

Problems with the New King James Version

Many Church of God people are aware of some of the problems with the New International Version (NIV). It is not a literal translation; it leans heavily on corrupt New Testament texts (Vaticanus, Sinaiticus); it introduces a number of heretical teachings (e.g., **Mark 7:19**, where the NIV adds, “In saying this, Jesus declared all foods ‘clean’.”); the NIV leaves out inspired verses (e.g., it leaves out the portion of **Acts 18:21** which says, “I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem”).

However, many believe that the *New King James Version* just updates some of the archaic language of the old KJV, such as getting rid of the “thee’s” and “thou’s.” Such naiveté is dangerous. The revisers of the KJV had to make more than merely a few updates to the 1611 English. Otherwise, Thomas Nelson Publishers could not have copyrighted the NKJV, for copyright law demands a new copyrighted work must contain a *substantial amount* of new material. If Thomas Nelson Publishers had truly been interested in making a more readable KJV, their work would have been in the public domain. As it is, the NKJV is protected by a 95-year copyright, and is reaping vast profits for its owners. They frequently substituted complex Latinized words for the simple one or two syllable Anglo-Saxon words of the original KJV. Consequently, the KJV reads at a fifth-grade level, while the NKJV reads at the sixth-grade level. ***The NKJV is harder to understand than the KJV!***

There are numerous examples, often absurd, which show the devilish proclivity of NKJV translators to defend their copyright, by purposely making their NKJV harder to understand than the KJV. Who does not know the famous parables of the talents (**Matthew 25:14-30**) and the parable of the pounds (**Luke 19:11-27**)? Anyone with a rudimentary education knows that the talent is a Roman measure weight of money, and the pound is a British unit of currency. But in the NKJV, Luke’s version is the “Parable of the Minas.” A “minor” is someone under age 21, but what is a *mina*? Most folks know what “quicksand” is, **Acts 27:17** (KJV), but can you find anyone who knows what “Syrtis Sands” (NKJV) are? If you were going to read **John 18:28** to your child, which would be more understandable, “judgment hall” (KJV), or “Praetorium” (NKJV)?

Most Church of God folks eschew Bibles with pictures of Christ, or crosses on the cover. However, they gullibly swallow the NKJV *triquetra*, an ancient symbol for the Trinity, comprising three interwoven arcs. See the *triquetra* on the front page of some editions of the NKJV. This same ancient symbol can be seen today on satanic rock group albums like Led Zeppelin, as well as New Age bestsellers like *The Aquarian Conspiracy*. Do we want pagan symbols on our Bibles?

While the body of the NKJV does not follow the NIV corrupt text versions, the NT portion of the NKJV center reference constantly cites “NU,” the Nestle-Aland Greek NT United Bible Societies’ third edition. So, for example, on **Acts 18:21**, the NKJV center reference has “NU omits *I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem.*” The NKJV thus casts doubt on the Majority Text (a.k.a. the Received Text), by including in its center references all the textual deviations of the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus manuscripts.

Sins of omission can be just as bad as sins of commission. The NKJV omits the word “Lord” 66 times, omits “God” 51 times, omits “heaven” 50 times, omits “repent” 44 times, “blood” 23 times, etc. The NKJV ignores the Greek *Textus Receptus* over 1,200

times. The NKJV replaced the better KJV Hebrew (*ben Chayyim* text) with the worse Stuttgart edition (*ben Asher* text) of the Old Testament. The *ben Asher* Old Testament text is a revision of Rudolph Kittle's *Biblia Hebraica* of 1906 and 1912. Kittle was a racist who is considered the father of the Nazi Party.

Do you want to weed out false doctrine? If you use the NKJV, you have your work cut out for you. Take **Matthew 7:14**, for example. The KJV says, "Because strait is the gate, and *narrow is the way*, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." But the NKJV says, "Because narrow is the gate and *difficult is the way* which leads to life, and there are few who find it." If something is *difficult*, you can just work harder, and you will usually succeed. The NKJV teaches works salvation. The way to eternal life is not difficult, it is narrow and constricted (strait and narrow). With the calling and guidance of God and His Son, it is not difficult at all, because it depends on His works, not ours. But, it is not the wide highway most people travel upon.

Gail Riplinger lists scores of harder NKJV words, and many NKJV distortions of Truth in her four-page brochure, "NKJV Death Certificate." Write Giving & Sharing for a free copy. We also recommend Riplinger's book, *The Language of the King James Bible*, 179 pages, \$10, and *New Age Bible Versions*, 690 pages, \$14.95, available from www.avpublicatons.com.

I believe that one of the *ill effects* of "modern language" versions such as the NKJV and NIV is to *dampen scripture memorization*. It is difficult to memorize scripture, when your pastor and your Church quote from a mixture of translations. Most Church members today do not memorize scriptures. There are just too many different translations being cited, and people are confused as to just what are the inspired scriptures. Is it the Received Text, the "Nestle-Aland-UBS" text, or something else? Today, your pastor may be using the NKJV, but tomorrow, he might be using the *Revised* NKJV, or some other translation. An analogy in the computer world, would be constantly switching your keyboard layout. You would never be able to be proficient if you constantly switched keyboards.

You can't get more basic than the "Lord's Prayer" of **Matthew 6:9-13**. Most people sing, and memorize, the King James Version, "Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name . . ." However, NKJV has, "Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name." When one has been used to reading "Our Father which art in Heaven," and hears instead, "Our Father in heaven," it creates what psychologists term, "cognitive dissonance," or mental tension. It is like hearing a screeching, twisted, end to a familiar piece of classical music. To relieve this mental disconnect, a person usually *reduces the importance* to that which is causing the dissonance, or *avoids* that which causes the tension.

In the case of discordant Bible verses, a person tends to put less importance on them, reads them less, and/or memorizes them less: *he puts them aside*. In any case, Satan has accomplished his aim. "Yea, hath God said," **Genesis 3:1**, were the first words of the Serpent. He immediately cast doubt on the Word of God, and caused Eve to put aside what God had plainly commanded. Satan lessened the importance of the Word of God. In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus explained the meaning of seed that falls by the wayside, "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side" **Matthew 13:19**. **Proverbs 30:5** says, "Every

word of God is pure.” Yet man has adulterated the Word of God. Let us not put aside the pure Word of God.

I have a New King James Version Bible. I sometimes use it along with other versions to compare “difficult” verses. However, my main study Bible will remain the *original* King James Version. I realize I will not convince everyone to use the KJV as their main Bible. For those unconvinced, Giving & Sharing provides NKJV Bibles, which we hope will be used as *secondary* Bible resources.

You may order the *New King James Version Wide Margin Bible*, burgundy leather, \$47 delivered, or the *Cambridge King James Version Wide Margin Bible*, leather, \$85 delivered, from **Giving & Sharing, PO Box 100, Neck City, MO 64849.**

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