

"God Save the King"

One of the phrases frequently attacked in the King James Bible is "God save the king".

A modern version proponent recently wrote our Which Version club with the following criticism.

"There is another set of passages in which the King James Version translators used a dynamic equivalence method in which they inserted God's name where it is not in the original. This is in the phrases "God save the king" and "God save king [king's name]" in 1 Samuel 10:24; 2 Samuel 16:16; 1 Kings 1:25, 1 Kings 1:34, 1 Kings 1:39, 2 Kings 11:12; and 2 Chronicles 23:11.

This person then goes on to say that the King James translation of "God save the king" is "DEPLORABLE" because 1. a literal, word-for-word translation method was not used 2.the translators used colloquialism and idiom 3.they deceive the reader into thinking that these words are in the original 4.they take God's name in vain.

I am often amazed at the criticisms against the King James Bible that the modern version proponents bring up. They don't usually discover these things for themselves but copy and paste them from some anti-KJV site, like those of Doug Kutilek or James White.

They profess a great love for God's words, yet if you ask them where we common Christians can get a copy of the infallible words of God, they soon reveal that the only "infallible bible" they have exists solely in their minds and imaginations. They don't believe any translation can be the infallible words of God nor do they have any "Hebrew and Greek texts" that completely represent the originals. Their mystical bible is made up of their own personal opinions and preferences, and of course, their "bible" differs from the "bible" the next scholar has dreamed up for himself. Each man becomes his own final authority - "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Judges 21:25.

The KJB critic often fails to be aware of the fact that those versions so commonly recommended as being "reliable translations", like the NASB, NIV, ESV, NKJV, often do the very things they condemn in the KJB.

"And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, GOD SAVE THE KING." 1 Samuel 10:24.

Not only does the KJB correctly express this as "God save the king" but so also do Miles Coverdale 1535, The Great Bible (Cranmer) 1540, Matthew's Bible (John Rogers) 1549, the Bishop's Bible 1568, the Geneva Bible of 1599, the Revised Version of 1881, Webster's 1833 translation, the Douay version of 1950, the KJV 21st Century Version 1994, the Third Millennium Bible 1998, God's First Truth version 1999, The Word of Yah translation 1993, the Urim-Thummin Version 2001, the Messianic Torah Transliteration Scriptures - <http://www.messianic-torah-truth-seeker.org/Scriptures/> and Darby's translation employs the same phrase in 1 Kings 1:25.

Realize that the King James Bible and all these other versions are English translations, written to

English speaking persons (the target audience) expressing what this Hebrew phrase means in English. We do not have kings here in America, but those God fearing nations that had or continue to have kings or queens to this day still say 'God save the king' or 'God save the queen'. The fact is directly implied and recognized that it is God who gives and preserves the life of the king, as well as everyone else on this planet.

Deuteronomy 32:39 "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I MAKE ALIVE; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand."

"The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty HATH GIVEN ME LIFE." Job 33:4.

"The LORD killeth, AND MAKETH ALIVE; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up." 1 Samuel 2:6.

"And now, behold, the LORD HATH KEPT ME ALIVE, as he said, these forty years..." Joshua 14:10.

"Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me IN SAVING my life" Genesis 19:19.

"But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but SAVED the men children ALIVE."

All these verses use the very same Hebrew word used in the expression "God SAVE the king."

The verb used here is # 2421 ghah-yah, and is variously translated as "to live, to be whole, to revive, to recover, to quicken, to give life, to make alive, to keep alive, to restore to life, and to save.

The King James Bible, as well as the Geneva bible, Revised Version and all the others recognize the theological truth that it is God who saves the king alive or takes his life away , and express this theological truth in the English language.

If you want to get technical, it should be noted that in the modern translations, such as the NKJV, NIV, NASB, which say "LONG live the king", there is no corresponding word for "long" either. These translations express a merely secular wish for a long life without regard for the fact that it is God who gives, preserves, maintains, and saves alive.

It seems a bit hypocritical to say the KJB is adding the word "God", even though it is definitely implied in biblical theology, when all the new versions do this very thing themselves.

In the NIV alone, they have added the word "God" 104 times when not strictly found in the Old Testament Hebrew texts, added "God" 117 times to the New Testament and the word "Jesus" 336 times to the New Testament when not found in any Greek text.

Likewise the NASB adds the word God or Lord in Exodus 33:9; 34:10; 1 Samuel 16:7; 2 Kings 19:23; 2 Kings 23:19; 2 Chron. 32:24; Job 21:17,19; Hosea 1:6, 9; Matthew 15:5; Acts 7:4; 19:26, Romans 11:28, and in Matthew 16:22 has that dreaded "God forbid" when 'God' literally is not in the text.

The NKJV also "adds" the word God or Lord to Exodus 33:9; 1 Samuel 3:17; 2 Kings 23:19; 2

Chronicles 3:1; 2 Chron. 18:21; Job 7:4; 15:15; 24:22; Lamentations 3:28; Romans 3:29, Acts 7:5 and in Galatians 6:14 again has that dreaded "God forbid" with no 'God' literally in the text.

Other Bible versions that do this same thing are the Revised Version of 1881, the American Standard Version of 1901, the World English Bible, Weymouth Version, the Revised Standard Version, Douay, the NRSV, the modern Hebrew Names Version, the World English Bible, Wesley's Bible Translation, Today's English Version, the Living Bible, ESV, and the Jerusalem Bible.

In Romans 11:4 the King James Bible reads: "But what saith the answer of God unto him?" The NIV reads, "And what was God's answer to him?" It is interesting to note that there is no word in ANY Greek text for the word "God". Despite this fact the NIV reads "God's answer".

The last word in the previous phrase is 'chrematismos' and it carries the idea of 1) an answer from God or 2) a divine response or revelation. To communicate the meaning of the Greek in this sentence the word "God" or "Divine" must be "added" (even though NOTHING has been added) to the English text. In fact, if "God" were not 'added' then the sense of the verse would be lost.

Another example is found in Matthew 2:22, using the same word as in Romans 11:4. The KJB reads, "And being WARNED OF GOD in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way."

Here the NASV reads, "And having been warned by God..."; the NKJV reads, "And being warned by God..." Once again we see that the NASV, NKJV have committed the unpardonable sin, according to Bible critic, of stating "by God" when God is not in the Greek text.

The NASB, using this same Greek word, "adds" the word God or Divine in Matthew 2:12, 22; Acts 10:22, Romans 11:4, and in Hebrews 8:5 and 11:7, and the 2001 ESV does the same thing in Romans 11:4; Hebrews 8:5 and 11:7.

The NKJV also does this in Matthew 2:12, 22; Acts 10:22, Romans 11:4, Hebrews 8:5 and 11:7. These modern versions at other times render the same word as "called, warned, or revealed", and leave out the part about God. Sometimes the idea of God is implied in certain contexts and at other times it is not; this is how biblical languages work.

Likewise in Mark 7:11 we read in all texts: "But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, A GIFT (dooron), by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free."

However instead of the simple word "gift", the NASB, NIV, ESV all add the word GOD to the text by saying: "given TO GOD", while the NKJV paraphrases and adds these words: "dedicated TO THE TEMPLE", none of which are found in any Greek text.

The clear facts are that both the Hebrew and the Greek texts allow for 'God' to be implicitly stated in many expressions, even though strictly speaking, the literal word for God is not there in the text. There is nothing wrong, incorrect or deplorable in the Bishop's Bible, Coverdale, the Geneva Bible, the KJB, the Revised Version, Webster's, Douay, Darby, or the Third Millennium Bible by translating the phrase as "God save the king." Those who claim it is wrong merely show

their ignorance of how languages work when translated from one into another.

For another directly related subject showing the hypocrisy of the modern versionists who criticize the KJB for saying "God forbid" see [God Forbid](#)

Will Kinney

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