receive and guard His inscripturated Words. Furthermore, He has allowed attacks upon His Words through pseudo-canonical and textual assaults by heretics.

The TR/KJV model very clearly holds to the promises of verbal, plenary preservation and the responsibility to receive God’s Words. The KJV is built upon the Received Text (*textus receptus*) and has been called “the received Bible.” Biblically and historically the TR/KJV model has acknowledged and rejected false canonical and textual tampering. This model has rejected the apocryphal efforts of Romanism and the text critical efforts of liberalism. The TR/KJV model fits the model predicted in Scripture at these points.

³⁴The Lord said “*My sheep hear my voice...*” (Jn. 10:27).

Contrariwise, the CT/MV model rejects the doctrine³⁵ of verbal, plenary preservation and subsequent reception, and instead promulgates the denial of Biblically-stated preservation and the necessity of restoration. Furthermore, this model rejects the Biblical teaching that canonical and textual tampering has occurred and advocates that all manuscripts³⁶ and all textual variants are part of divine preservation with no Biblical discernment necessary. This model argues in favor of the imperfect preservation of the text because of the obvious differences in variants which must be sorted out through textual criticism to restore what God never preserved perfectly. The CT/MV model does not fit the model predicted in Scripture at these points.

THE SCRIPTURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR TRANSLATION PRACTICES

Introduction

Since there are over three thousand languages and dialects in the world today, Christians have attempted to translate part or all of God’s Word in many of these languages. The Lord God confounded the languages at the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1-11) and necessitated the translation of His Word by believers into various languages, using certain translational techniques or practices.

The Necessity of Translations

The Great Commission requires the translation of the Scriptures into various languages. The Lord commissioned local, NT immersionist assemblies to “*teach all nations (matheteusate panta ta ethne)...teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*” (Mt. 28:19-20). The only way for this to have been accomplished was for the first local churches to translate the Scripture into the languages of the nations reached with the gospel. The Apostle Paul maintained the necessity for translations by stating that the NT revelatory mysteries as well as the OT Scriptures be “*made known to all nations for the obedience of faith*” (Rom. 16:25-26). The Scripture self-attests to the necessity of the translation of the Word of God.

The Translation Practices

The Bible self-attests to the practices required for translation work. Believers who took their responsibilities seriously no doubt carried out these practices. These responsibilities included a full Scriptural approach to bibliology and the recognition that God’s *autographa* were distinct from man’s writing.

Bibliological Practices

³⁵Although some may say preservation has not reached “the level of doctrine,” one wonders how many times the Scriptures must state a truth before it becomes doctrine.

³⁶The popular “totality of manuscripts” view is repudiated by the aforementioned Scriptures.

The Christians of the first century recognized the necessity of translation work and applied their bibliology to the practice of translating. For instance, they knew that the apostles wrote Scripture which was inspired by God (II Tim. 3:16; II Pet. 3:16), that the very words were inspired and preserved (I Cor. 2:10-14, but especially v. 13), and were inerrant (Psm. 12:6-7; Jn. 10:35). The Apostle John concluded his Apocalypse with the warning in his colophon stating: “*For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book*” (Rev. 22:18-19). This caveat was not just for those copying the *autographa* but also for those handling God’s Word in any way, including translating it.

Earlier believers passed on the practice of the careful handling of God’s Words to them. For instance, Ezra and thirteen others helped the Jews understand the law of Moses (Neh. 8:1-8). Whether the Scripture was translated from Hebrew to Aramaic or not, the preachers demonstrated the careful conveyance of God’s Words to the people. “*They read [aloud] in the book in the law of God distinctly (meporash),³⁷ and gave the sense (secel)³⁸ and caused them to understand (wayyaviynu)³⁹ the reading*” (v. 8). Ezra gave the audience the literal, word for word, static equivalency of God’s Word. The people understood what the Lord had said to the original audience about the feast of Tabernacles (cf. Lev. 23:34-44).⁴⁰

The Bible is Distinct Literature

The early Christians in the NT churches recognized that the Bible was distinct from man’s writings. Paul asseverated this point, stating to the Thessalonians, “*For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe*” (I Thess. 2:13). The Thessalonians obviously had a high view of the *autographa* and were careful not to treat it as any other piece of literature. Paul’s two epistles to them were the Word of God, and to be handled accordingly, the Thessalonians realized (cf. again II Thess. 2:2).

The Models Tested

The Scriptures attest to the necessity of Bible translations and the proper translational practice for these translations. Gentiles around the world have the need to know what God has said through His written word. The Scripture self-attests to the proper bibliological truths translators must hold and implement, including the belief in verbal, plenary inspiration, preservation and perfect inerrancy. They must translate with

³⁷This *Pual* participle comes from *parash* meaning to separate or make distinct or give the exact sum [of silver] (cf. Est. 4:7).

³⁸This noun means good insight or understanding (cf. Prov. 3:4).

³⁹This Qal imperfect verb comes from *bin* and means to perceive or distinguish.

⁴⁰Ezra did not give his audience a contemporary, cultural, dynamic equivalency for God’s Word.

an effort to reveal distinctly, accurately, and verbally what the Lord said to the original audiences. Furthermore, translators must believe and handle Scripture as distinct from man's literature.

The TR/KJV model obviously believes in the necessity of translations since it is one. Furthermore, this model practiced the self-attested bibliological truths of Scripture holding to inspiration, preservation and inerrancy while giving an accurate, word for word, static translation, and recognizing that the Bible is distinct from human literature. The TR/KJV model fits the model predicted in Scripture.

However, the CT/MV model rejects the bibliological truths of preservation and inerrancy, producing a contemporary, culturally satisfying, dynamic equivalent translation,⁴¹ based on textual/translational techniques used on the secular literature of man's writings. The CT/MV model does not fit the model of translation predicted in Scripture.

THE SCRIPTURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR LOCAL CHURCH RESPONSIBILITY

Introduction

The Scripture self-attests to the agency responsible for handling the Bible. In the OT the agency was the Jewish Nation (Rom. 3:1-2)⁴² and in the NT the local immersionist assemblies. These churches recognized and received the true revelation and rejected the tampered "revelation." The local churches had the responsibility to make the Scriptures generally accessible to every generation and believers would universally recognize these local church-preserved Scriptures as the Words of God.

The Agency of the Local Church

Most of Christendom has acknowledged that the Great Commission (Mt. 28:19-20)⁴³ is for church age saints. Although definitions for church vary, this passage is the mandate for Christianity. An exegetical examination of this passage will reveal the nature and responsibility of churches.

Grammatically, and therefore contextually and Biblically, the Great Commission should be understood around three major parts of speech. The main verbal of Mt. 28:19-20 is the aorist imperative "teach" (*matheteusate*) which could be rendered "make disciples" of all nations. The Lord addressed the eleven disciples (*mathetai*)⁴⁴ and instructed them to make disciples as He had disciplined them. Associated with this main

⁴¹Although the NASV is not a dynamic equivalent translation, it fails the Biblical model regarding its shortcomings relative to "thees and thous" and other translational infelicities.

⁴²Cf. Acts 7:38; Heb. 5:12; I Pet. 4:11.

⁴³Other passages that embrace the teaching of the Great Commission include Mk. 16:15; Lk. 24:47; Jn. 22:21; Acts 1:8.

⁴⁴Although the eleven are the eleven apostles, they are addressed as disciples representative for all disciples who hear and obey (cf. Mt. 12:46-50; 27:57).

verbal are the three participles “go” (*poreuthentes*), “baptizing” (*baptizontes*),⁴⁵ and “teaching” (*didaskontes*). The first participle functions as a circumstantial participle that is dependent upon the imperative and maintains an imperatival thrust of “go.” The remaining two present participles (baptizing, teaching) trailing the imperative are participles of manner, describing more of the character of disciples rather than the means of discipleship. The third significant part of speech is the present infinitive *terein* meaning to observe, keep or guard.

The exegetical interpretation of the Great Commission declares that the apostles, representing disciples, were to go to the nations and make disciples of all mankind, Jew and Gentile, and immerse them with reference to the Trinitarian formula for baptism, and instruct them regularly to guard all that the Lord Jesus Christ had commanded. In other words, the Lord commanded his assembly of immersed disciples (Mt. 3:5-11) to establish NT immersionist assemblies instructed in guarding His Words (OT and NT). He promised to be with this movement of immersionist assemblies “*always, even unto the end of the world*” (*pasas tas hemeras eos tes suntelieias tou aionos*, literally “all the days until the completion of the age”).

The apostles and early disciples corroborated this exegetical interpretation in the book of Acts.⁴⁶ On the day of Pentecost, Peter and the others discipled Jews by preaching the necessity of faith in Jesus of Nazareth the Christ, baptizing and instructing their converts (2:41 ff.). The Samaritans were made disciples, baptized and instructed regularly (8:12). Cornelius and his household were discipled, baptized and instructed (10: 45-48). During Paul’s first missionary journey he discipled, baptized and organized churches (14:23). The Philippians (16:32-34), Thessalonians (17:2-4) and Corinthians (18:8) were organized into local churches as Paul carried out the Great Commission. By the end of the first century the Lord addressed seven churches (Rev. 2-3) which were still carrying out the Great Commission (because He was still in their midst [Rev. 1:13, 20]). In fact the church in Philadelphia was commended because they “kept (*eteresas*) the word” of the Lord (3:10).

In harmony with this interpretation, the Scripture states that God’s agency for preserving His truth is “*the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth*” (I Tim. 3:15). Contextually, this agency is the one that has bishops and deacons (vv. 1-13). The Scriptures do not countenance either a visible or invisible catholic (universal) church⁴⁷ notion involved in preserving truth. Instead, the Lord’s local, visible, NT churches have been inextricably linked with His truth.⁴⁸

⁴⁵The root verb *baptizo* means “to immerse, dip, plunge, dunk, put under” and is distinct from the words *rantizo* (“sprinkle”) and *cheo* (“pour”). Scripture teaches the meaning (identification of believer with Christ [Mt. 3:6-8; Rom. 6:3-5]) and the mode (immersion [Mt. 3:16; Col. 2:12]), which mode secular literature and the Protestant reformers corroborated. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself, not Baptists, is the “sectarian” Who requires believers’ immersion only.

⁴⁶The CT/MV model attempts to teach the doctrine of the territorial (visible, catholic) church by favoring variants in Acts 2:47, 8:37 and 9:31.

⁴⁷Neither all Christendom nor the Roman Catholic Church, nor Protestantism have the responsibility, privilege, or spiritual and theological wherewithal to be involved with the preservation of the Lord’s truth.

⁴⁸Based on Scriptural inference, all legitimate manuscript readings and translations have been influenced by local NT churches.

General Accessibility

Local immersionist churches were given the divine responsibility to guard God's Word.⁴⁹ His plan was and still is to preserve His Words through His churches. As the local churches evangelized the world they made copies and produced translations. Since the local NT church is God's only Scriptural place of presence, service, and power, and since He gave the responsibility to guard His Word to local churches with whom He promised His permanent presence, it stands that the Lord's churches have indeed preserved His Words every day of the church age. Thus, Scripture attests to the general accessibility of the Words of God for every generation through the agency of the local church. The Lord promised mankind that His canonical word would be accessible to all generations since it will eventually judge all generations, saying "*He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day*" (Jn. 12:48). Historical evidence, which does not reveal all facts and therefore cannot either affirm or deny the Biblical prediction of general accessibility, should not pre-empt the promises of Biblical revelation. The OT and NT texts have been preserved perfectly and manifested in vernacular translations for every generation for the last 2,000 years.⁵⁰

Universal Recognition

The first century churches recognized and received the apostles' writings that eventually became the NT canon. They believed the apostolic *autographa* were divine Words to them which they had the responsibility to receive, preserve and distribute (cf. Col. 4:16; II Pet. 3:16; II Jn. 1:12, II Jn. 1:9-14; Rev. 2:1, 7 *et al*). The churches were filled with immersed believers who had the indwelling Holy Spirit who would guide them into all truth (Jn. 14:26; 15:26; 16:13; I Jn. 2:20, 27). These same believers had the spiritual capacity to hear their Savior's voice and confirm His written Words with His spoken Words (Jn. 10:29). The Lord has guaranteed the universal recognition of His canonical Words through the agency of Spirit-indwelt believers in local assemblies who in turn have received, preserved and distributed His Words to this very day.

The Models Tested

The Scriptures attest that the Lord's plan for the preservation of His Words is through divinely given institutions, namely Judaism for the OT and the local church for the OT and NT Scriptures. The local, immersionist assembly has had the responsibility throughout the church age to guard the Lord's Words for His disciples. Because of the faithfulness of earlier local churches God's Words have been preserved and translated.

⁴⁹That the Lord Jesus Christ utilizes fallible mankind in the processes of His infallible Word is irrefutable. The Lord instructed Daniel to keep his writing (i.e. the Book of Daniel) until the end, but then the Lord asserted that Daniel's Book would be divinely kept until the end (Dan. 12:4, 9).

⁵⁰Although many manuscripts and early translations were destroyed during the second and third centuries of Christianity, the Lord nevertheless preserved His word in spite of man's neglect, ignorance or persecution.

His institution of the local church has guaranteed that not only the general accessibility of all of Scripture but also the universal reception of the Word of God

The TR/KJV model acknowledges what has been received by and preserved in local churches. Consequently, this model recognizes that Scripture has been accessible to every generation. Furthermore, the TR/KJV model obviously maintains the Scriptural teaching of the universal reception of the Word of God since it is called “the text received by all.” The TR/KJV model fits the model predicted in Scripture.

The CT/MV model rejects the truth that the responsibility for maintaining God’s Word is for the local church only. This model purports that this responsibility is for scholars within some universal church notion irrespective of their individual or collective relationships to local immersionist assemblies. This model rejects the general accessibility of Scripture for every generation and denies the universal recognition of Divine Scripture since scholars disagree over the variants. The CT/MV model does not fit the model predicted in Scripture.

Conclusion

The Lord Jesus Christ predicted through the Scriptures what translation model He expected His disciples, in any generation and language, to embrace. The Scriptures demand that this model be based on relative bibliological truths such as the doctrines of inspiration, preservation, translation practices, and local church responsibility. These four doctrines embrace a total of seven Scriptural sub-points, giving a total of eleven significant truths with which to measure translation models.

The Scriptures self-attest to verbal, plenary inspiration and perfect inerrancy, to verbal, plenary preservation, the received Bible, and recognition of false readings, to the necessity of translations which would be accurate and treated differently from all other literature, and to the local church’s responsibility in handling the Scripture, maintaining the general accessibility of such to mankind in every generation and the universal recognition of Scripture. The TR/KJV model fits all eleven Scriptural predictions for the Lord’s approved model. The CT/MV does not fit unambiguously nine of the eleven Scriptural predictions for His model. The two truths the CT/MV model does fit are the predictions for inspiration and the necessity of translations. For a graphic summarization of the respective fitness of the TR/KJV and CT/MV models with the Scriptural predictions, see the attached chart.

The tragic failure of the CT/MV model is its man-centered approach to bibliology. It is permeated with the promotion of human rationalism, the priority of historical evidence, a cavalier attitude towards translation practices and the erroneous agency for handling of the truth. Because this model rejects Scriptural teaching in its theological perspective, it fails to represent the truth in practice. Since it refuses the Lord’s teaching on perfect preservation and the agency of the local church, it is unfaithful to God and cannot be trusted. Consequently, believers should reject the translation model that rejects the Lord’s truth.

The Lord has predicted the translation model He wanted His people to embrace. The irrefragable conclusion is that the TR/KJB model fits the predicted Scriptural model and the CT/MV does not. If the TR/KJB model does not give God’s people God’s Words, then Christians do not have the Lord’s Words and have no prospect of ever

having them. However, Peter affirmed with encouraging and edifying words, saying “*But the word of the Lord endureth for ever*” (I Pet. 1:25).

CHART Translation Model Predicted in Scripture

SCRIPTURAL REQUIREMENTS	TR/KJV	CT/MV
I. Inspiration (verbal, plenary) (II Tim. 3:16-17)	Yes	Yes [?]
Inerrancy (Psm. 12:6-7)	Yes	Yes [?]
II. Preservation (verbal, plenary) (Mt. 24:35)	Yes	No [Concepts Only]
Received Bible (Jn. 17:8)	Yes	No [Restored Bible]
Presence of False Readings (Dt. 13:1-5)	Yes	No [Total of MSS]
III. Translations (Rom. 16:25)	Yes	Yes [Paraphrase]
Accurate (Neh. 8:8)	Yes	No [Dynamic Equiv.]
Different from secular literature (I Thess. 2:13)	Yes	No [Same]
IV. Local Church Responsibility (Mt. 28:19-20)	Yes	No [Univ. Church]
General Accessibility (Jn. 12:48)	Yes	No [Limited]
Universal Recognition (Jn. 10:27)	Yes	No [Scholars Disagree]