

## Can a Translation be Inspired?

I am frequently told by modern bible version proponents that no translation can be inspired and that only the originals were inspired. This may be what they learned in seminary or from some other Bible teacher they happen to admire, but is it the truth?

Most Christians will affirm that the Bible is our rule of faith and practice. It is a little self-contradictory to stand in the pulpit and say the word of God is inspired, when in his heart the pastor knows he is not referring to any book here on this earth that people can hold in their hands and believe. He really should say what he believes - that the word of God WAS inspired at one time but we no longer have it, so the best we can do is hope we have a close approximation of what God probably meant to tell us.

It also seems a bit inconsistent to say he believes the originals were inspired, when he has never seen them, they never were together in one single book, and they no longer exist anyway. How does he know they were inspired? He accepts this by faith. Yet he seems to lack the faith to actually believe that God could do exactly what He said He would do with His words. God said He would preserve them and that heaven and earth would pass away but His words would not pass away.

So, if the Bible itself is our rule of faith and practice, does it teach us a translation can be the inspired words of God? The answer is an emphatic Yes, and it does so many times.

In the Book of Genesis, chapters 42-45, we have the record of Joseph's reunion with his brethren. That Joseph spoke Egyptian instead of Hebrew is evident by Genesis 42:23 "And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter." Joseph spoke in Egyptian yet his words are translated and recorded in another language, which turns out to be the inspired words of God.

A translation does not have to be a "word for word" literal carry over into another language for it to be the inspired word of God. If we have the God given text and the God given meaning of that text communicated by way of another language, as I firmly believe we do in the King James Bible, it is still the inspired word of God.

God's words are like water in a vessel. If the same water is poured out into another vessel, even a vessel of a different shape and size, and there is no addition of foreign matter or subtraction of substance, it is the same water.

Again we see the same thing in Exodus chapters 4 through 14 where Moses confronts Pharaoh and speaks with him face to face. Pharaoh does not speak Hebrew, so Moses undoubtedly uses the Egyptian language in his verbal exchanges with him, yet the whole series of conversations is recorded in another inspired translation.

In the book of Ezra chapter 4:7-16 we see another clear example of where a rather lengthy letter written in the Syrian language is translated into inspired Hebrew. In Ezra 4:7-8 we read where

the enemies of God's people wrote a letter "in the Syrian tongue" to persuade king Artaxerxes to demand that the Jews cease from their work of re-building the house of the Lord in Jerusalem. The translated words of this letter are found written in verses 11 all the way through verse 16. Read the entire passage to see that what was originally written in Syrian was then translated and recorded in the Hebrew language.

Ezra 4:7-11 And in the days of Artaxerxes wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their companions, unto Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the writing of the **letter** was **written** in the **Syrian tongue**, and interpreted in the Syrian tongue. ... And the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Asnappar brought over, and set in the cities of Samaria, and the rest that are on this side the river, and at such a time. **This** is the **copy** of the letter that they sent unto him, even unto Artaxerxes the king; Thy servants the men on this side the river, and at such a time..." Here we clearly see that the original Hebrew autograph of Ezra included a portion that was both a TRANSLATION of another foreign language and a COPY of that other foreign language, yet it was and is the inspired words of the living God.

In Acts 22 we see another clear example of how a translation can be the inspired words of God. Acts 21:40 tells us: "And when he had given him licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, HE SPAKE UNTO THEM IN THE HEBREW TONGUE, SAYING...". There then follows a lengthy sermon of 21 entire verses preached by Paul in the Hebrew tongue, yet not a word of this sermon is recorded in Hebrew but in inspired Greek. Was Paul's sermon inspired? Undoubtedly. But God also inspired the translation of this sermon into another language.

If no translation can be inspired of God, then how do those who hold this unbiblical position explain all the Old Testament quotes found in the New Testament? They were originally inspired in Hebrew but then the Holy Ghost took these scores of verses and translated them into another inspired language. Not only that, but the Holy Ghost sometimes did not use a strictly literal word for word rendering. God sometimes adds a little more detail or explains further or makes a different application of the original verse to a new situation. This is how God does it and what the Bible itself teaches us about inspired translations.

Brother James Melton has written a very good article on why he believes the King James Bible is the true word of God. In his article he mentions what the true Holy Bible says about the word "to translate" - <http://www.av1611.org/kjv/knownkjv.html>

Brother Melton writes: The words "translate" and "translated" occur three times in the Bible, and GOD is the Translator each time. The scholars insist that the KJV cannot be infallible, because it is "only a translation." Do you suppose that such scholars have checked II Samuel 3:10, Colossians 1:13, and Hebrews 11:5 to see what GOD has to say about translating?

In II Samuel 3:10 we are told that it was God Who translated Saul's kingdom to David. We are told in Colossians 1:13 that Christians have been translated into the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and Hebrews 11:5 tells us that God translated Enoch that he should not see death. God was the One

doing the translating each time. What's the point? The point is that a translation CAN be perfect, if God is involved in the translating.

When the New Testament writers would quote the Old Testament (Mt. 1:23; Mk. 1:2; Lk. 4:4; Jn. 15:25; Acts 1:20; 7:42; I Cor. 2:9; Gal. 3:13, etc.), they had to TRANSLATE from Hebrew to Greek, because the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, but THEY wrote in Greek. So, if a translation cannot be infallible, then EVEN THE NEW TESTAMENT IN THE "ORIGINAL GREEK" ISN'T INFALLIBLE, because it contains translations from the Hebrew text! - (end of quotes from brother Melton. See his article. <http://www.av1611.org/kjv/knowkjv.html> It is very good!)

Which language did the Lord Jesus Christ speak while He was here on earth, Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic or a combination of the three? No one knows for sure, but we do know that He spoke to Paul in the Hebrew tongue yet His words were translated into Greek. "And when we were all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul. why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." There then follows another four long verses all spoken in the Hebrew tongue by our Lord, yet none of it is recorded in Hebrew but is translated into another language.

" And that from a child thou hast known the HOLY SCRIPTURES, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ALL SCRIPTURE IS GIVEN BY INSPIRATION OF GOD, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Timothy 3:15,16.

It should be noted that Timothy did not have "the originals" yet what he had in his home is referred to as inspired scripture. In fact, in no case of all the references in the New Testament to the Scriptures that people read and believed, is it ever referring to "the originals only".

So when you hear someone tell you with firm conviction: "No translation can be inspired. Only the originals were inspired" you should know that he didn't get this teaching out of the Bible or from God. If a professing Christian chooses not to believe in the possibility of an inspired translation, he does so contrary to many God given examples in the Bible itself.

One of the moderators at the Study Light Forum (Keith) wrote this summary of his views of the King James Bible debate. My brief comments follow each point.

Keith writes:

Satan must be jumping for joy, seeing as how the KJVO myth is fairly wide-spread. Here are some things the KJVO myth does:

1. The KJVO myth challenges God's ability to bring inerrant scriptures down to anyone in any language. Anyone who sincerely believes in the KJVO myth would have us believe that God can bring His inerrant Word down only to those who can read English. Pray for them.

Hi Keith, thanks for your prayers. However it is the King James Bible believer who affirms that God has indeed brought down the inerrant Scriptures to us. It is your side that denies any Bible or any text to be the inerrant word of God. Look at the polls. Look at your own answers. Never

once have you affirmed the Bible to be the inerrant word of God and then identified this inerrant Bible for us. At least, I have yet to see a clear and unequivocal answer from you.

2. The KJVO myth and those who constantly perpetrate the spreading of the KJVO myth bring division among the body of Christ. These seek no likemindedness among the members of Christ's body, only a division fostered by Satan. Pray for them.

Again, thanks for your prayers. But we do seek a likemindedness among believers. A likemindedness that there really is an inerrant Bible. Your "likemindedness" is the consensus of opinion that no Bible is now the inerrant word of God, and it seems this is the only unity your view results in. Truth always brings division.

Remember this? Pastor Michael Youseff's Message on His "Leading The Way" program. The title of today's message was "The Bible, The World's Most Relevant Book - Part 2

In his message he gave statistics of a poll that was conducted.

Here is what the poll revealed:

85% of students at America's largest Evangelical Seminary don't believe in the inerrancy of Scripture.

74% of the Clergy in America no longer believe in the inerrancy of Scripture.

3. The KJVO myth and those who keep spreading it would have us believe the inerrant Word of God came in only a single Bible version. Although other Bible versions may tell of the creation of the world and of mankind, the fall of mankind, God's love for mankind, the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, and of future things, spreaders of the KJVO myth would have us believe that all other Bible versions are errant because they may use a few different words than the King James Version. I dare say there is not a believer in the KJVO myth anywhere who can show us a "modern version" which does not teach all these truths. These spreaders of the KJVO myth are constantly guilty of claiming God's Word is false, unless it is the KJV itself, thus making a mockery of the Word of God. Pray for them.

Keith, I have repeatedly affirmed that the gospel is found in any version, but that does not make them the pure word of God.

I have repeatedly posted the article about NO Doctrines Are Changed? and so far no one, including yourself, has addressed any of these examples of perverted doctrine.

<http://brandplucked.webs.com/nodoctrinechanged.htm>

4. Spreaders of the KJVO myth are guilty of idolizing a specific Bible version. Most of those of the KJVO persuasion place the KJV in a position where the version itself is given status equal with the Trinity. The KJV becomes their "golden calf" in a sense. They want a "god" or a Bible version they can worship because they can see it and hold it in their hands. Pray for them.

Keith, once again, the "idolatry" you accuse us of is an old myth and a false allegation. I do not

worship or idolize the KJB. I toss it on my desk or in the back of my car, I write notes in it, I spill coffee on it, and I have no altar or burning candles where I celebrate it. But I do believe it is the inerrant, pure, and always true word of God.

You have no such Book anywhere on this earth that you believe is now the inerrant word of God and it is your unbelief that is spreading like a cancer.

5. The majority of those who spread the KJVO myth are masters of deception and confusion. Like Satan, the father of the KJVO myth, they love to cause confusion and divisiveness among the body of Christ. Those who believe in the KJVO myth are "brothers," but anyone who disagrees with the KJVO myth is normally treated like a child. In fact it is those who adhere to the KJVO myth who are stuck in the "milk" of the Word and who cannot advance to the "meat" until they reach a more mature level in their Christian walk. Pray for them.

Thanks Keith for another excellent summary of the situation as you see it. It is so nice of you to characterize us Bible believers as "masters of deception", "like Satan", and "stuck on the milk of the word", while you guys are so sweet and loving towards all your fellow non-believers in an inerrant Bible. We Bible believers are just a bunch of nasty folks who use unloving and unkind language when talking about other Christians, aren't we?

6. The KJVO myth is founded on the presumption that there are many people who are totally ignorant of the fact that God can spread His Word in any form He chooses. The KJVO myth relies on the gullibility and ignorance of how God spreads His Word of those who continue to spread the KJVO myth. Pray for them.

Keith, let me ask you this. Does God spread His word in a multitude of conflicting and contradictory versions that results in the majority of Christians now holding the view that No Bible is the inerrant word of God? Is this how God does things? I trow not.

We King James Bible believers are the only ones in the world who actually believe there is such a thing as an inerrant Bible we can hold in our hands, and yet you call this belief a myth.

Keith, I see this whole thing in a very different light that you do. Is it the "myth" that God has kept His promises to preserve His words in a Book here on this earth, or is the myth the view that No Bible is the inerrant word of God?

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Timothy 4:2-4

"Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way."  
Psalm 119:128

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