

## 1 Samuel 13:1

Have some of God's inspired words been lost? The modern version proponents would have us believe that such is the case. We will consider one specific passage of Scripture to illustrate this point and will also hear from one of the NIV translators regarding a few others.

One of the hundreds of Scripture references called into question by today's bible translators is 1 Samuel 13:1. We read in the Authorized King James Bible: "Saul reigned ONE YEAR; and when he had reigned TWO YEARS over Israel, Saul chose him three thousand men of Israel; whereof two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in mount Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin; and the rest of the people he sent every man to his tent."

"Saul reigned ONE YEAR; and when he had reigned TWO YEARS..." This is the reading of the KJB 1611, the NKJV 1982, Miles Coverdale 1535, the Great Bible 1540, Bishop's Bible 1568, the Geneva Bible of 1599, Daniel Webster's translation of 1833, the Lesser Bible 1853, the Ferrer Fenton translation 1903, the NKJV 1982, the Jewish School & Family Bible Volume 2 by Abraham Benisch, The Urim-Thummin Version 2001, the Natural Israelite Bible English Version 2008 by Ed Schneider, the Hebrew Names Version of 2008 - "Saul reigned a year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel," the 2008 Interlinear Hebrew-Greek Scripture- "**Shaul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Yisrael...**", the 2008 World English Bible by Michael Johnson, the 2008 Interlinear Hebrew- Greek Scriptures by Lanny Mebust, the New Berkeley Version 1969, Lamsa's translation of the Syriac Peshitta, the Spanish Reina Valera of 1602, 1960 and 1995, the 2004 Reina Valera Gomez bible - "Había ya reinado Saúl **un año**, y cuando llevaba reinando **dos años** sobre Israel, escogió a tres mil hombres de Israel;", the Portuguese O Livro of 2000 - "Saul tinha já reinado durante UM ANO, e agora, no SEGUNDO ANO da sua função", the Portuguese de Almeida 1681 - "Saul reinou **um ano**; e no **segundo ano** do seu reinado sobre Israel", the Italian Diodati version of 1649 - "SAULLE avea regnato un anno, quando queste cose avvennero; e poi, dopo aver regnato due anni sopra Israele,", the French Martin 1744, the 1906 La Bible du Rabbinate, and the French Ostervald 1996 - "Saül avait régné **un an**; et quand il eut régné **deux ans** sur Israël,", the KJV 21st century version 1994, Green's literal translation 2000, and the Third Millennium Bible 1998. It is also the reading found in the Modern Greek Bible (Not to be confused with the so called Septuagint, which entirely omits the whole verse) - " Ο Σαουλ ητο βασιλευς **ενος ετους**: αφου δε εβασιλευσε **δυο ετη** επι τον Ισραηλ,"

There is a brand new Hebrew-English translation put out in 2004 called the Judaica Press Complete Tanach. It can be seen online here:

<http://www.chabad.org/library/archive/LibraryArchive.asp?AID=63255>

In 1 Samuel 13:1 it reads as does the King James Bible: "Saul was a year in his reign, and he reigned two years over Israel..."

The Spanish Reina Valera 1960 reads: "Habia ya reinado Saul UN ANO; y cuando hubo reinado DOS anos sobre Israel..." = KJB

Italian Diodati - Saulle avea regnato UN ANNO, e poi (then) dopo (after) aver regnato DUE ANNI sopra Israele..." = KJB

The French Martin 1744 and the French Ostervald 1996 both translate the passage as it is found in the KJB - "Saül avait régné UN AN; et quand il eut régné DEUX ANS sur Israël..."

Luther 1545: Saul war EIN JAR Konig gewesen / vnd da er ZWEY JAR vber Jsrael regiert hatte...

"Saul was king one year, and when he had reigned two years over Israel...= KJB

The Swiss Zurcher 1531 says exactly the same thing.

The Modern Greek translation is the same as the King James Bible reading, even though the so called Septuagint is entirely lacking the verse. The Modern Greek text reads: Ο Σαουλ ητο βασιλευς **εΝΟΣ εΤΟΥΣ**; αφου δε εβασιλευσε **δυο εΤΗ** επι τον Ισραηλ

The Modern Greek text can be found at this site here - <http://unbound.biola.edu/>

There are several bible versions like Darby's, the RSV, NRSV, ESV, the New Scofield KJV and the Catholic New Jerusalem bible 1985 which actually read: "Saul was \_\_\_\_years old when he began to reign; and he reigned\_\_\_\_and two years over Israel." Then in a footnote they tell us "the number is lacking in Hebrew" and "two is not the entire number. Something has dropped out."

The ASV of 1901, which is the predecessor of the NASB, says: "Saul was (FORTY) years old when he began to reign; and when he had reigned TWO years over Israel..." Then in a footnote it tells us "The number is lacking in the Hebrew text, and is supplied conjecturally."

Young's tells us: "A SON OF A YEAR is Saul in his reigning, yea, two years he hath reigned over Israel", while Lamsa's 1936 translation of the Syriac Peshitta says: "And when Saul had reigned ONE OR TWO years in his kingdom over Israel..."

Then we have the recent 1989 The Revised English Bible, and it reads differently than them all saying: "Saul was THIRTY years old when he became king, and he reigned over Israel for TWENTY-TWO years."

When we get to the NASB and the NIV we really get confused. The NASB of 1972 and 1977 reads: "Saul was THIRTY years old when he began to reign, and he reigned THIRTY TWO years over Israel." But the 1995 edition of the NASB has changed the 32 years to now read 42 years. The NIV says: "Saul was THIRTY years old when he became king, and he reigned over Israel FORTY TWO years."

But wait. There's more to this Bible Babel. The 1970 New English Bible actually says: "Saul was FIFTY YEARS OLD when he became king, and he reigned over Israel FOR TWENTY TWO years."!!! So was Saul 30 or 40, or perhaps 50? And did he reign 2 years as the ASV tells us, or

22 years as the NEB, REB say, or 32 as some NASBs have it, or was it perhaps the 42 of the NIV?

Not only do the NIV, ASV, NEB and NASB all contradict each other, but they also contradict Acts 13:21 where we are told that Saul reigned over Israel 40 years.

Dr. Daniel Wallace, of Dallas Theological Seminary, is creating his own personal bible version called the NET Bible. It frequently departs from the Hebrew texts. He has come up with a reading in 1 Samuel 13:1 that is even different than all the others.

His NET bible reads: "Saul was THIRTY (1- footnote) years old when he began to reign; he ruled over Israel for FORTY (2 - footnote) years."

Then in the footnote "today's most eminent textual scholar" tells us: The Hebrew Masoretic Text does not have "thirty." A number appears to have dropped out of the Hebrew text here, since as it stands the MT (literally, "a son of a year") must mean that Saul was only one year old when he began to reign! Although most LXX mss lack the entire verse, some Greek mss have "thirty years" here (while others have "one year"). The Syriac Peshitta has Saul's age as twenty-one... The present translation ("thirty") is a possible but admittedly uncertain proposal.

Regarding the change from "when he had reigned TWO years" to "he ruled over Israel for FORTY years", the good Doctor says: The MT has "two years" here. If this number is to be accepted as correct, the meaning apparently would be that after a lapse of two years at the beginning of Saul's reign, he then went about the task of consolidating an army as described in what follows."

(Note: What a shocker! If we follow what the Hebrew text says, the King James reading is correct! But Dr. Wallace can't seem to accept this.) So he continues:

"But if the statement in v. 1 is intended to be a comprehensive report on the length of Saul's reign, the number is too small. According to Acts 13:21 Saul reigned for forty years. The NIV, taking this forty to be a round number, adds it to the "two years" of the MT and translates the number in 2 Sam 13:1 as "forty-two years." While this is an acceptable option, the present translation instead replaces the MT's "two" with the figure "forty." Admittedly the textual evidence for this decision is weak, but the same can be said of any attempt to restore sense to this difficult text. The Syriac Peshitta lacks this part of v. 1."

There you have it - the fevered ramblings of America's foremost Evangelical textual scholar. Small wonder that 85 % of the students in America's largest Evangelical seminary say they do not believe in the inerrancy of Scripture.

Have some of God's words been lost or dropped out of the text? Or has God been faithful to His promises to preserve His words here on this earth till heaven and earth pass away? Jesus said in Matthew 24:35 "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." This is either a true statement or Jesus lied to us. The modern version translators imply that the Lord Jesus Christ didn't really mean what He said.

One of the members of the NIV translation committee has written a book called The Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties. His name is Gleason Archer and his book is highly recommended by Hank Hanegraaff, 'the Bible answer man'. Regarding this passage in 1 Samuel 13:1 Mr. Gleason tells us on page 171 "the Masoretic text has lost the number that must have been included in the original manuscript." Gleason Archer goes on to tell us: "the REIGNED of the KJV is not justifiable, for the Hebrew text does not say "reigned" but "he became king".

Now this is interesting. Here is a scholar telling us emphatically that "reigned" is not justifiable, yet the NASB has "reign" and has translated this same word as reign or reigned some 144 times and even his own NIV has translated this word *malak* as "reign or reigned" 117 times.

Gleason Archer not only believes the numbers have been lost here in 1 Samuel 13 but also on page 39 of his book he tells us that 15 words have been lost in the Hebrew text of Psalms 145 that are restored to us in the Greek Old Testament version.

The RSV, ESV, NIV and Holman Standard have added these 15 words to the Old Testament from the Greek LXX. However, the Revised Version, the American Standard Version, the NASB and the NKJV have not added these extra words. In Psalm 145:13 we read: "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations."

The extra fifteen words that supposedly were lost but now are finally restored to us in the NIV, ESV and Holman are "The LORD is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made." You won't find these added words even in the 1995 update version of the NASB, so I guess not all scholars share Mr. Gleason's views. In fact, not even the other NIV translators apparently share his views either. But wait! There's more. Now the brand new 2010 NIV has come out and they changed the verse once again. Now it reads: "The LORD is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does." So even the NIV has now changed "faithful" to "trustworthy" and "loving to all he has made" to "faithful in all he does." It just keeps getting better and better, huh.

In the very next chapter of 1 Samuel in verse 14:41, Mr. Archer tells us on page 40 of his book that 26 Hebrew words have been passed over by the Jewish scribes but have been restored to us by way of the Greek LXX. These 26 added words are found in the liberal RSV and in the brand new ESV versions, but not even the NIV 1984 edition or the Holman Standard include them. Oh, but wait! Now the "new" New International Version 2011 edition has come out and they have now added all these extra words to their late\$ Ver\$ion. The NIV 2011 now reads: "Then Saul prayed to the LORD, the God of Israel, (they now omit the Hebrew "Give a perfect lot." and replace it with) "WHY HAVE YOU NOT ANSWERED YOUR SERVANT TODAY? IF THE FAULT IS IN ME OR MY SON JONATHAN, RESPOND WITH URIM, BUT IF THE MEN OF ISRAEL ARE AT FAULT, RESPOND WITH THUMMIN. Jonathan and Saul were taken by lot, and the men were cleared." All the capital lettered words come from the so called Septuagint, but are not found in any Hebrew text. See how consistent these "latest findings" of modern scholarship are?

If Mr. Archer is so fond of the Greek LXX, why did he not take note of the fact that the Greek Septuagint entirely omits 1 Samuel 13:1 altogether? Thus he could have easily disposed of the whole problem by saying it never was part of the inspired text at all.

It is a marvel to behold when a Bible corrector like the NIV's Gleason Archer writes a book telling us that some of God's words have been lost, but they are restored to us in some other version, though we shouldn't always follow that other version, and not even the rest of his fellow NIV translators adopt his conclusions. And this is a book recommended by Hank Hanegraaff, who himself uses the NASB, which differs from the NIV in hundreds of places. Such is the confusion and unbelief foisted upon the Church by today's "science of textual criticism."

So, how do we explain the passage in 1 Samuel 13:1? Have God's words been lost in the shuffle, as Gleason Archer and Hank Hanegraaff tell us? Absolutely not. The King James Bible is 100% correct. What the NASB, NIV translators missed here is a Hebrew idiom. Nothing has been lost; it has been there all the time.

The Hebrew text in question translated in the KJB and many other versions as "ONE year" consists of two words, ben (Strong's # 1121) and shanah (Strong's #) 8141. The "problem" is how the word ben is translated. Hebrew words often have multiple meanings, depending on the context. The NIV and NASB concordances tell us they have translated this one word as: "age, aliens, arrow, afflicted, beast, bought, child, bulls, calf, builders, breed, father, fellow, foal, fools, foreigner, grandchildren, heir, kids, lambs, low, man, mortal, nephew, offspring, old, ONE, ONE born, ONES, opening, overnight, people, scoundrels, son, troops, warriors, whelps, young, and youths."

Both the NASB and the NIV have translated this same Hebrew word in other places just as it stands in the KJB's "ONE" year. In Leviticus 12:6 we read: "she shall bring a lamb of the FIRST YEAR for a burnt offering." The NASB reads: " a ONE year old lamb," the NIV "A year old lamb." In Exodus 29:38 "Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the alter; two lambs of the FIRST YEAR day by day continually." The NASB has: "a lamb of the FIRST year" while the NIV has: " she is to bring A year old lamb."

In 2 Samuel 17:10 the NASB reads: "Even the ONE (ben) who is valiant...will lose heart." In Genesis 15:3 both the NASB and NIV read: "ONE (ben) born in my house is my heir." The same thing occurs twice in Nehemiah 3:8 and 31 where the NASB, NIV have "ONE of the perfumers...ONE of the goldsmiths", and the NIV has "ONE of the wise men" in Isaiah 19:11. Again, both the NASB and NIV translate this same word ben as ONES in Zechariah 4:14 "Then said he, These are the two anointed ONES, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

Other well known Bible commentators, who certainly are not King James Only, also agree with the KJB reading in 1 Samuel 13:1. Here is what a few of them have to say.

### **Matthew Henry**

" But we take it rather, as our own translation has it, Saul reigned one year, and nothing happened that was considerable, it was a year of no action; but in his second year he did as

follows -1. He chose a band of 3000 men, of whom he himself commanded 2000, and his son Jonathan 1000, v. 2. The rest of the people he dismissed to their tents."

### **Jamieson, Faussett & Brown**

Saul reigned one year-- The transactions recorded in the eleventh and twelfth chapters were the principal incidents comprising the first year of Saul's reign; and the events about to be described in this happened in the second year.

### **John Gill**

Bible commentator John Gill offers this commentary on the meaning of 1 Samuel 13:1 - "he was but a year old with respect to his kingdom: the inauguration of a king is "natalis imperii," the birthday of his kingdom, and therefore the words are well enough rendered by us, "Saul reigned one year".

John Gill also comments; "The sense Ben Gersom gives is best of all, that one year had passed from the time of his being anointed, to the time of the renewal of the kingdom at Gilgal; and when he had reigned two years over Israel, then he did what follows, chose 3000 men. In the first year of his reign was done all that is recorded in the preceding chapter; and when he had reigned two years, not two years more, but two years in all, then he did what is related in this chapter."

### **Matthew Poole**

In his Bible commentary Matthew Poole notes: SAUL reigned one year ; and when he had reigned two years over Israel, ." *Reigned one year*, i. c. had now reigned one year, from his first election at Mizpeh, in which time these things were done, which are recorded chap, xi., xii."

So you see, God has not lost any of His words at all. The modern bible translators set themselves up as the final authority and they want you to come to them, buy their books and their "bibles" so you too can doubt God's ability to preserve His inspired words. No thank you, Mr. Archer. I choose to believe God and His infallible words as found in the King James Bible.

Will Kinney

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### **Notes from the internet.**

Dale posts: "Errors in translation or copy does not mean inerrant."

Now this is the type of Mind Turned to Mush thinking today's bible agnostics come up with. Inerrant means "no errors", yet genius here tells us errors in translation does not mean inerrant.

Besides this, he is totally wrong when he tries to explain that the bogus bibles like the NASB, NIV, ESV etc (the new Catholic bible versions) start off in 1 Samuel 13:1 by telling us how long Saul reigned with their confusing and contradictory numbers. No, what is being related there is a historical event that happened at a certain time during Saul's reign as king. Simply read the context.

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"Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel, Saul chose him three thousand men of Israel; whereof two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in mount Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan..." It's a specific historical event that is being talked about. The fake bibles (all of which differ among themselves) yank this verse completely out of context and tell us how long his entire reign was, and then begin relating a historical event that occurred in the second year of his reign. Pretty simple once you start reading the true Bible and most Bibles all over the world in all languages read just as the King James Bible has it.