

The Book of Jude - James White's "inferior" texts

In his book, *The King James Only Controversy*, James White makes a lot of outrageous statements in an attempt to destroy the Christian's faith in the King James Bible.

In one section of his book he discusses the reading of the KJB in Jude verse four. On page 206 of his book Mr. White brings up his experience in speaking to Jehovah witnesses and he says: "I have often pointed this passage out to Jehovah's Witnesses and asked, 'Now, can you say with Jude that you have only one Sovereign Lord? Or do you have two, Jehovah, and Jesus Christ?' The point is rarely missed. But the KJV's rendering obscures this by following INFERIOR (caps are mine) manuscripts, resulting in a reading that allows one to distinguish between the "Lord God" and the Lord Jesus Christ."

It should first be pointed out that many Christians see a reference to two persons of the Godhead in this verse, both God the Father and God the Son.

Matthew Henry comments: "Those who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness do in effect deny the Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ; that is, they deny both natural and revealed religion. They strike at the foundation of natural religion, for they deny the only Lord God; and they overturn all the frame of revealed religion, for they deny the Lord Jesus Christ. "

Likewise John Gill remarks: "And denying the only Lord God; God the Father, who is the only sovereign Lord, both in providence and grace; and the only God, not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit, but in opposition to nominal and fictitious deities, or Heathen gods; And our Lord Jesus Christ; as his deity, or sonship, or humanity, or that he was the Messiah, or the alone Saviour, or his sacrifice, satisfaction, and righteousness;"

Secondly, if we adopt the view that this verse speaks of only the second Person of the Godhead, the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, the King James reading is more accurate than the NASB and NIV. Mr. White misses on both of his objections to the KJB reading. The King James Bible is both theologically correct and based on superior manuscripts as we shall see.

It is also hypocritical of Mr. White to attack the KJB here, and yet he recommends the New KJV as being an excellent version to use. The NKJV reads exactly the same as the KJB in this verse - "who deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ."

If this verse is referring to Jesus Christ as THE only Lord God and OUR Lord Jesus Christ, the KJB is correct. Jesus Christ is THE only Lord God and creator of all people and things, but He is OUR Lord only of His redeemed.

Notice the distinctions brought out in Jude 9, 14, 17, 21 and 25. In verse 9 Michael the archangel says to Satan "the Lord rebuke thee"; in 14 it is "the Lord" who comes to execute judgment upon the ungodly; in 17 he speaks to other Christians 'of the apostles of "our" Lord Jesus Christ'; in 21 we are looking for the mercy of "our" Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life; and in 25 he closes in a benediction to the only wise God "our" Saviour.

In Jude 4 the NASB reads: "deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ." The NIV has: "deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord", while the J. W. bible reads: "our only Owner and Lord, Jesus Christ." The Jehovah Witness version reads basically like the NASB and the JWs still don't believe Jesus Christ is God. In fact, with neither the NIV nor the NASB can you prove that Jesus Christ is God using Jude verse four. Mr. White's objection to the KJB is pointless.

A Jehovah Witness can easily reply that Jesus is sovereign only in so far as JEHOVAH gave him that designated authority, but Jesus is still less and inferior to Jehovah.

As a side note, I personally am convinced that the Lord Jesus Christ is JEHOVAH God, but if you are using the NKJV, NIV or NASB you might well ask "Who is JEHOVAH? I don't see that word in my bible." The name JEHOVAH has been removed from the NKJV, NIV and NASB.

The main point I want to look at is the statement by Mr. White that the KJB follows INFERIOR manuscripts. The omission of the word "GOD" in the NASB, NIV is based on a handful of Greek manuscripts that Mr. White seems to imply are then SUPERIOR to the "inferior" majority of all remaining Greek copies we have today which are the basis of the KJB. According to Mr. White these "superior" manuscripts are Sinaticus, Vaticanus, A, C and P72.

Let's examine more closely what these "superior" manuscripts actually say. We will soon learn that they are in constant disagreement not only with the majority of Greek texts but with each other as well.

1. "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them THAT ARE SANCTIFIED by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called"

"Them that are sanctified" is the reading of the Majority or 90% plus of all remaining Greek manuscripts we have today, plus several uncial or capital letter manuscripts. However the NASB, NIV read BELOVED or LOVED instead of sanctified. This reading comes from Sinaticus, Vaticanus, C and P72.

In verse three the NKJV departs from the Greek text of the KJB and follows the Wescott-Hort text of the NASB, NIV. The NKJV does not follow the same Greek text of the KJB in at least 40 places I have personally found so far, and I am not yet done with that study.

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of THE common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

The reading of the TR of the KJB and the Majority is THE (tes) common salvation. The TR is the Textus Receptus, or the traditional Received Text that underlies the King James Bible. This is in contrast to the modern Critical Text that differs from the TR by changing or omitting some 5,000 words from the New Testament. I like to refer to it as the Textus Corruptus.

However Sinaticus, Vaticanus, A and P72 say OUR (hemoon) common salvation and this is the reading of the NKJV and NASB. The NIV paraphrases even this as "the salvation we share" introducing a verb where none is found in any Greek text. It should also be noted that Sinaiticus adds additional words to this text which are not found in the others. Sinaiticus says: "our

salvation AND LIFE", but no version has adopted this additional reading - Yet.

Verse 4 is where we get into the interesting and totally hypocritical comments made by James White in his book The King James Only Controversy.

The reading of the Textus Receptus, the Majority, K, L, P and others is as it stands in the KJB. "...ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord GOD, and our Lord Jesus Christ." In the NASB and NIV the word GOD is missing because the word God or Theos is not found in Sinaticus, Vaticanus, A, C and P72.

In the very next verse these same 5 "superior" manuscripts all go each one their separate ways and they continue to do so in the remainder of this small book of Jude which contains only 25 verses.

In the KJB and the Majority we read: "I will therefore put you in remembrance, THOUGH YE ONCE KNEW THIS, how that THE LORD, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not."

"Though ye once knew this, how that the Lord" is made up of 7 words in the Greek text. eidotes humas hapax touto hoti ho kurios. Both A and Vaticanus actually read JESUS instead of the Lord, even though the passage is speaking about the Lord God, the Father, bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt. These two "superior" manuscripts tell us that Jesus saved the people out of the land of Egypt. The correction of manuscript C reads God instead of Lord, and P72 actually says "God Christ" brought the people out of Egypt!

What is of extreme interest is to take a look at the various modern versions and see how totally mixed up they are as to which variant readings they adopt. The reading of "how that THE LORD, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not" is the reading found in Tyndale, Coverdale, Bishops' Bible, the Geneva Bible, the RV, ASV, NIV, TNIV, NASB, NKJV, Holman Standard, and the up and coming ISV. Not even Westcott and Hort changed this reading but kept the word Kurios which means Lord. LORD is also the reading found in the Critical text of the Nestle-Aland and UBS 4th edition.

The Catholic versions are their usual mixed bag with the previous Douay-Rheims and Douay reading JESUS, while the later Jerusalem bible 1968, New American Bible 1970, and the New Jerusalem bible 1985 now reading THE LORD, instead of 'Jesus".

However, instead of THE LORD the RSV of 1952 says HE (found in no text at all), the NRSV of 1989 went back to THE LORD, but then in 2001 the ESV (English Standard Version) has now adopted the reading found in Vaticanus and it actually says JESUS saved the people out of the land of Egypt. Daniel Wallace's loopy NET version has also adopted this weird variant of JESUS too and in his footnotes he says: " As difficult as the reading "Jesus" is, in light of v. 4 and in light of the progress of revelation, it is wholly appropriate." In other words, because it is clearly wrong it must be right! This is the nature of the so called "science" of textual criticism. Every man does that which is right in his own eyes.

This goofy reading found in the ESV and NET version is just another proof that the ESV is a

fake bible. It doesn't even follow the Nestle-Aland critical texts, let alone the traditional Greek texts found in the King James Bible. Back in the days spoken of when the LORD brought the people out of the land of Egypt, there was no Jesus. He had not yet been incarnated. His human name is Jesus. "But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:20-21.

The Lord Jesus Christ is never referred to as Jesus until after his incarnation when He took on Him the seed of Abraham and was made in the likeness of men.

Continuing in Jude verse 5, we see that Sinaticus reads "You knew ALL THINGS (panta), instead of THIS (touto), and it omits the word ONCE (hapax), while P72, A and C omit the word YOU (humas), though it is in Vaticanus and Sinaiticus.

Sinaticus omits the definite article THE in "the Lord", but it is in C, while A and Vaticanus read JESUS (ESV 2001) and P72 reads GOD CHRIST instead of THE LORD! These are the "superior" manuscripts Mr. White refers to when he calls the KJB texts inferior! None of them agree with each other in very substantial ways, and all this occurs right after the verse Mr. White criticizes in the KJB.

And still the NASB and NIV do not agree with each other. The NASB says: "though you know ALL THINGS once for all, that the Lord..." while the NIV has: "though you already know ALL THIS" - the NIV makes up its own text here as none of the 5 "superior" nor any of the majority texts read this way.

Before going on with more of the textual differences, let's examine some of the places where the Greek text is the same but the modern versions have come up with very different meanings.

In verse 8 we read: "Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of DIGNITIES." This is a question of translation and context, not of the text itself.

DIGNITIES is the reading of the KJB, the RV, ASV, Darby, Young's, Third Millennium Bible and others. Tyndale and the Geneva Bible read: "them that are in authority". These versions indicate that the people of whom they speak evil is anyone in civil authority like kings, ministers and presidents. They despise all forms of government. The NKJV has dignitaries, which is acceptable, but the NASB says ANGELS and the NIV has CELESTIAL BEINGS. This is pure fantasy and speculation.

Verse 11 describes these false teachers as having "perished in the GAINSAYING of Core." To gainsay is not an archaic word and it means to speak against. The Greek word here is antilogia and means literally the speaking against or gainsaying.

Gainsaying is the reading of the RV, ASV, Darby, Young's, Geneva and others but the NKJV unites with the NIV/NASB in reading REBELLION.

Verse 12 presents us with an interesting example. "These are SPOTS in your feasts of charity..." Spots is the reading of the KJB, NKJV, the Spanish (manchas), Tyndale, New Century Version

and Today's English Version plus others. Even the NIV, RSV and NRSV say BLEMISHES and the Douay and New American Bible say either stains or blotches. But the NASB says HIDDEN REEFS instead of SPOTS.

In Jude 12 we read of these wicked men "feeding THEMSELVES (heautous) without fear", and so read Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, but C reads "feeding YOU", while P72 says "feeding THEM". Also to be noted is that the Majority, TR, Vaticanus and Sinaiticus read "in your FEASTS OF CHARITY", But A and C read: "in your DECEPTIONS".

Another significant difference occurs in the phrase which describes these false teachers as "trees WHOSE FRUIT WITHERETH, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots". Versions that agree with the KJB are the KJV 21, the Third Millenium Bible, Murdock's translation of the Syriac Peshitta, the Italian Diodati and the Bible in Basic English.

The NKJV again joins the NIV/NASB in reading AUTUMN trees, or LATE AUTUMN trees, instead of WHOSE FRUIT WITHERETH. There is always a good reason why the KJB is translated the way it is. The word used here is a combination of a verb and a noun. Phthinoporinos is used only one time in the New Testament. It is composed of the verb Phthino which means to wane, to waste away or pine away, and the word opoora which can have several meanings.

The word opoora can mean autumn, or even summer. It also means Fruit in a general sense or metaphorically it can mean Ripeness. The Lexicon of Liddell and Scott shows on page 1247 that this word means Fruit and also is used in combination with other words to mean "a fruiterer, one who sells fruit, a fruit storage room, a fruit eater, and bearing fruit. Thus we have trees whose fruit is wasting or withering as in the KJB and others.

A lot of modern versions have not translated the verb part of this word and have changed the meaning of the phrase as it is found in the KJB and others.

The KJB describes the progressive degeneration and final doom of these false teachers. They are trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots.

Now back to some of the textual differences. In verse 11 we read of those who have greedily run "after the error of BALAAM" the false prophet, but P72 says: "the error of BALAAK" (the king of Moab). In 14 we read of a future prophecy. "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord COMETH with ten thousand of his saints."

"The Lord COMETH" is the translation of the KJB, the NKJV, Tyndale, Geneva, even the NIV and the NRSV , but the NASB says "the Lord CAME with many thousands of his holy ones" - like it already happened - Duh, I don't recall that happening yet, do you?.

"Ten thousand of his saints" is the reading of the Majority, B, A and C, but again we see the so called superior manuscripts contradict each other. Sinaticus and P72 omit HIS (autou) and read ANGELS (aggeloon) instead of SAINTS or holy ones (hagioon).

V. 15 "To execute judgment upon all, and to convince ALL THAT ARE UNGODLY AMONG THEM of all THEIR UNGODLY DEEDS..." This is the reading of the Majority and the TR of

the KJB.

"All the ungodly" is the reading of the Majority, Vaticanus, A and C. It is also the reading found in the NKJV, NASB, NIV, TNIV, RSV, and the ESV. but Sinaticus and P72 again split off and read EVERY SOUL (pasan psuke) instead of "all the ungodly" (pantas tous asebeis). What is of great interest here is that the modern Nestle-Aland Greek texts keep changing every few years. The Nestle-Aland text USED TO READ "all the ungodly", but NOW they have once again changed their actual Greek text to read "to convict EVERY SOUL", so even their latest modern versions do not agree with their own latest Nestle-Aland, UBS Critical text.

The words AMONG THEM are also omitted by the 5 "superior" texts, but found in the Majority. In this same verse the phrase "of all their ungodly deeds" (peri pantoon toon ergoon asebeias autoon) reads the same in the Majority and C, but Vaticanus omits THEIR, while Sinaticus and C add WORDS (logoon) and Sinaticus omits "ungodly deeds" altogether. Thus we see that Mr. White's oldest and best manuscripts are in total disarray and disagreement among themselves - and this not once but hundreds of times throughout the entire New Testament.

In verse 16 we read: "These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and THEIR MOUTH SPEAKETH GREAT SWELLING WORDS, HAVING MEN'S PERSONS IN ADMIRATION because of advantage."

In this verse P72 omits the whole phrase "walking after their own lusts", but it is found in the others. "Their mouth speaketh great swelling words" is the reading of the KJB, the ASV and the Revised Version word for word.

The NASB says: "they speak arrogantly" omitting the literal "their mouth" and changing the meaning of the phrase. There is a difference between speaking great swelling words and speaking arrogantly. The NIV says: "they boast about themselves" again omitting "their mouth", changing "speak" to "boast" and adding "about themselves", which is not in any text at all.

The part about having men's persons in admiration is the same exactly or in sense of the Geneva Bible, the ASV, RV, Tyndale and Young's and others. The NKJV again unites with the NIV/NASB and says FLATTERING people to gain advantage."

The word thaumazo does not mean to flatter but rather to wonder at, marvel at or admire. To have mens persons in admiration is to think highly of them and hold their opinions in esteem when referring to them -much like today's scholars do for one another. But to flatter someone is to speak directly to them with personal adulation. The meaning is not the same in the NKJV as it is in the KJB and others.

In verse 19 the NKJV again departs from the Textus Receptus of the KJB. "These be they who separate THEMSELVES (heautous). The Nestles-Aland Greek text omits this word and so do the NKJV, NIV and NASB. The NKJV reads like the NASB in saying "who CAUSE DIVISIONS" and the NIV again paraphrases with "men who divide YOU" - which is not found in any text.

In verse 20, "building up yourselves on your most holy faith", P72 has a different word order, spells 5 words differently than any other text and omits YOUR faith, while manuscript C

changes YOUR faith to OUR faith.

In 21 we read: "Keep YOURSELVES in the love of God" and this is the reading of the Majority, Sinaticus and A, but Vaticanus and C read LET US KEEP. But both the NASB and NIV rejected the reading of their favorite Vaticanus here and read as does the KJB.

In verse 22 we read: "And of some HAVE COMPASSION, MAKING A DIFFERENCE." The verb "have compassion" is eleete in the Majority and TR, but Sin/Vat have a different form in eleate; both A and C say REBUKE instead of have compassion and P72 entirely omits the verb . The confusion of how to render this verse is seen in the NASB and NIV which say : "be merciful to those who doubt"; the RSV says: "Convince some who doubt", Douay has: "some who are judged reprove." Boy, am I glad that 's all cleared up for us.

23. "And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." This is the reading of the Majority and the TR of the KJB. However the NASB and NIV add "AND ON SOME HAVE MERCY" to this verse. This reading comes from Vaticanus, Sinaticus and A. However A and Vaticanus omit "on some", though it is in Sinaticus and C reads as does the KJB and does not include these extra words. Are you beginning to get the picture of how mixed up and confused these "superior" texts are that Mr. White recommends?

24. "Now unto him that is able to keep YOU from falling..." YOU is found in all the texts except A which reads US instead of YOU and P72 omits the word altogether.

25. "To the only WISE God our Saviour be glory AND majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." Again this is the reading of the Majority and the TR, but the "superior" texts of Mr. White have added a lot of different words to this verse.

The NASB and NIV omit WISE from "only wise God" -(P72, Sinaiticus and Vaticanus omit "wise") - and omit the word AND, though it is found in P72 which predates Sinaticus and Vaticanus by about 100 years. The NASB - NIV say: "to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, BEFORE ALL AGES, now and forevermore. Amen."

All of these eight added words in the NIV represent 10 extra words in the Greek which come from the usual suspects -Vaticanus, Sinaticus, A and C. These extra 10 words are NOT found in the vast Majority of all Greek texts, nor are they found in the Greek Bible used by the Greek Orthodox churches all over the world today. The few manuscripts that DO contain them are in disagreement even with each other. For example, Sinaticus omits the word pantas (ALL) while included in B and A, but what is quite interesting here is that P72, which is 100 years older than Sinaticus and Vaticanus, does not contain these added eight words but reads like the King James Bible, though it does omit the word "wise".

The oldest manuscript we have reads as does the KJB in this particular verse (except for "wise"), yet Mr. White and other scholars like him choose to use readings found in their favorite two which are constantly differing from each other. Sinaticus and Vaticanus are not the oldest and they certainly are not the best.

James White's criticism of the KJB reading in Jude 4 is seen to be without basis. His assertion that the KJB is based on "inferior" texts and that the others are "superior" has been shown to be completely false.

If Mr. White's "superior" manuscripts are the best we have, then we are in BIG trouble and God has failed to preserve His words. We are left with the vain hope that somehow our great present day scholars, like Mr. White, might get lucky and rescue God's words from the dumpster of history.

Either God has been faithful to preserve His pure, perfect and inspired words in the King James Bible or they are lost forever. If God cannot preserve His words as He promised, then maybe He will also fail in preserving our souls. How can a Christian trust Him for the one and yet deny the other?

Summary of main differences between the KJB and the NKJV.

3. KJB - THE common salvation NKJV - OUR common salvation - different Greek text.
4. KJB - certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation
NKJV- men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation

6. KJB - angels kept not their first estate

NKJV- angels did not keep their proper domain

8 KJB - despise dominion and speak evil of dignities.

NKJV - reject authority and speak evil of dignitaries.

11 KJB - perished in the gainsaying of Core

NKJV - perished in the rebellion of Korah

12 KJB - feeding themselves without fear...trees whose fruit withereth

NKJV - serving only themselves... late autumn trees

16 KJB - their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

NKJV - they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage.

19 KJB - These be they who separate themselves, sensual

NKJV- These are sensual persons, who cause divisions - follows different Greek text again.

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