

Revelation 16:5 "Thou art righteous, O LORD, which art, and wast, AND SHALT BE, because thou hast judged thus."

The Book of Revelation has more textual variants than any other New Testament book. The reading found in the King James Bible in Revelation 16:5 represents one of the hundreds of such textual variants. It is admittedly a minority reading, but it should be noted that for every One minority reading found in the KJB, there are at least 20 such minority readings found in the modern versions like the NASB, NIV, ESV. These modern versions often do not even agree with each other. One will follow a particular minority reading while the other will disagree and follow another.

For example, in Revelation 15:3 the KJB, NKJV, Tyndale, Geneva, Young's, Spanish Reina Valera say: "just and true are thy ways, thou King OF SAINTS." (hagiwn)

The NASB follows other texts and says: "King OF THE NATIONS" (ethwn), while the NIV 1984 edition follows different ones still and says: "King OF THE AGES" (aiwniwn). Oh, but wait! Now the 2011 edition of the NIV has come out and they have once again changed this to read "King of NATIONS". This is very similar to the other Catholic versions. The older Douay-Rheims and the Douay of 1950 read "king of AGES". Then the 1970 St. Joseph New American Bible and the 1985 New Jerusalem changed this to "king of NATIONS" but now once again the 2009 Catholic Public Domain Version has gone back to "king of AGES". You never know what is going to come down the pike next.

Another instance of fickle changes and disagreements among the modern versions is found in Revelation 13:10. There we read: "...HE THAT KILLETH with the sword MUST (dei) be killed with the sword..." "He that killeth with the sword MUST" is in the active voice; he is doing the killing. And there is the additional word "must" which in Greek is a three letter word DEI. This is the reading of the Textus Receptus, Sinaiticus and manuscript C. It also used to read this way in the previous Westcott-Hort and the Nestle Greek texts. I have a copy of the Nestle critical Greek text 4th edition, 1934 and it clearly reads the active voice and has the additional word "dei". "he that killeth must..." (apoktenei dei)

"HE THAT KILLETH with the sword MUST..." (active voice, and includes the word "must") is the reading of Tyndale, the Geneva Bible, the Revised Version, the American Standard Version, the RSV, NRSV, NASB, NKJV, the Spanish Reina Valera and Lamsa's translation of the Peshitta.

However, later on, the Nestle Greek text was once again changed and they decided to follow the reading of ONE manuscript, that is, Alexandrinus. This single manuscript changes the reading from "he that killeth" (apoktenei) to "he that is to be killed" (apoktantheenai) and it also removes the Greek word "must" - DEI. Now, the NIV, ESV and Holman versions have adopted this new reading based on ONE manuscript, and they now read: "IF ANYONE IS TO BE KILLED with the sword, with the sword he will be killed." Notice that the RSV and NRSV both followed the King James reading, but now the new ESV (a revision of the old RSV, NRSV) has now "scientifically" decided to go along with the NIV and follow a different text, and the 1995 NASB doesn't even follow the newest UBS 4th edition text, so it must be "out of date". The older Catholic Douay version read like the KJB and the Traditional Text, but the newer St. Joseph NAB now reads like the NIV, ESV, Holman and ISV, because they are all based on the same ever changing UBS critical text. This is how the "scholars' game" is played.

Revelation 18:2 - KJB - "And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon is fallen, is

fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful BIRD." (orneou)

So read the Majority of all texts, the TR AND Sinaiticus. "every unclean and hateful BIRD" is also the reading of the RV, ASV, NKJV, NASB, RSV, The Message, and the NIV 1973 and 1984 editions.

However manuscript A (Alexandrinus) reads "the cage of every unclean and hateful BEAST." and omits the part about "cage of every unclean bird" (theerion)

The previous Westcott-Hort, Nestle's Greek texts read as do the King James Bible and even the NASB, NIV 1984, but later on the UBS Greek "scholars" decided to change it, and it now includes both readings in full.

So now the 2003 Holman Standard and the 2001 ESV, and the brand new ISV (International Standard Version) have come out and they add this extra reading of five Greek words which follows neither the Majority text, Sinaiticus nor Alexandrinus. These three latest versions read:

"Fallen, fallen, is Babylon the great! She has become a lair for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, A HAUNT FOR EVERY UNCLEAN BIRD, AND A HAUNT FOR EVERY UNCLEAN AND DESPICABLE BEAST." (Holman Standard 2003, ESV 2001.) "He cried out in a powerful voice, "Fallen! Babylon the Great has fallen! She has become a home for demons. She is A PRISON FOR EVERY UNCLEAN SPIRIT, A PRISON FOR EVERY UNCLEAN BIRD, AND A PRISON FOR EVERY UNCLEAN AND HATED BEAST." (ISV). So, it looks like not even the "old" NIV of 1984 nor the 1995 NASB are now "up to date with the latest scholarly findings"!!!

Revelation 18:2 NIV 1984 - "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a HOME for demons and a haunt for every EVIL spirit, a haunt for every unclean and detestable BIRD."

Revelation 18:2 NIV 2011 - "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a DWELLING for demons and a haunt for every IMPURE spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, A HAUNT FOR EVERY UNCLEAN AND detestable ANIMAL."

The new NIV 2011 now takes part from the majority of texts and the other 5 words they add from just one manuscript which also omits the previous 5 Greek words found in the other manuscripts. So, they now include both readings in a single verse, and there is no Greek manuscript on this earth that reads that way. They just "made it up" by combining the various readings from among several manuscripts. Modern Textual Criticism is a "science", don't ya know ;-)

Here are a few more examples of how the modern versions follow different texts and don't agree among themselves.

Revelation 21:3 "And I heard a great voice out of HEAVEN saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, AND BE THEIR GOD."

There are two textual problems with this verse. The word HEAVEN is the Majority reading, as well as that of the TR, the Syriac, Coptic, Old Latin, the Spanish Reina Valera, and the NKJV. However the NASB, NIV, RSV follow Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus, and say: "I heard a great voice out of THE THRONE saying..."

The second textual variant is where we see more of the hypocrisy and fickleness of what they call the "science of textual criticism". The final words in this verse: "AND BE THEIR GOD" are found in multiplied scores of Greek manuscripts including Alexandrinus, the Syriac Peshitta, Philoxenian, Harclean, and the Old Latin.

"And be their God" is also the reading of Wycliffe 1395, Tyndale 1525, Coverdale 1535, Geneva Bible, the Revised Version of 1881, the American Standard Version of 1901, the NKJV, the NIV, the TNIV, the 2004 Holman Standard and the new ESV (English Standard Version). However the NASB from 1960 to 1995 continues to omit these words, as well as the RSV and the NRSV. The silly and misleading footnote in the NASB of 1995 should be noted. The 1960 NASB footnotes: "Some ancient manuscripts add "and be their God". The RSV footnote says: "Other ancient authorities add "and be their God", BUT now the new 1995 NASB tells us: "ONE early manuscript reads: "and be their God". This is flat out deception!!! The UBS Greek text lists ONLY ONE manuscript that OMITTS these words, and that is Sinaiticus. Wallace's NET bible version also omits these precious words of inspired Scripture.

The older Nestle Greek text omitted these words, but the newer critical Greek UBS text has once again changed, and they now include these words, though in brackets. Notice too that the previous RSV, and NRSV omitted them, but now the revision of the revision of the revision has once again placed them back into the verse as it has always stood in the King James Bible. Such is the true nature of what the scholars like to call "the science of textual criticism".

In the very last verse of Revelation 22:21 we read in the KJB and the NKJV: "The grace of OUR lord Jesus CHRIST, be with YOU all." Here the NASB, NIV unite in omitting "our" and "Christ" but instead of reading "you all" (pantwn humwn) the NASB follows neither the Majority, nor the TR, but Alexandrinus which omits "you" and says: "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with ALL." This is the reading of ONE Greek manuscript.

The NIV, on the other hand, follows Sinaiticus and even paraphrases this. Sinaiticus says "grace...be with THE SAINTS (twn hagiwn) and the NIV reads: "the grace....be with GOD'S PEOPLE." Again, this is the reading of ONE Greek manuscript.

Revelation 16:5

"Thou art righteous, O LORD, which art, and wast, AND SHALT BE, because thou hast judged thus."

The texts that underlie Revelation 16:5 vary greatly among themselves. The word LORD is found in 051, 296, 2049, some Latin copies, the Coptic Boharic and Ethiopic ancient versions. LORD is also the reading of Tyndale 1525, Coverdale 1535, the Great Bible 1540, Matthew's Bible 1549 the Geneva Bible 1587, KJB, NKJV, Young's, Webster's 1833 translation, the KJV 21, Third Millennium Bible, Douay, Italian Diodati, Spanish Reina Valera, and Green's Literal KJV.

The NASB, NIV, ESV, RSV all omit the word LORD.

The second part is the one that is more hotly debated - "AND SHALT BE". It is so hypocritical to hear man like James White complain about this single reading made up of a single word and

make the claim that if the King James Bible reading is correct, then the church was left without the true words of God for 15 centuries. We do not know what thousands of manuscripts read in this single verse simply because they no longer exist, but there is ancient support for this reading, as we shall soon see. Mr. James White himself sides with the view that some 3000 words were in most of the church's bibles for centuries that he thinks should not have been there at all and he still to this day does not believe that the church EVER HAD much less HAS NOW any Bible in any language that is the complete, inspired and infallible words of God. All you have to do is ask the man where we can get a copy of this "inspired and infallible Bible" he professes to believe in so that we can read it for ourselves to see the differences and similarities to the bible we are reading now. But he will NEVER do this. Why? Simply because James White's "inspired and infallible Bible" is a mystical, unseen, philosophical and hypothetical product of his own imagination. He has no tangible infallible Bible to give you, and couldn't show you one if his life depended on it.

"AND SHALT BE" is the reading found in the Greek texts of Beza, which the KJB translators mainly used, and in Elzevir's text of 1633. It is the reading of the KJB, NKJV, Green's Literal KJV, Webster's, Young's, the KJV 21st Century, the Third Millennium Bible, the French Martin of 1744, the French Ostervald of 1996, the Spanish Reina Valera of 1865 Angel de Mora and the 2004 Reina Valera Gómez Bible.

Beza himself comments on this change in a marginal note of his Greek New Testament: *"And shall be": The usual publication is "holy one," which shows a division, contrary to the whole phrase which is foolish, distorting what is put forth in scripture. The Vulgate, however, whether it is articulately correct or not, is not proper in making the change to "holy," since a section (of the text) has worn away the part after "and," which would be absolutely necessary in connecting "righteous" and "holy one." But with John there remains a completeness where the name of Jehovah (the Lord) is used, just as we have said before, 1:4; he always uses the three closely together, therefore it is certainly "and shall be," for why would he pass over it in this place? And so without doubting the genuine writing in this ancient manuscript, I faithfully restored in the good book what was certainly there, "shall be." So why not truthfully, with good reason, write "which is to come" as before in four other places, namely 1:4 and 8; likewise in 4:3 and 11:17, because the point is the just Christ shall come away from there and bring them into being: in this way he will in fact appear setting in judgment and exercising his just and eternal decrees.*

(Theodore Beza, Nouum Sive Nouum Foedus Iesu Christi, 1589. Translated into English from the Latin footnote.)

Beza's reasoning is sound. If you look at the theme of the book of Revelation itself, we see in Revelation 1:4 and 8: "Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come;" - "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." In Revelation 4:8 we read: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." and in Revelation 11:17 "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come". These verses fit in perfectly with the constant theme of our coming Lord who is the beginning and the ending, the Alpha and Omega "Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus."

I've also located several independent English translations that also read "and shall be". Among these are the Natural Israelite Bible of 2008 done by Ed Schneider; The Urim-Thummin Version 2001, A Revised Translation 1815 by David Macrae; The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments 1808 by Charles Thomson, and A New Family Bible 1824 by Benjamin Boothroyd. "And shall be" is also the reading of the Greek texts the Trinitarian Bible Society of 1894, and that of J.P. Green's interlinear Greek text. The KJB reading is also supported by a Latin commentary on the book of Revelation done way back in 380 A.D. by Beatus Beatus of Liebana's compiled commentary on the book of Revelation (786 A.D.) where he uses the Latin phrase "qui fuisti et futurus es". In this compilation he was preserving the commentary of Tyconius (approx 380 A.D.). So there is manuscript support. Whether Beza knew of it or not, the 1611 translators may well have, and we do not know what manuscripts they had at their disposal, likely many more than we know of four centuries later.

Jack Moorman, in his "When the King James Departs from the "Majority Text", says: The King James reading is in harmony with the four other places in Revelation where this phrase is found. 1:4 "him which is, and which was, and which is to come" 1:8 "the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" 4:8 "Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come" 11:17 "Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come" Indeed Christ is the Holy One, but in the Scriptures of the Apostle John the title is found only once (1 John 2:20), and there, a totally different Greek word is used. The Preface to the Authorized Version reads, "With the former translations diligently compared and revised". (Jack Moorman)

What is of great interest is the English Hexapla Greek-5 English versions of 1841. Though the Greek text used in this printed Greek text follows the reading of *hosios* or "Holy", yet it footnotes that the reading of the Greek Received text is *esomenos* or "**and shalt be**". **It was called the Received Text reading way back in 1841.** You can see the site here: http://bible.zox.net/hex/_1304.htm

Among foreign language Bibles that follow the same Greek texts as the King James Bible and read "AND SHALT BE" are the French Martin of 1744 and the French Ostervald 1996 with both reading: - "Seigneur, QUI ES, QUI ÉTAIS, et QUI SERAS", the Spanish Reina Valera of 1865 Angel de Mora and the Reina Valera Gomez 2005 translation also read like the King James Bible - "Y oí al ángel de las aguas, que decía: Justo eres tú, oh Señor, que eres y que eras, Y SERAS, porque has juzgado así."

One well known modern Italian Bible is interesting in that it has combined the two readings. It is the 1991 New Italian Diodati and it reads "Tu sei giusto, o Signore, che sei e che eri e **che hai da venire, il Santo**, per aver giudicato queste cose." Translated this would be "You are just, O Lord, who is and who was and WHO IS TO COME, THE HOLY, because you have judged thus." For some reason, they include BOTH the Textus Receptus reading that underlies the KJB and some others, along with the other reading of "the Holy".

What is also of interest is that the earlier English Bibles apparently followed some other Greek texts because they do not read as the King James Bible nor as the Critical text versions like the

NASB, NIV, RSV. Wycliffe read: "Just art thou, Lord, that art, and that were hooli, that demest these thingis;" Wycliffe left out "and wast" and has the awkward reading that God "WERE Holy". This came from the Latin Vulgate, which came along after the Old Latin. On the other hand, Tyndale 1525, Coverdale 1535 and the Bishops Bible 1568 all read: Lord, which art, and wast, thou art RIGHTEOUS AND HOLY, because thou hast given such judgements." Here they add the word "righteous" Then the Geneva Bible came along and it differed from all four previous English bibles reading: "Lord, thou art iust, Which art, and Which wast: and Holy, because thou hast iudged these things."

Dr. Thomas Holland regarding the KJB reading of Revelation 16:5

http://www.purewords.org/kjb1611/html/rev16_5.htm

"First of all, to change the Trinitarian phraseology (which is used in Revelation 1:4, 8; 4:3; and 11:17) does break the sense of the passage and is inconsistent with the phrase used elsewhere by John. Furthermore, the addition of "Holy One" is awkward and is repetitive of the use of the phrase "Thou art righteous, O Lord."

Secondly, there are some textual variances among the changes made. The Greek text of Beza reads, "o wn, kai o hn, kai o esomenos" (who is, and was, and shall be).

Thirdly, P47 is not the only Greek text which is worn here. In fact, while P47 is slightly worn, the Greek text which Beza used was greatly worn. This is so noted by Beza himself in his footnote on Revelation 16:5 as he gives reason for his conjectural emendation:

"And shall be": The usual publication is "holy one," which shows a division, contrary to the whole phrase which is foolish, distorting what is put forth in scripture... But with John there remains a completeness where the name of Jehovah (the Lord) is used, just as we have said before, 1:4; he always uses the three closely together, therefore it is certainly "and shall be," for why would he pass over it in this place? And so without doubting the genuine writing in this ancient manuscript, I faithfully restored in the good book what was certainly there, "shall be." So why not truthfully, with good reason, write "which is to come" as before in four other places, namely 1:4 and 8; likewise in 4:3 and 11:17, because the point is the just Christ shall come away from there and bring them into being: in this way he will in fact appear setting in judgment and exercising his just and eternal decrees. (Theodore Beza, *Nouum Sive Nouum Foedus Iesu Christi*, 1589. Translated into English from the Latin footnote.)

Wordsworth also points out that in Revelation 16:5, Beatus of Liebana (who compiled a commentary on the book of Revelation) uses the Latin phrase "qui fuisti et futures es." This gives some additional evidence for the Greek reading by Beza (although he apparently drew his conclusion for other reasons). Beatus compiled his commentary in 786 AD.

Furthermore, Beatus was not writing his own commentary. Instead he was making a compilation and thus preserving the work of Tyconius, who wrote his commentary on Revelation around 380 AD (Aland and Aland, 211 and 216. Altaner, 437. Wordsworth, 533.). So, it would seem that as early as 786, and possibly even as early as 380, there was an Old Latin text which read as Beza's Greek text does." (end of article by Dr. Thomas Holland)

Instead of "and shalt be" (ho esomenos) most texts read "the Holy" (ho hosios). However there is variation even among these. P47, which is the oldest remaining Greek copy and dates to the third century has a nonsensical reading of "who was AND holy". Vaticanus does not contain the book of Revelation, so we cannot look to it for confirmation one way or the other. Sinaiticus says "who was THE Holy", while Alexandrinus reads: "who was Holy", omitting the word "the".

Even among the so called Majority of texts, there are four slightly different readings found, some adding extra definite articles or the word "and", while others do not in varying combinations. Another King James Bible believer sent me the following site where you can actually see the Sinaiticus manuscript and what it looks like. He writes: These images might be interesting too. It's the line "ο ων και ο ην ο οσιος" (who is and who was that holy one)" in Sinaiticus. The smaller image is a close-up of the word which appears to be οσιος. But as you can see, the last four letters of οσιος are disproportionately smaller, scrunched together and barely legible. It's very suspicious, and indicative of a scribal "correction." The images are from <http://codexsinaiticus.org/en/>

If you go to the site and look at the Sinaiticus manuscript where Revelation 16:5 is found, what you find are very large capital letters in the entire line, but at the very edge of the line on the border of the manuscript the letters sios which make up osios are about one-fourth the size of the previous letters and they are scrunched together and barely legible.

You can read much more about the evolution of the textual varieties found in Revelation 16:5 and how not even the remaining earliest manuscripts are in agreement among themselves in this single verse here:

<https://sites.google.com/site/kjvtoday/home/translation-issues/shalt-be-or-holy-one-in-revelation-165>

For the modern versionists who depend on one of the so called "oldest and best manuscripts", namely Sinaiticus, it may be an eye opener to see some of the really strange readings found in this text in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 4:8 "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."

But Sinaiticus says: "Holy, holy, holy, holy, holy, holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty..."

Revelation 7:4 and 14:3 Both verses mention the number of 144,000. However Sinaiticus has 140,000 in 7:4 and 141,000 in 14:3.

Revelation 10:1 "And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and A RAINBOW was upon his head..." Sinaiticus says: "clothed with a cloud with HAIR on his head."

Revelation 21:4 "For THE FORMER THINGS are passed away". Sinaiticus reads: "For THE SHEEP are passed away."

Revelation 21:5 "Behold, I make all things NEW", while Sinaiticus says: "Behold, I make all things EMPTY."

What we have here in Revelation 16:5 is a very common cluster of divergent readings and the King James Bible went with one reading while other versions went with another.

It is a well documented fact that multiplied numbers of ancient Greek manuscripts were available to the translators of early English Bible versions that we no longer have today. Another "minority reading" found in the KJB is 1 John 5:7 "the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one". Only a few Greek manuscripts exist today which contain this reading, yet it was not always so. John Gill remarks in his commentary on 1 John regarding this trinitarian verse in the texts used by Stephanus in 1550: "Out of sixteen ancient copies of Robert Stephens's, nine of them had it." This example serves to illustrate that some readings found in the KJB were supported by far more textual evidence than is available for us today.

The King James Bible translators did not slavishly follow Beza's Greek text, but after much prayer, study and comparison, did include Beza's reading of "and shalt be" in Revelation 16:5. We do not know what other Greek texts the KJB translators possessed at that time that may have helped them in their decisions. They then passed this reading on to future generations in the

greatest Bible ever written. Since God has clearly placed His mark of divine approval upon the KJB throughout the last 400 years, I trust that He providentially guided the translators to give us His true words.

"Kept by the power of God through faith" - 1 Peter 1:5

Will Kinney