



# The Burning Bush

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# THE BURNING BUSH

Theological Journal of the  
FAR EASTERN BIBLE COLLEGE

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## **FEBC FACULTY UNITED ON VERBAL PLENARY PRESERVATION (VPP)**

The original statement of the Bible-Presbyterian (BP) Church on the Holy Scriptures as stated in the constitution of many BP churches today reads, “*We believe in the divine, verbal and plenary inspiration of the Scriptures in the original languages, their consequent inerrancy and infallibility, and as the Word of God, the Supreme and final authority in faith and life*” (Article 4.2.1). Article 4.2.1 does not explicitly state or identify the Holy Scriptures in which we regard as the inspired, infallible and inerrant Word of God except that it is “the Scriptures in the original languages.” This was because when the BP Church in Singapore was founded in 1950, the humble, God-fearing leaders of the Church generally understood the Reformed and Protestant doctrine of Holy Scripture, and there was no need to express more than that which is contained in the wording of the Constitution. It ought also to be noted that the attack on Scripture in those days concerned the Scripture’s inspiration and not preservation. However, in this modern age of confusion over the nature and identity of the Holy Scriptures, the FEBC found it necessary to state in no uncertain terms what it believes to be the Holy Scriptures, 100% inspired and 100% preserved to the jot and tittle (Matt 5:18).

On February 27, 2007, the lecturers and tutors of the Far Eastern Bible College (FEBC) reaffirmed unanimously their commitment to the Statement of Faith drafted and approved by the Board of Directors and the Theological Faculty in 2003. Articles 4.2.1, and 4.2.1.1/2/3 of the Statement of Faith as contained in the FEBC Constitution read:

*4.2.1 We believe in the divine, Verbal Plenary Inspiration (Autographs) and Verbal Plenary Preservation (Apographs) of the Scriptures in the original languages, their consequent inerrancy and infallibility, and as the perfect Word of God, the supreme and final authority in faith and life (2 Tim 3:16, 2 Pet 1:20-21, Ps 12:6-7, Matt 5:18, 24:35).*

- 4.2.1.1 *We believe the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament underlying the Authorised (King James) Version to be the very Word of God, infallible and inerrant.*
- 4.2.1.2 *We uphold the Authorised (King James) Version to be the Word of God—the best, most faithful, most accurate, most beautiful translation of the Bible in the English language, and do employ it alone as our primary scriptural text in the public reading, preaching, and teaching of the English Bible.*
- 4.2.1.3 *The Board of Directors and Faculty shall affirm their allegiance to the Word of God by taking the Dean Burgon Oath at every annual convocation: “I swear in the Name of the Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit that I believe “the Bible is none other than the voice of Him that sitteth upon the throne. Every book of it, every chapter of it, every verse of it, every word of it, every syllable of it, every letter of it, is direct utterance of the Most High. The Bible is none other than the Word of God, not some part of it more, some part of it less, but all alike the utterance of Him that sitteth upon the throne, faultless, unerring, supreme.”*

Not only the FEBC, but the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC) in 1998 and 2000, the Trinitarian Bible Society (TBS) in 2005, and the Dean Burgon Society (DBS) have all found it necessary to state clearly the nature and identity of the Holy Scriptures that we have in our hands today.<sup>1</sup> FEBC stands with them in their affirmation of the present infallibility and inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures, and the identification of the divinely preserved texts to be the Hebrew Masoretic Text and the Greek Textus Receptus.

**We hereby beseech all Bible-believing Christians to affirm and defend the Biblical doctrines of the Verbal Plenary Inspiration (VPI) and Verbal Plenary Preservation (VPP) of the Holy Scriptures in the Traditional Hebrew Masoretic Text and the Greek Textus Receptus on which the Reformation Bible, the King James Bible, is based.**

#### **FEBC Constitution Article 4: Statement of Faith**

- 4.1 The Statement of Faith of the College shall be in accordance with that system commonly called “the Reformed Faith” as expressed in the Confession of Faith as set forth by the historic Westminster Assembly together with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms.

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- 4.2 In abbreviated form, the chief tenets of the doctrine of the College, apart from the Doctrinal Position Statement of the College, shall be as follows:
- 4.2.1 We believe in the divine, Verbal Plenary Inspiration (Autographs) and Verbal Plenary Preservation (Apographs) of the Scriptures in the original languages, their consequent inerrancy and infallibility, and as the perfect Word of God, the supreme and final authority in faith and life (2 Tim 3:16, 2 Pet 1:20-21, Ps 12:6-7, Matt 5:18, 24:35).
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- 4.2.2 We believe in one God existing in three co-equal and co-eternal Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Deut 6:4, 1 John 5:7).
- 4.2.3 We believe that Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and is true God and true man in complete and direct fulfilment of Isaiah 7:14 (Matt 1:20-23, John 1:1, 14, Col 2:9).
- 4.2.4 We believe God created the whole universe *ex nihilo* (out of nothing) by the Word of His mouth, and all very good, in the space of six literal or natural days (Gen 1:1, Exod 20:11, Ps 148:5, John 1:3, Col 1:16, Heb 11:3).

- 4.2.5 We believe that man was created in the image of God, but sinned through the fall of Adam, thereby incurring not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature and become sinners in thought, word and deed (Gen 1:26-27, Rom 3:19-20, 5:12, 6:23).
- 4.2.6 We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died a propitiatory and expiatory death as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who repent of their sins and believe in Him are justified before God on the grounds of His shed blood (Rom 5:8-11, 1 John 2:2, 1 Pet 1:18-19).
- 4.2.7 We believe in the bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His ascension into Heaven, and in His exaltation at the right hand of God, where He intercedes for us as our High Priest and Advocate (1 Cor 15:1-4, 15-19, Phil 2:9-11, Heb 3:1, 4:14-16).
- 4.2.8 We believe in the personal, visible and premillennial return of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to judge this world, restore His chosen nation Israel to greatness, and bring peace to the nations as King of kings and Lord of lords (Jer 3:17, Zech 14:9, Acts 1:6, Rom 11:26, Rev 20:1-7).
- 4.2.9 We believe that salvation is by grace through faith alone, not by works, and that all who repent and receive the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour are born again by the Holy Spirit and thereby become the children of God (Rom 5:1, 8:14-16, Eph 2:8-10, 1 Tim 2:5, Tit 3:5).
- 4.2.10 We believe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and to convict and regenerate the sinner, and indwell, guide, instruct and empower the believer for godly living and service (John 16:7-14, Rom 8:1-2).
- 4.2.11 We believe that Christ instituted the Sacrament of Baptism for believers and their children and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which sacraments shall be observed by His Church till He comes (Matt 28:19, 1 Cor 11:23-26).
- 4.2.12 We believe in the eternal security, bodily resurrection and eternal blessedness of the saved, and in the bodily resurrection and eternal conscious punishment of the lost (John 10:27-29, 1 Cor 15:51-53, 1 Thess 4:13-18, Rev 20:11-15).

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4.2.13 We believe in the real, spiritual unity in Christ of all redeemed by His precious blood and the necessity of faithfully maintaining the purity of the Church in doctrine and life according to the Word of God, and the principle and practice of biblical separation from the apostasy of the day being spearheaded by the ecumenical movement, charismatic movement and other false movements that contradict the Holy Scriptures and the Historic Christian Faith (2 Cor 6:14-7:1, Jude 3, Rev 18:4).

**Notes**

<sup>1</sup> See ICCC, TBS, and DBS statements as published in *The Burning Bush* (July 2006): 72-73, and *The Burning Bush* (January 2007): 36-39.

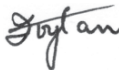
Signed:



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## **CANON, TEXTS, AND WORDS: LOST AND FOUND OR PRESERVED AND IDENTIFIED?**

Jeffrey Khoo

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Judeo-Christian Bible comprising the Old Testament (OT) and the New Testament (NT) Scriptures is usually discussed in terms of its respective canons, texts, and words in the original languages. As seen in our previous discussion,<sup>1</sup> there is no issue with the divine inspiration of the Scriptures in the original writings or autographs. The issue today involves the transmission of the Scriptures from the time they were originally written until the present day. Since the autographs, the original scripts written by the original writers themselves, no longer exist, having long perished, can Bible-believers today say they have in their possession the very same Scriptures or Words that God had originally given by divine inspiration?

Many modern pastors and scholars deny that there exists such an infallible and inerrant Bible today. Although they may believe in the Verbal Plenary Inspiration (VPI), they do not believe in the Verbal Plenary Preservation (VPP) of the Holy Scriptures. In their minds, the inspiration of the Scripture is a miracle from God, but the preservation of Scripture is man's work without any special superintendence or intervention by God.<sup>2</sup> Such a view is held nowadays by those who call themselves "Reformed." The "Reformed" pastors and teachers of today actually speak in a Bibliological tongue that is strange to the ears of the Reformed scholars and Reformation saints. This strange understanding of the Bible that is far removed from the Reformed faith concerns looking at the infallibility and inerrancy of the Bible only in terms of (1) its divine inspiration and not divine preservation, and (2) its autographs and not apographs.<sup>3</sup>



In view of the current fallacious paradigm and ignorant confusion over the nature of the Sacred Scriptures of yesterday and today, it is the intention of this paper to recapture the true Biblical teaching and Reformed thinking of the Scriptures, that (1) the verbally inspired Scriptures are verbally preserved by God and God alone; and (2) the supremely authoritative Scriptures are the extant infallible apographs and not the non-existent autographs. As such (1) the inspired Scriptures were never lost but *always preserved* without any corruption or missing words; (2) the Sacred Scriptures are *always infallible and inerrant*, and *supremely authoritative not only in the days of the Reformation, but also today—Sola Scriptura!*

This paper seeks to identify where and what the infallible and inerrant Scriptures are in terms of their Canon, Texts, and Words.

## CANON

The word “canonicity” comes from the Greek *kanon* which means “a straight rod,” or “a measuring rule.” When applied to the Scriptures, it means the standard list of divinely inspired *books*—the Word of God—which serves as the only authoritative basis for the faith and practice of the Church.

### Old Testament Canon

By the time of Jesus Christ, the OT Canon was already completed and identified. The Jews regarded the 39 books of the *Tanakh*—the Hebrew OT Canon comprising the *Torah* (Law), the *Nabi'im* (Prophets), and the *Kethubim* (Writings) to be nothing short of the direct utterance of the Most High—absolutely infallible and supremely authoritative. These 39 books were recognised as the divinely inspired books for they came during the period of Biblical revelation—the period between Moses (1450 BC) and Malachi (450 BC).

The identification of the OT Canon is given by the Author of the Canon Himself—the Lord Jesus Christ—in Luke 24:44,

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the *law* of Moses, and in the *prophets*, and in the *psalms*, concerning me.

The Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms/Writings make up the 39 books of the OT Canon that Jesus regarded as the very Word of God. Note that there is no mention of the Apocrypha—the 14 books<sup>4</sup>

<b>OLD TESTAMENT CANON AND BOOKS</b>		
<b>Canon</b>	<b>Books</b>	<b>Period</b>
<i>Torah (Law)</i>	Genesis	15 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Exodus	
	Leviticus	
	Numbers	
	Deuteronomy	
<i>Nabi'im (Prophets)</i>	Joshua	15 <sup>th</sup> - 14 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Judges	14 <sup>th</sup> - 11 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	1 Samuel	12 <sup>th</sup> - 11 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	2 Samuel	11 <sup>th</sup> - 10 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	1 Kings	10 <sup>th</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	2 Kings	9 <sup>th</sup> - 6 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Isaiah	8 <sup>th</sup> - 7 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Jeremiah	7 <sup>th</sup> - 6 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Ezekiel	6 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Hosea	8 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Joel	9 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Amos	8 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Obadiah	9 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Jonah	8 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Micah	8 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Nahum	7 <sup>th</sup> Century BC

CANON, TEXTS, AND WORDS

<b>OLD TESTAMENT CANON AND BOOKS</b>		
<b>Canon</b>	<b>Books</b>	<b>Period</b>
<i>Nabi'im</i> (Prophets)	Habakkuk	7 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Zephaniah	7 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Haggai	6 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Zechariah	6 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Malachi	5 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
<i>Kethubim</i> (Writings)	Psalms	11 <sup>th</sup> - 10 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Job	20 <sup>th</sup> - 16 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Proverbs	10 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Ruth	13 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Song of Solomon	10 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Ecclesiastes	10 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Lamentations	6 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Esther	5 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Daniel	7 <sup>th</sup> - 6 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Ezra	6 <sup>th</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	Nehemiah	5 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	1 Chronicles	11 <sup>th</sup> - 10 <sup>th</sup> Century BC
	2 Chronicles	10 <sup>th</sup> - 6 <sup>th</sup> Century BC

written during the 400 “silent years” of the inter-testamental period when there was no prophetic voice until John the Baptist came onto the scene. The Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF) acknowledged the traditional and ecclesiastical view that the apocryphal books were not

divinely inspired but merely human books with some historical value, but no spiritual or doctrinal value whatsoever:

The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon of the Scripture, and therefore are of no authority in the Church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved, or made use of, than other human writings (I:III).

It is a Biblical fact that God had intended a fixed number of 39 divinely inspired OT books to serve as the supremely authoritative Standard of faith and life for the Church. If there is such a divinely ordained set of canonical books for the OT, surely a similar set of canonical books can be expected for the NT.

### **New Testament Canon**

The Lord Jesus Christ in fulfilment of the *Tanakh*—the OT Canon—was born of a virgin, lived a sinlessly perfect life, died on the cross for the sins of the world, was buried, and on the third day rose from the dead just as the OT Scriptures had predicted. His life and work on earth marked the beginning of the New Covenant period of a better administration of the Covenant of Grace which called for an NT Canon to regulate the life and faith of New Covenant saints.

At Pentecost, God did not present the Bible to the New Covenant Church as a complete whole. The NT Canon like the OT Canon required a period of time for its inscripturation and completion. This period of divinely inspired inscripturation occurred during the time of the Apostles of Jesus Christ. It began with the Gospel of Matthew in AD 40 and ended with the Revelation of John in AD 90.

Since Jesus gave no explicit word concerning the number of NT books and their specific identities, how did the Church finally arrive at the 27 books? It is a question that needs to be answered today especially when the Church is being attacked by pop-modernism that questions the authenticity and certainty of the 27 books that form our NT Canon. Dan Brown's bestseller—*The Da Vinci Code*—for instance speaks of the newly discovered Gnostic Gospels of Nag Hammadi as the authentic and authoritative NT books. Brown dismissed the Four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John in the NT Canon today as fabricated accounts of the life of Christ produced in the time of Emperor Constantine (4<sup>th</sup> century AD). According to him, these Four Gospels should be rejected and

replaced by the Gnostic Gospels.<sup>5</sup> In other words, the true Gospels were once lost but are now found!

This begs the question of whether the Church has been reading from the wrong Gospels all these centuries. Were the true books about the life of Christ lost very early and now found? Or were the true books the ones that God has preserved from the beginning, and received by the Church from the time they were written until today? By virtue of God's promise of the preservation of His words in Psalm 12:6-7, Matthew 5:18, 24:35, John 10:35, and 1 Peter 1:23-25, we believe the latter to be true—that the all-powerful Author of the Christian Scriptures has supernaturally and continuously preserved His words throughout the ages, and kept them pure and uncorrupted, available and accessible to His Church, so that His people might appeal to them as their supremely authoritative Canon or rule of faith and practice without any doubt or uncertainty.

Nevertheless, Brown's pop-modernistic attack on the Scriptures does great damage to the testimony of the Scriptures and of the Church. Ben Witherington III highlighted the serious implications of Brown's canonical-critical book:

The issue of canon—what books constitute the final authority for Christians—is no small matter. If the critics are correct, then Christianity must indeed be radically reinterpreted, just as they suggest. If they are wrong, traditional Christians have their work cut out for them, because many seekers remain skeptical of claims to biblical authority.<sup>6</sup>

To put it bluntly: No Canon, no Christ; no Canon, no Gospel!

Was the Biblical Canon falsified and the Christian Gospel fabricated? There was in fact no "orthodox" fabrication of the Gospels as posited by Brown but the very opposite. History reveals the unorthodox corruption of the Scriptures by Alexandrian heretics who denied and attacked the full deity of Christ.<sup>7</sup> It is a fact that shortly after the inspired NT books were completed, spurious books claiming inspiration were also written (eg, Acts of Paul, Revelation of Peter, Epistle of Barnabas, Gospel of Peter, Gospel of Thomas, Acts of Andrew etc).<sup>8</sup> The contents of these false books do not fit the nature of divinely inspired writ. They are filled with myths and even blasphemous stories of Christ. The born again and Spirit indwelt believer can tell straightaway that these books are not of God (John 16:13, 1 Cor 2:12-14, 1 John 2:27). The early believers had long rejected them as spurious.

So how was the NT Canon arrived at? The Canon was arrived at by the ecclesiastical consensus of God's people who were indwelt and led by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13). The Council of Carthage (AD 397), chaired by the pre-eminent early church father and theologian—Augustine—identified the sacred books by name. There were exactly 27 of them.

<b>NEW TESTAMENT CANON AND BOOKS</b>		
<b>Canon</b>	<b>Books</b>	<b>Date</b>
Gospels	Matthew	AD 40
	Mark	AD 45
	Luke	AD 45-55
	John	AD 70-90
History	Acts	AD 62-64
Epistles	Romans	AD 55
	1 Corinthians	AD 54
	2 Corinthians	AD 55
	Galatians	AD 49
	Ephesians	AD 60
	Philippians	AD 60
	Colossians	AD 60
	1 Thessalonians	AD 50-51
	2 Thessalonians	AD 50-51
	1 Timothy	AD 62
	2 Timothy	AD 63
	Titus	AD 62

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<b>NEW TESTAMENT CANON AND BOOKS</b>		
<b>Canon</b>	<b>Books</b>	<b>Date</b>
Epistles	Philemon	AD 60
	Hebrews	AD 60-65
	James	AD 40-44
	1 Peter	AD 63
	2 Peter	AD 63-64
	1 John	AD 80-90
	2 John	AD 80-90
	3 John	AD 80-90
	Jude	AD 60-70
Apocalypse	Revelation	AD 90

The Canon of NT books above was no innovation, but an official statement of what the Church by ecclesiastical consensus had already accepted as inspired Scripture by virtue of its divine origination. The WCF states:

We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture. And the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is, to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God: yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts (I:V).

The NT Canon is under attack today like never before. Bible-believing Christians ought not to be naïve but to put on the whole armour of God (Eph 6:11-18). We ought to realise that truth is ascertained by

spiritual knowledge, and we need to pray for the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth (John 16:13).

## **TEXTS**

The texts of the Holy Scriptures refer to the copies of the Scriptures which come either in handwritten or in printed form.

### **Old Testament Text**

The OT Scriptures were first given to Israel—God’s chosen nation. Romans 3:1-2 tells us that God had committed to the Jews the safekeeping and copying of the Holy Scriptures. Knowing well the divine nature of the Scriptures, that the words of the sacred pages were the very words of the Almighty God, they copied the Scriptures with great precision and accuracy employing the following rules:

- (1) The parchment must be made from the skin of clean animals; must be prepared by a Jew only, and the skins must be fastened together by strings taken from clean animals.
- (2) Each column must be no less than 48 and no more than 60 lines. The entire copy must be first lined, and if three words were written in it without the line, the copy was worthless.
- (3) The ink must be of no other color than black, and it must be prepared according to a special recipe.
- (4) No word or letter could be written from memory; the scribe must have an authentic copy before him, and he must read and pronounce aloud each word before writing it.
- (5) He must reverently wipe his pen each time before writing the word for “God,” and must wash his whole body before writing the word “Jehovah,” lest the holy name be contaminated.
- (6) Strict rules were given concerning the forms of the letters, spaces between letters, words, and sections, the use of the pen, the color of the parchment, etc.
- (7) The revision of a roll must be made within 30 days after the work was finished; otherwise it was worthless. One mistake on a sheet condemned the sheet; if three mistakes were found on any page, the entire manuscript was condemned.
- (8) Every word and every letter was counted, and if a letter were omitted, an extra letter inserted, or if one letter touched another, the manuscript was condemned and destroyed at once.<sup>9</sup>



These very strict rules of transcription show how precious the Jews had regarded the inspired words of God, and how precise their copying of these inspired words must have been. Such strict practices in copying “give us strong encouragement to believe that we have the real Old Testament, *the same one* which our Lord had and which was originally given by inspiration of God.”<sup>10</sup>

The present confusion in identifying the Hebrew Scriptures is not with the traditional copies which God has kept pure without corruption by His special providence, but with the printed editions of the Hebrew Text which comes in two types: (1) the Hebrew Masoretic Text—Ben Chayyim (1524-25), and (2) the *Biblia Hebraica*—Kittel (1937) and Stuttgart (1967/77).

The Ben Chayyim Text is the faithful text that follows the traditional and providentially preserved manuscripts. This Hebrew Text underlying the KJV is totally infallible and inerrant. The Ben Chayyim Text is published today by the Trinitarian Bible Society (TBS). TBS considers the Ben Chayyim Masoretic Text to be the definitive Hebrew Text for today.<sup>11</sup>

The Kittel and Stuttgart texts, on the other hand, display a critical apparatus that is filled with conjectural emendations that come from modern scholarship. These modern critical texts are the texts that underlie the NASV, NIV, and NKJV. The Kittel and Stuttgart texts contain 20,000-30,000 suggested corrections or changes to the OT Scriptures.<sup>12</sup> Many of these recommended corrections are unwarranted because they come from the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), or the Samaritan Pentateuch which trace their origins to heretical sects (eg, Essenes and Samaritans, cf John 4:22), and dubious translations like the Septuagint (LXX).<sup>13</sup> The textual-critical apparatuses found in these critical texts cause the Bible student to doubt God’s Word. They cause him to question whether he has indeed all the words of Scripture and whether the words of Scripture can be trusted as being altogether true—the very words of God—verbally inspired and preserved (Matt 5:18)? From personal experience, having practised the textual-critical methods of modern scholarship at both Bible College and Seminary levels, I can testify that such critical devices in the modern texts not only cast doubt on God’s Word, but also distract from a reverent and faithful study to a prideful and judgmental study of the Holy Scriptures.

In light of the Biblical doctrine of the divine, verbal and plenary preservation of the Scriptures, Bible-believing students would do well to stick to the providentially preserved line of traditional Hebrew manuscripts and text which is the Ben Chayyim Masoretic Text—the Text that underlies the time-tested and time-honoured KJV—over against the new and critical line of modernistic texts that are behind all the modern English versions.

### **New Testament Text**

The NT Scriptures were written by the Apostles of Jesus Christ under divine inspiration (2 Tim 3:16). The NT Scriptures were then committed to the care of the NT Church comprising born again believers who were loyal to both the Living Word and the Written Word. Just like the OT Scripture, the Lord has also promised to preserve the inspired Greek words of the NT Scripture. Three times Jesus said, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Matt 24:35, Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33).

The NT autographs in time became apographs for they were copied and circulated to all the NT churches for their meditation, application and edification. As the Church grew, the copies multiplied. There are over 5000 extant NT copies today. These 5000 plus manuscripts are classified under two categories: Alexandrian and Byzantine.<sup>14</sup>

<b>TWO STREAMS OF TEXTS AND VERSIONS</b>		
<b>Text</b>	Preserved Byzantine/Majority/Received Text Every word preserved	Perverted Alexandrian/Minority/W H Text Many words excised
<b>Thrust</b>	Spirit of the 16 <sup>th</sup> Century Reformation	Spirit of 19 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> Century Modernism
<b>Translators</b>	Martyrs and Reformers-Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, and KJV men	Money-Makers, Liberals, Ecumenists, and Neo-Evangelicals
<b>Technique</b>	Verbal Equivalence-word for word translation	Dynamic Equivalence-thought for thought interpretation
<b>Translation</b>	Protestant Reformation Bible-the AV/KJV is the best. Vital doctrines fully preserved	Ecumenical and Modern Versions. Vital doctrines (virgin birth, deity of Christ, blood of Christ, Trinity, ecclesiastical separation) attacked

The Byzantine manuscripts come from the region of Byzantium or Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern or Greek Empire (AD 295-1453). The majority of the 5000 plus extant NT copies are Byzantine manuscripts. These manuscripts were faithfully copied and continuously used by the Church. They reflect uniform readings. Although there were minor variations, these were easily rectified by a simple comparison of the manuscripts.<sup>15</sup> The Lord has certainly kept these manuscripts pure and uncorrupted throughout the centuries. The Church recognised them to be the inspired and preserved manuscripts, and received them as the Holy Scriptures. These handwritten copies were finally put into print in the 15<sup>th</sup> century upon the invention of the printing press. During the Protestant Reformation, the Lord specially raised up Erasmus, Stephanus, and Beza to prepare the Byzantine manuscripts for print. The printed Greek text eventually became known as the *Textus Receptus*—the Text received by all. This is the Greek text that underlies the KJV and all the other Reformation translations.<sup>16</sup>

The Alexandrian manuscripts come from Alexandria, Egypt. These manuscripts are in the minority, and they reveal a corrupt hand.<sup>17</sup> The most notorious of these minority manuscripts are the *Codex Sinaiticus* and the *Codex Vaticanus*. The *Codex Sinaiticus* was discovered by Tischendorf in St Catherine's monastery in Egypt in 1844 while the *Codex Vaticanus* was kept in the Vatican library and found in 1481. Both these manuscripts were dated to about AD 350. Since they were such old manuscripts, and regarded by Westcott and Hort to be closest to the autographs, they were hailed as the best manuscripts in existence. Westcott and Hort then proceeded to revise the *Textus Receptus* based on their textual-critical theory that the older, harder, and shorter readings of the Alexandrian manuscripts were better. In 1881, they published their new but mutilated text which changed the traditional Received Text in nearly 10,000 places.<sup>18</sup>

God did not allow such an attack on His preserved words to go unchallenged. He raised up a most worthy scholar in Dean Burgon to expose the corruptions of the Alexandrian manuscripts on which Westcott and Hort built their revised Greek Text. Burgon, by a diligent study of the primary sources and a careful investigation of the facts, rightly judged the Alexandrian manuscripts to be among the

most scandalously corrupt copies extant: exhibit the most shamefully mutilated texts which are anywhere to be met with: have become, by

whatever process (for their history is wholly unknown), the depositories of the largest amount of fabricated readings, ancient blunders, and intentional perversions of Truth, which are discoverable in any known copies of the Word of God.<sup>19</sup>

Since 1881, the corrupt Westcott-Hort text has unfortunately become the standard text for modern translations of the Bible.<sup>20</sup> Are the Alexandrian manuscripts so reliable? The Alexandrian manuscripts and the Westcott-Hort text that underlie the modern versions of the English Bible are today being questioned by their very editors—Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland—who wrote, “In the twentieth century the papyri have eroded the dominance of the uncials, and a group of minuscules presently under study promises to diminish it further.”<sup>21</sup> One such papyrus is the Magdalen GR17 or “Jesus Papyrus” which consists of three fragments containing Matthew 26:7-8, 26:10, 14, 15, 22, 23, 31, 32, 33. It is a very early, first century (AD 60) manuscript. The last four words of Matthew 26:22 (*legein auto hekastos auton*) in the GR17 agree with the Textus Receptus over against the Westcott-Hort and modern critical texts (*legein auto heis hekastos*).<sup>22</sup> Another evidence of the antiquity and authenticity of the Textus Receptus comes from the Chester Beatty Papyri which are early 3<sup>rd</sup> century fragments and they agree with the Traditional or Byzantine Text. Papyrus p75 contains the ascension of Christ (Luke 24:51) which was omitted in the Westcott-Hort Text and modern versions like the NASV.<sup>23</sup> Now, the 26<sup>th</sup> edition of the critical text of Nestle and Aland has put the ascension verse back into the original text bringing it to conformity with the inspired and preserved Textus Receptus underlying the KJV.<sup>24</sup> All such findings confirm Dean Burgon’s observation all along—the Alexandrian/Minority/Westcott-Hort texts are the heretically corrupted texts, but the Byzantine/Majority/Received texts are the divinely preserved texts.<sup>25</sup>

It is tragic that in many Bible Colleges and Seminaries today, the genealogy of the NT apographs follows the textual-critical paradigm invented by Westcott and Hort who had introduced an imaginative transmission history of the NT Text that is vastly different from the Biblical truth of VPP that is taught by the Author of the Scriptures Himself in His forever infallible and inerrant Word (Ps 12:6-7, Matt 5:18, 24:35, John 10:35, 1 Pet 1:23-25). Far Eastern Bible College (FEBC), despite fierce local and foreign opposition to her VPP belief, remains steadfast in its defence of God’s forever infallible and inerrant Word. The

100% inspired Word of God are in the 100% preserved words of the Hebrew Masoretic Text (Ben Chayyim), and the Greek Textus Receptus (Stephanus, Beza, Scrivener) underlying the time-tested and time-honoured King James or Authorised Version.<sup>26</sup>

## WORDS

The words of the Scriptures are important (Deut 8:3, Matt 4:4, Luke 4:4). God uses His words to communicate His Truth so that we might know who and what He is and how we might be saved through Him. The Bible clearly tells us that it is God's written words (*pasa graphe*—"All Scripture") that are inspired (2 Tim 3:16), and from these inspired words come all the doctrines that are sufficient and profitable for the spiritual growth and maturity of the believer (2 Tim 3:17). The Bible also clearly says that God Himself will preserve all His inspired words to the jot and tittle without the loss of any word, letter or syllable (Ps 12:6-7, Matt 5:18, 24:35).

### Old Testament Words

Now if we have the inspired, infallible and inerrant words of God today preserved in the traditional and Reformation Scriptures, then how do we explain the differences or discrepancies found in the Bible especially those found in 1 Samuel 13:1, 2 Chronicles 22:2, and many other places. Can these be due to "scribal errors"?

Since God has preserved His inspired words to the last iota and no words are lost but all kept pure and intact in the original language Scriptures, we must categorically deny that our Bible contains any mistake or error (scribal or otherwise). But it is sad that certain evangelicals and fundamentalists would rather choose to deny the present infallibility and inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures by considering the "discrepancies" found in 1 Samuel 13:1 and 2 Chronicles 22:2 and other like passages to be *actual* instead of *apparent* discrepancies, and calling them "scribal errors."

A denial of the verbal preservation of the Scriptures will invariably lead one to believe that some words of God have been lost and remain lost leading to a "scribal error" view of the OT Scriptures. For instance, W Edward Glenny denies that God has perfectly preserved His Word so that no words have been lost. He says, "The evidence from the OT text suggests that such is not the case. *We might have lost a few words ...*"<sup>27</sup>

Based on his “lost words” view of the Bible, he was quick to point out “obvious discrepancies” in the OT like 2 Chronicles 22:2. He pontificates,

In 1 Chronicles 8:26 [sic], the KJV states that Ahaziah was twenty-two when he began to reign; the parallel in 2 Chronicles 22:2 says that he began to reign at the age of forty-two. ... These *obvious discrepancies* in the KJV and the Hebrew manuscripts on which it is based show that *none of them perfectly preserved the inspired autographa*.<sup>28</sup>

Now, know that 2 Chronicles 22:2 reads “forty-two” in the KJV and RSV. A number of the modern versions like the NASV, NIV, and ESV read “twenty-two” instead. So which is the original, inspired reading: “forty-two” (in KJV, and RSV), or “twenty-two” (in NASV, NIV, and ESV)? In making such a textual decision, we must have a perfect standard, and that infallible and inerrant standard is the inspired and preserved Hebrew Scripture, and not any translation ancient or modern.

It is significant to note that every single Hebrew manuscript reads “forty-two” (*arebba'im wushetha'im*) in 2 Chronicles 22:2. There is no evidence of lost words—every word to the letter is preserved, and reads precisely as “forty-two” as accurately translated in the KJV and RSV. If every Hebrew manuscript reads “forty-two” in 2 Chronicles 22:2, then on what basis do the NASV, NIV, and ESV change it to “twenty-two”? They change “forty-two” to “twenty-two” on the basis of the Septuagint (LXX) which is a Greek version of the Hebrew Scripture just like the NIV is an English version of it. In other words, they use a version or translation to correct the original Hebrew text! Should not it be the other way round?

Why do they do this? They do this because of their fallacious assumption that (1) God did not preserve His words perfectly, (2) lost words exist in the Hebrew text, and (3) 2 Chronicles 22:2 is an “obvious” discrepancy (cf 2 Kgs 8:26). Thus, Glennly and all such non-VPPists are quick to use a fallible translation (eg, LXX) to correct the infallible Hebrew Text! This is no different from someone using the NIV today to correct any part of the Hebrew Text according to his whim and fancy! But Glennly calls it “conjectural emendation” which sounds scholarly but colloquially it means—“*Suka* only, change!” Can a translation be more inspired than or superior to the original language text? Can a translation or version (whatever the language) be used to correct the Hebrew? Glennly’s method of explaining such “obvious discrepancies” in the Bible is troubling for it displays (1) a sceptical attitude towards the numerical integrity of God’s Word, (2) a critical readiness to deny the present

inerrancy of Scripture in historical details, and (3) a lackadaisical approach towards solving difficulties in the Bible by conveniently dismissing such difficulties as “scribal errors.”

A godly approach is one that presupposes the present infallibility and inerrancy of God’s Word not only when it speaks on salvation, but also when it speaks on history, geography or science. “*Let God be true, but every man a liar*” (Rom 3:4). Such a godly approach to difficult passages is seen in Robert J Sargent who, by comparing (not correcting) Scripture with Scripture, offered two possible solutions to the so-called “problem” or “error” in 2 Chronicles 22:2. Sargent suggested that “forty-two” could be either (1) Ahaziah’s years counted from the beginning of the dynasty founded by Omri, or (2) the year in which Ahaziah was actually seated as king though anointed as one at “twenty-two” (2 Kgs 8:26).<sup>29</sup> Whatever the answer may be, the truth and fact is: the inspired and preserved Hebrew reading in 2 Chronicles 22:2 is “forty-two” and not “twenty-two,” and no man has the right to change or correct God’s Word by “conjectural emendation,” taking heed to the serious warning not to add to or subtract from the Holy Scriptures (Rev 22:18-19).

Now, let us look at the next text which is 1 Samuel 13:1 which the KJV translates as, “Saul reigned one year.” But the other versions read quite differently. The NASV has, “Saul was *forty* years old when he began to reign;” the NIV has, “Saul was *thirty* years old when he became king;” and the RSV/ESV has, “Saul was ... years old when he began to reign.” Which of the above is correct? The only way whereby we can ascertain the correct reading is to go to the Hebrew Bible. The Hebrew Bible since day one reads *Ben-shanah Shaoul*, literally, “A son of a year (was) Saul,” or idiomatically, “Saul was a year old.”

Now, the difficulty is: How could Saul be only a year old when he began to reign? Scholars and translators who do not believe in the perfect preservation of the Scriptures say that this is an actual discrepancy in the Hebrew Text which they attribute to a “scribal error.” This is why Michael Harding in a mistitled book—*God’s Word in Our Hands*—wrote,

[I]n 1 Samuel 13:1-2 the Masoretic Text states that Saul was one year of age (*ben-shanah*—literally “son of a year”) ... Some ancient Greek manuscripts ... read “thirty years” instead of “one year,” ... On account of my theological conviction regarding the inerrancy of the autographa, I believe the original Hebrew text also reads “thirty,” even though *we do not currently possess a Hebrew manuscript with that reading*.<sup>30</sup>



Harding and those like him fail to apply the logic of faith to the promise of God that He will preserve and has preserved every iota of His inspired words. This leads them to conclude that a word is lost and 1 Samuel 13:1 contains a “scribal error” even when there is no such error to begin with. They change the text when the text needs no changing. They replace divine words with human words. Instead of attributing error to the translation (NASV, NIV, RSV, ESV), they rather fault the inspired and preserved Hebrew Text and treat it as an actual discrepancy even when there is absolutely none. This has caused many Bible believers to doubt God’s Word: Do we really have God’s infallible and inerrant Word in our hands? Many are indeed stumbled by such allegations of error in the Bible, and are questioning whether they can really trust the Scriptures at all if there is no such thing as a complete and perfect Word of God today.

It must be categorically stated that there is no error at all in the Hebrew Text and no mistake also in the KJV which translated 1 Samuel 13:1 accurately. So how do we explain 1 Samuel 13:1? A faithful explanation is offered by Matthew Poole who wrote,

[Saul] had now reigned one year, from his first election at Mizpeh, in which time these things were done, which are recorded in chap. xi., xii., to wit, peaceably, or righteously. Compare 2 Sam. ii.10.<sup>31</sup>

In other words, the year of Saul was calculated not from the time of his birth but from his *appointment as king*; “Saul was a year old *into his reign*.” This meaning is supported by the Geneva Bible which reads, “*Saul now had beene King one yeere*.” Rest assured, there is no mistake in the Hebrew Text and in the KJV here. God has indeed inspired and preserved His OT words perfectly so that we might have an infallible, inerrant OT Bible in our hands today.

### **New Testament Words**

As much as the Lord has preserved His inspired OT words (Matt 5:18), so also has He preserved His inspired NT words (Matt 24:35). Where are His words? The divinely preserved words of God today are found in the pure and preserved Greek Textus Receptus underlying the KJV, and not in the corrupt and heretical Westcott-Hort Greek Text behind the modern versions which not only cast doubts on the authenticity of certain Biblical passages like the last 12 verses of Mark (Mark 16:9-20), and the *pericope de adultera* (John 7:53-8:11), but also scissored out the following verses of Scripture in whole or in part:



<b>SCISSION AND CORRUPTION IN THE WESTCOTT-HORT TEXT AND THE MODERN ENGLISH VERSIONS</b>		
<b>Entire Verses Deleted</b>		
<b>Matt</b>	17:21	Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.
	18:11	For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.
	23:14	Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.
<b>Mark</b>	7:16	If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.
	9:44	Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.
	9:46	Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.
	11:26	But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.
	15:28	And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.
<b>Luke</b>	17:36	Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.
	23:17	(For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.)
<b>John</b>	5:4	For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.
<b>Acts</b>	8:37	And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
	15:34	Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still.
	24:7	But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands.
	28:29	And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves
<b>Rom</b>	16:24	The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

**SCISSION AND CORRUPTION IN THE WESTCOTT-HORT TEXT  
AND THE MODERN ENGLISH VERSIONS**

**Portions of Verses Deleted or Changed**

<b>Matt</b>	5:22	without a cause
	5:27	by them of old time
	6:13	For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen
	9:35	among the people
	10:3	Lebbaeus, whose surname was
	10:8	raise the dead
	12:35	of the heart
	13:51	Jesus saith unto them
	15:8	draweth nigh unto me with their mouth
	18:29	at his feet
	19:20	from my youth
	20:7	and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive
	20:16	For many be called, but few chosen
	20:22	and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with
	20:23	and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with
	22:13	take him away, and
	23:3	observe
	25:13	wherein the Son of Man cometh
	26:60	false witnesses
	27:35	that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots
<b>Mark</b>	1:2	in the prophets

*CANON, TEXTS, AND WORDS*

<b>SCISSION AND CORRUPTION IN THE WESTCOTT-HORT TEXT AND THE MODERN ENGLISH VERSIONS</b>		
<b>Portions of Verses Deleted or Changed</b>		
<b>Mark</b>	1:14	of the kingdom
	2:17	to repentance
	3:5	whole as the other
	3:15	to heal sicknesses, and
	4:4	of the air
	6:11	Verily, I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city
	6:36	bread: for they have nothing to eat
	7:2	they found fault
	9:29	and fasting
	9:45	into the fire that never shall be quenched
	9:49	and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt
	10:24	for them that trust in riches
	11:10	in the name of the Lord
	12:4	and at him they cast stones
	12:30	This is the first commandment
	12:33	with all the soul
	13:14	spoken of by Daniel the prophet
	14:19	And another said, Is it I?
	14:27	because of me this night
	14:70	and thy speech agreeth thereto
<b>Luke</b>	1:28	blessed art thou among women
	1:29	when she saw him

**SCISSION AND CORRUPTION IN THE WESTCOTT-HORT TEXT  
AND THE MODERN ENGLISH VERSIONS**

**Portions of Verses Deleted or Changed**

<b>Luke</b>	1:78	hath visited
	4:4	but by every word of God
	4:8	Get thee behind me, Satan
	4:18	to heal the brokenhearted
	4:41	Christ
	5:38	and both are preserved
	6:10	whole as the other
	6:45	treasure of his heart
	7:10	that had been sick
	7:31	And the Lord said
	8:45	and they that were with him
	8:45	and sayest thou, Who touched me?
	8:54	and he put them all out
	9:54	even as Elias did
	9:55	and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of
	9:56	For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them
	10:35	when he departed
	11:2	Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth
	11:4	but deliver us from evil
	11:11	bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask
11:29	the prophet	

<b>SCISSION AND CORRUPTION IN THE WESTCOTT-HORT TEXT AND THE MODERN ENGLISH VERSIONS</b>		
<b>Portions of Verses Deleted or Changed</b>		
<b>Luke</b>	11:44	scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites
	11:54	that they might accuse him
	17:3	against thee
	17:9	him? I trow not
	19:5	and saw him
	20:23	Why tempt ye me?
	20:30	took her to wife, and he died childless
	22:30	in my kingdom
	22:31	And the Lord said
	22:64	struck him on the face, and
	22:68	me, nor let me go
	23:23	and of the chief priests
	23:38	written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew
	24:1	and certain others with them
	24:42	and of an honeycomb
<b>John</b>	3:13	which is in heaven
	3:15	not perish, but
	4:42	the Christ
	5:3	waiting for the moving of the water
	5:16	and sought to slay him
	6:11	to the disciples, and the disciples
	6:22	whereinto his disciples were entered

**SCISSION AND CORRUPTION IN THE WESTCOTT-HORT TEXT  
AND THE MODERN ENGLISH VERSIONS**

**Portions of Verses Deleted or Changed**

<b>John</b>	6:47	on me
	8:9	being convicted by their own conscience
	8:10	and saw none but the woman
	8:59	through the midst of them, and so passed by
	9:11	the pool of
	10:26	as I said unto you
	11:41	from the place where the dead was laid
	12:1	which had been dead
	17:12	in the world
	19:16	and led him away
<b>Acts</b>	2:23	ye have taken
	7:30	of the Lord
	7:37	him shall ye hear
	9:5	it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks
	10:6	he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do
	10:21	which were sent unto him from Cornelius
	10:32	who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee
	15:24	Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law
	17:5	which believed not
	18:21	I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem
	21:8	that were of Paul's company
	21:25	that they observe no such thing, save only

CANON, TEXTS, AND WORDS

<b>SCISSION AND CORRUPTION IN THE WESTCOTT-HORT TEXT AND THE MODERN ENGLISH VERSIONS</b>		
<b>Portions of Verses Deleted or Changed</b>		
<b>Acts</b>	22:9	and were afraid
	22:20	unto his death
	24:6	and would have judged according to our law
	24:8	commanding his accusers to come unto thee
	24:15	of the dead
	24:26	that he might loose him
<b>Rom</b>	1:16	of Christ
	3:22	and upon all
	8:1	who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit
	8:26	for us
	9:31	of righteousness
	9:32	of the law
	10:15	preach the gospel of peace
	11:6	But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work
	14:6	and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks
	14:21	or is offended, or is made weak
	15:24	I will come to you
15:29	of the gospel	
<b>1 Cor</b>	5:7	for us
	6:20	and in your spirit, which are God's

<b>SCISSION AND CORRUPTION IN THE WESTCOTT-HORT TEXT AND THE MODERN ENGLISH VERSIONS</b>		
<b>Portions of Verses Deleted or Changed</b>		
<b>I Cor</b>	9:18	of Christ
	10:23	for me
	10:28	for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof
	11:24	Take, eat
	11:29	Unworthily
	15:47	the Lord
<b>2 Cor</b>	8:4	that we would receive
	12:11	in glorying
	13:2	I write
<b>Gal</b>	3:1	that ye should not obey the truth
	3:17	in Christ
	4:7	through Christ
<b>Eph</b>	3:9	by Jesus Christ
	3:14	of our Lord Jesus Christ
	4:17	other
	5:30	of his flesh, and of his bones
<b>Phil</b>	3:16	rule, let us mind the same thing
<b>Col</b>	1:2	and the Lord Jesus Christ
	1:14	through his blood
	2:2	and of the Father, and
	2:11	of the sins
<b>1 Thess</b>	1:1	from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ



CANON, TEXTS, AND WORDS

<b>SCISSION AND CORRUPTION IN THE WESTCOTT-HORT TEXT AND THE MODERN ENGLISH VERSIONS</b>		
<b>Portions of Verses Deleted or Changed</b>		
<b>2 Thess</b>	2:4	as God
<b>1 Tim</b>	2:7	in Christ
	3:3	not greedy of filthy lucre
	3:16	"who" instead of "God"
	4:12	in spirit
	5:4	good and
	5:16	man or
	6:5	from such withdraw thyself
	6:7	and it is certain
<b>2 Tim</b>	1:11	of the Gentiles
<b>Heb</b>	1:3	by himself
	2:7	and didst set him over the works of thy hands
	3:6	firm unto the end
	8:12	and their sins
	10:9	O God
	10:30	saith the Lord
	11:11	was delivered of a child
	11:13	were persuaded of them
	12:20	or thrust through with a dart
<b>Jas</b>	4:4	adulterers and
<b>1 Pet</b>	1:22	through the Spirit
	4:1	for us

<b>SCISSION AND CORRUPTION IN THE WESTCOTT-HORT TEXT AND THE MODERN ENGLISH VERSIONS</b>		
<b>Portions of Verses Deleted or Changed</b>		
<b>I Pet</b>	4:14	on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified
<b>1 John</b>	2:7	from the beginning
	4:3	Christ is come in the flesh
	5:7	in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one
	5:13	and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God
<b>Rev</b>	1:8	the beginning and the ending
	1:11	I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and
	1:11	which are in Asia
	5:14	him that liveth for ever and ever
	11:1	and the angel stood
	11:17	and art to come
	14:12	here are they
	15:2	over his mark
	16:5	O Lord
	16:7	another out of
	16:14	of the earth and
	19:1	the Lord
	21:24	of them which are saved

All the above words are the words God has purely preserved and kept intact in the Greek Textus Receptus on which the KJV is based, but are doubted and deleted in the modern English versions which reflect the corruptions of the Westcott-Hort Text. A total of 2886 words (equivalent to 1 and 2 Peter) have been scissored out of the KJV by the modern

versions.<sup>32</sup> Which Bible is true—the “cut up” Bible that is edited by modernists and neo-evangelicals, and based on heretical and corrupt manuscripts, or the “kept pure” Bible that is sourced in the Protestant Reformation and based on divinely preserved and uncorrupted manuscripts? If the Holy Spirit indwells you and grants you discernment, the choice is obvious.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this paper is as follows:

- (1) The Judeo-Christian Canon was never lost and found, but always preserved and identified, and they are the 66 books of the Bible—39 in the OT, and 27 in the NT, no more and no less, fixed and firm, the Apocrypha and Gnostic Gospels having no part whatsoever.
- (2) The OT and NT Texts were never lost and found, but always preserved and identified, and they are the Hebrew Masoretic Text of the OT, and the Greek Textus Receptus of the NT, and not the critical and corrupt texts of Kittel/Stuttgart, and Westcott-Hort.
- (3) The perfectly inspired words of the Hebrew/Aramaic OT and Greek NT were never lost and found, but always preserved and identified, and they are all the words of the Hebrew Masoretic Text (Ben Chayyim) and the Greek Textus Receptus (Stephanus, Beza, Scrivener) on which the KJV—the Reformation Bible—is based, and not the interpretive or speculative words of any version ancient or modern.

In these end-times, may God’s Church—“the pillar and ground of the truth”—return to the Reformed Bibliology of 16<sup>th</sup> Century Protestantism, and reject the Deformed Babelology of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Postmodernism, Neo-Evangelicalism, and Neo-Fundamentalism.

The Written Foundation of our Judeo-Christian Faith is sure and secure for “the word of our God shall stand for ever” (Isa 40:8). Amen!

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey Khoo, “Inspiration, Preservation, and Translations,” a paper presented to the Truth Bible-Presbyterian Church Adults’ Sunday School, March 5, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> For instance, Princeton Seminary’s Bruce Metzger, in his textbook on New Testament textual criticism entitled, *The Text of the New Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), discusses the New Testament text in terms

of “Its Transmission, Corruption and Restoration,” presuming that there is no such thing as a divinely preserved text that is without corruption, and that the restoration of the text is entirely in the hands of textual scholars and their universities, and not at all in God and His Church.

<sup>3</sup> Jeffrey Khoo, “Sola Autographa or Sola Apographa?” *The Burning Bush* 11 (2005): 3-19. See also Theodore P Letis, *The Ecclesiastical Text* (Philadelphia: Institute for Renaissance and Reformation Biblical Studies, 1997).

<sup>4</sup> The word “apocrypha” comes from the Greek *kryptein* (“to hide”) and speaks of the spurious nature of these 14 books: (1) 1 Esdras, (2) 2 Esdras, (3) Tobit, (4) Judith, (5) Rest of the Chapters of Esther, (6) Wisdom of Solomon, (7) Ecclesiasticus, (8) Baruch, (9) Song of the Three Holy Children, (10) History of Susanna, (11) Bel and the Dragon, (12) Prayer of Manasseh, (13) 1 Maccabees, (14) 2 Maccabees.

<sup>5</sup> Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code* (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 254. See “The Gnostic Society Library” ([www.gnosis.org/library.html](http://www.gnosis.org/library.html)).

<sup>6</sup> Ben Witherington III, “Why the ‘Lost Gospels’ Lost Out,” *Christianity Today* (June 2004): 28-32.

<sup>7</sup> See J W Burgon, *The Causes of Corruption of the Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels* (Collingswood: Dean Burgon Society, 1998 reprint). On page 13, Burgon wrote, “certain manuscripts ... particularly copies of a Version ... these do, to the present hour, bear traces incontestably of ancient mischief.”

<sup>8</sup> See *Lost Books of the Bible Being All the Gospels, Epistles, and Other Pieces Now Extant Attributed in the First Four Centuries to Jesus Christ, His Apostles and Their Companions Not Included, by its Compilers, in the Authorized New Testament; and, the Recently Discovered Syriac Mss. of Pilate’s Letters to Tiberius, etc.* (np: Alpha House, 1926).

<sup>9</sup> H S Miller, *General Biblical Introduction* (Houghton: Word Bearer, 1947), 184-5.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, 185.

<sup>11</sup> Trinitarian Bible Society, “Statement of Doctrine of Holy Scripture,” *Quarterly Record* (April-June 2005): 1-15.

<sup>12</sup> See D A Waite, *Defending the King James Bible: A Fourfold Superiority*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed (Collingswood: Bible For Today, 1996), 20-3.

<sup>13</sup> J Daniel Hays in his paper, “Reconsidering the Height of Goliath,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48 (2005): 701-14, questioned the height of Goliath (1 Sam 17:4) in the traditional and received Masoretic Text, calling “six cubits and a span” (ie, 9 feet, 9 inches) a “scribal error.” He argued in favour of “four cubits and a span” (ie, 6 feet, 9 inches) as found in the DSS (4QSam), LXX, and Codex Vaticanus. Thus Goliath was not that extraordinarily tall after all, and the Jews and the Christians have been reading the wrong height of Goliath all these centuries and millennia. Such a criticism of the Bible is typical of scholars who are either ignorant or dismissive of the Biblical doctrine of VPP.

<sup>14</sup> Adapted from S H Tow, *Beyond Versions* (Singapore: King James Productions, 1998), 121.

<sup>15</sup> For a defence of the Byzantine Text, see Jakob Van Bruggen, *The Ancient Text of the New Testament* (Winnipeg: Premier, 1976); and Harry Sturz, *The Byzantine Text-Type and New Testament Textual Criticism* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984). Dr Van Bruggen is Professor of NT at the Theological College of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (Broederweg, Kampen), and Dr Sturz was Professor of Greek at BIOLA (Bible Institute of Los Angeles). His book was his ThD dissertation at Grace Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, Indiana, USA.

<sup>16</sup> For a defence of the Traditional or Received Text, see J W Burgon, *Revision Revised* (Collingswood: Dean Burgon Society, reprint 2000); E F Hills, *The King James Version Defended* (Des Moines: Christian Research Press, 1984); and Waite, *Defending the King James Bible*.

<sup>17</sup> For the intentional corruptions of God's Word found in the Alexandrian manuscripts, see J W Burgon, *The Causes of Corruption of the Traditional Text* (Collingswood: Dean Burgon Society, reprint 1998).

<sup>18</sup> Waite, *Defending the King James Bible*, xii.

<sup>19</sup> Burgon, *Revision Revised*, 16.

<sup>20</sup> For a critique of modern versions based on the Westcott-Hort Text, see Jeffrey Khoo, *Kept Pure in All Ages: Recapturing the Authorised Version and the Doctrine of Providential Preservation* (Singapore: FEBC Press, 2001), 69-100.

<sup>21</sup> Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 102.

<sup>22</sup> See Carsten Peter Thiede and Matthew D'Ancona, *The Jesus Papyrus* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1996).

<sup>23</sup> See Aland and Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, 91.

<sup>24</sup> Erwin Nestle, Barbara and Kurt Aland, eds, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 27<sup>th</sup> ed (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979), 246. See Theodore Letis, "The Strange About-Face of the New American Standard Version," Institute for Renaissance and Reformation Studies, January 9, 2002, in [www.holywordcafe.com/bible](http://www.holywordcafe.com/bible), accessed on February 11, 2006.

<sup>25</sup> See chart on the two streams of NT Greek Texts in Jeffrey Khoo, *KJV: Questions and Answers* (Singapore: Bible Witness Literature, 2003), 9.

<sup>26</sup> See Jeffrey Khoo, "A Plea for a Perfect Bible," *The Burning Bush* 9 (2003): 1-15.

<sup>27</sup> Roy E Beacham and Kevin T Bauder, eds, *One Bible Only?* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2001), 121 (emphasis mine). See my critique of this book, "The Emergence of Neo-Fundamentalism: *One Bible Only?* or "Yea Hath God Said?" *The Burning Bush* 10 (2004): 2-47.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, 114-5 (italics mine).

<sup>29</sup> Robert J Sargent, "A Scribal Error in 2 Chronicles 22:2? No!," *The Burning Bush* 10 (2004): 86-92. See also Chester Kulus, *Those So-Called*

*Errors: Debunking the Liberal, New Evangelical, and Fundamentalist Myth that You Should Not Hear, Receive, and Believe All the Numbers of Scripture* (Newington: Emmanuel Baptist Theological Press, 2003), 367-8.

<sup>30</sup> James B Williams and Randolph Shaylor, eds, *God's Word in Our Hands: The Bible Preserved for Us* (Greenville: Ambassador Emerald, 2003), 361 (italics mine). See my critique of this book, "Bob Jones University, Neo-Fundamentalism, and Biblical Preservation," *The Burning Bush* 11 (2005): 82-97.

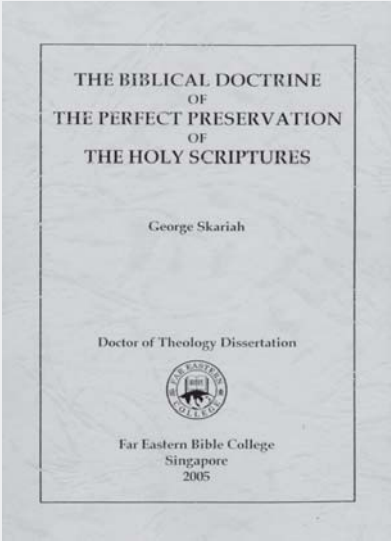
<sup>31</sup> Matthew Poole, *A Commentary on the Holy Bible*, (Mclean: MacDonald, nd), 1:542. See also Kulus, *Those So-Called Errors*, 222-5.

<sup>32</sup> Jack Moorman, *Modern Bibles—the Dark Secret* (Los Osos: Fundamental Evangelistic Association, nd), 25.

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THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE  
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OF  
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George Skariah

Doctor of Theology Dissertation



Far Eastern Bible College  
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# **THE NUMBERS IN EZRA 2 AND NEHEMIAH 7: A SOLUTION IN FAVOUR OF THE INERRANCY OF THE VERBALLY AND PLENARILY PRESERVED TEXT**

Nelson Were

In Nehemiah 7 we are given a list of returnees that Nehemiah found. It is almost identical to the list in Ezra 2. The repetition of this list confirms God's faithfulness in preserving His chosen people and His loyal love in bringing them back into the land that He had promised their ancestors. Nehemiah (445/4 BC) is the second witness to God's covenant faithfulness and love to Israel, Ezra (537/6 BC) being the first.

The total number who returned was 42,360 (Neh 7:66, Ezr 2:64). However the sum total of the individuals mentioned in Nehemiah 7 is 31,089 whereas in Ezra 2, it is 29,818. This has led some to question the inerrancy of the Bible. Opponents of the Bible have found in these two chapters "a sceptical goldmine" and many "Christian apologists" in addressing this chapter have opted to attribute these distinctions to "scribal errors." Those who have used these lists to attack the Verbal Plenary Inspiration (VPI) and Verbal Plenary Preservation (VPP) of the Holy Scriptures have pointed to the (1) disagreement in the numbers of people given in the lists of Ezra 2 and Nehemiah 7, and (2) disagreement in the total number from the lists with the total number as given in Ezra 2:64 and Nehemiah 7:66.

It is obvious from the table (next page) that there are many statistical differences between Ezra and Nehemiah. These are not contradictions. Before we address and explain the differences, we must first remember that every word of God is important. Hence, these long lists of names are as equally the inspired Word of God as the other more familiar Scriptures, such as John 3:16 and as such they contain no errors whatsoever, and are to be accepted as inerrant just as John 3:16 is inerrant.

<b>List of the 17 Verses that Do Not Match Between Ezra 2 and Nehemiah 7</b>		
<b>Ezra 2</b>	<b>Nehemiah 7</b>	<b>Diff</b>
<sup>5</sup> the children of Arah, 775	<sup>10</sup> the children of Arah, 652	123
<sup>6</sup> the children of Pahath-moab ... 2,812	<sup>11</sup> the children of Pahath-moab ... 2,818	6
<sup>8</sup> the children of Zattu, 945	<sup>13</sup> the children of Zattu, 845	100
<sup>10</sup> the children of Bani, 642	<sup>15</sup> the children of Binnui, 648	6
<sup>11</sup> the children of Bebai, 623	<sup>16</sup> the children of Bebai, 628	5
<sup>12</sup> the children of Azgad, 1,222	<sup>17</sup> the children of Azgad, 2,322	1,100
<sup>13</sup> the children of Adonikam, 666	<sup>18</sup> the children of Adonikam, 667	1
<sup>14</sup> the children of Bigvai, 2,056	<sup>19</sup> the children of Bigvai, 2,067	11
<sup>15</sup> the children of Adin, 454	<sup>20</sup> the children of Adin, 655	201
<sup>17</sup> the children of Bezai, 323	<sup>23</sup> the children of Bezai, 324	1
<sup>28</sup> the men of Bethel and Ai, 223	<sup>32</sup> the men of Bethel and Ai, 123	100
<sup>33</sup> the children of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, 725	<sup>37</sup> the children of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, 721	4
<sup>35</sup> the children of Senaah, 3,630.	<sup>38</sup> the children of Senaah, 3,930.	300
<sup>41</sup> The singers: the children of Asaph, 128	<sup>44</sup> The singers: the children of Asaph, 148	20
<sup>42</sup> The sons of the gatekeepers: ... 139	<sup>45</sup> The gatekeepers: ... 138	1
<sup>59</sup> and <sup>60</sup> list several names with one total of 652	<sup>61</sup> and <sup>62</sup> names with one total of 642	10
<sup>65</sup> 200 singing men and women	<sup>67</sup> 245 male and female singers	45

When reading through Ezra 2 and Nehemiah 7, sceptics point out first, the discrepancies in the number of people in the various clans listed both in Ezra and Nehemiah; second, the discrepancy between the



## *THE NUMBERS IN EZRA 2 AND NEHEMIAH 7*

numbers that would be arrived at by adding up the individual numbers and the total given at the end of the list. But strangely they do not point out or comment on the words used.

In addressing this, firstly we need to take into consideration that both Ezra and Nehemiah are referring to the same event here, namely, the return of the Jews to Palestine after the Babylonian Captivity (Neh 7:6-7 cf Ezr 2:1-2). In addition to this, it ought to be noted that there is a difference in time between Ezra 2 and Nehemiah 7. Therefore, the dates of writing are different and the statistical differences can be accounted for by the death of people and the growth of families during the intervening years. Thus, it is possible that the lists in Ezra and Nehemiah reflect the different counts at different times of the Jewish return to Palestine. Higher totals might reflect clans who added people along their journey, and lower totals might reflect deaths or certain types of attrition on the journey and thus reasonably explain the differences.

Many Christian scholars attribute the differences in numbers to “scribal errors.” In explaining why both Ezra 2:64 and Nehemiah 7:66 agree that the total for the whole congregation was 42,360, and yet disagree after the totals are added up, Ezra having 29,818 and Nehemiah 31,089, one Christian apologist says:

The original texts must have had the correct totals, but somewhere along the line of transmission, a scribe made an error in one of the lists, and changed the total in the other so that they would match, without first totaling up the numbers for the families in each list. There is the suggestion that a later scribe upon copying out these lists purposely put down the totals for the whole assembly who were in Jerusalem at his time, which because it was later would have been larger.

This is not an acceptable explanation in light of God’s verbal and plenary preservation of His inspired words (Matt 5:18). The Bible also teaches that God does not lie or bear false witness (Num 23:19). So how do we explain these very real differences without denying the inspiration, preservation, and inerrancy of Scripture? Study the text itself!

First of all, the introduction to the two lists specifies the contents. The lists specifically mention that they contain the “number of the men of the people of Israel” (Ezr 2:2 cf Neh 7:7). When recording the total, both texts also state that the total number given in the texts is the number of the “whole congregation together” (Ezr 2:64 cf Neh 7:66). It is clear from the text that first of all, those who were recorded in both lists were only

the men – the Hebrew word used here in both lists is “*ish*” which means “a man,” “a male,” or “a husband” (Exod 35:29, Gen 3:6). The word connotes maleness, as opposed to femaleness.<sup>1</sup>

The word for congregation is also the same in both lists and is taken from the Hebrew word “*qahal*” which means “a convocation, a congregation, an assembly, a crowd, a multitude, an army (Ezek 17:17; 23:46, 47), the Hebrew community, an assembly of nations.”<sup>2</sup> From this, the question of the numbers not adding up to the total given at the end of each list may be reconciled by taking the number to be that of the men, without including the women and children, though the total was given to mean the whole congregation.

The question that needs to be asked in our attempt to settle this issue of the sum total is this: Are there other biblical accounts which employ this method of numbering? And the answer is yes. See for instance Exodus 12:37 where only the men were counted who journeyed from Rameses to Succoth (Exod 12:37), and Matthew 14:21; Mark 6:44; Luke 9:14 where only the men were numbered who ate the bread and fish miraculously multiplied by Jesus. In all three Synoptic Gospels, the word for “men” is “*aner*” which distinguishes man from woman like the Hebrew “*ish*” which may also be rendered as husband.

Secondly, having reconciled the apparent discrepancies with regard to the total amount, there still seems to be other “discrepancies” for as one reads through the lists, the breakdown of numbers in the lists also do not tally. How can this be reconciled? Is it possible that these lists though referring to the same event were compiled at different times? Returning to the texts, as one carefully studies them, one would notice that it is not only the numbers that are not the same, but certain names are also different—having alternate forms. There are instances where the numbers agree but the names are different; for example Ezra 2:18 and Nehemiah 7:24 which have 112 for the number of the children of Jorah/Hariph; Ezra 2:44 and Nehemiah 7:47 which have among the Nethinims the children of Siaha/Sia.

Another observable distinction concerns the same information but given in different forms. For example, Ezra 2:24 and Nehemiah 7:28 where the same group of people are referred to as children (“*ben*” ie son, boy, young one) and men (“*ish*”) (compare also Ezr 2:20-21 with Neh 7:25-26). Thus, considering the differences, we can say that there were

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two lists, and taking into account the time that had elapsed since the period of Ezra 2 and the time when Nehemiah found the register in Nehemiah 7, and the additional fact that the “children” were referred to as “men,” it seems that there could be another census taken after the people arrived so as to update the register. This could very well be the case for in Nehemiah 7:5, Nehemiah testified how God had put a burden on him to conduct a census and the first step he took was to look for the former register which he found and he noted the details of it in the remaining part of that chapter. This would mean that both the lists in Ezra 2 and Nehemiah 7 were accurate records with no errors whatsoever; the list found in Nehemiah being a list that was written after the one in Ezra 2, taking into account the changes that would have taken place within the time that had elapsed between the two writings.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament*, sv “ish,” 2300.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, sv, “qahal,” 2360.

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## **MODERN DENIAL OF PRESERVATION**

Lawrence E Bray

The doctrine of preservation is a foundational teaching of the Protestant Church. Most conservative Christians are in agreement that the original manuscripts of Scripture are inspired. But as we do not possess these originals, the doctrine of the preservation of these originals is of utmost importance. What this doctrine states is that while the Bible was immediately inspired in the originals, it was also kept pure throughout the ages. The purity of preservation is no less than the purity of inspiration as it is the work of God Himself. Yet sadly today the conservative Christian Church is teaching something quite different. They no longer believe in the doctrine of preservation, though some do claim a belief in it. There are pockets of Christianity that still hold to this doctrine, being unshaken by the postmodernism that has infected the Church at large. Some of the organizations that represent this remnant of historic Christian belief in preservation are the Trinitarian Bible Society, the James Begg Society, and the Dean Burgon Society.

To better see the distinction between historic Christianity and postmodern Christianity we will look at two confessions that deal with the preservation of Scripture – The Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy. The Westminster Confession of Faith (chapter 1, section 8) says this:

The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic; so as in all controversies of religion the Church is finally to appeal unto them. But because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God who have right unto, and interest in, the Scriptures, and are commanded, in the fear of God, to read and search them, therefore they are to be translated into the language of every people unto which they come, that the Word of God

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dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship him in an acceptable manner, and, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, may have hope.

We can see that the accepted doctrine of the Protestant Church was that God kept His Scripture pure in all ages. That is how preservation was defined. Now before we go much further, let's look at what the word "pure" means. To be pure is to be complete, without fault, free of foreign elements.<sup>1</sup> This gives us an excellent idea of what the Westminster Divines were telling us in this passage of the Confession. They believed that the Scriptures in their original languages were pure and perfect in the apographs (copies), not solely in the autographs.

Now let's see what a modern confession has to say about the purity and preservation of Scripture. The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy (article X) says this:

We affirm that inspiration, strictly speaking, applies only to the autographic text of Scripture, which in the providence of God can be ascertained from available manuscripts with great accuracy. We further affirm that copies and translations of Scripture are the Word of God to the extent that they faithfully represent the original.

We deny that any essential element of the Christian faith is affected by the absence of the autographs. We further deny that this absence renders the assertion of Biblical inerrancy invalid or irrelevant.

This clearly shows us that modern Christian teaching promulgates the idea that we can have Scripture with "great accuracy," but not pure. How great is the accuracy? I've heard scholars suggest numbers from 98% to over 99% (Bruce Metzger et al), but never 100%. The statement of faith also shows that they look on the apographs as being the Word of God only to the extent that they represent the original. This is an interesting statement, as the originals do not exist. Logically speaking, since we do not have the originals this statement of faith confirms a belief that they do not know to what extent the Scriptures that we have are the Word of God since it is impossible for them to see how closely they represent the original.

There is another interesting statement in the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy that seems to contradict modern textual criticism. Article XIV says:

We affirm the unity and internal consistency of Scripture.

We deny that alleged errors and discrepancies that have not yet been resolved violate the truth claims of the Bible.

While they say that they believe in the internal consistency of Scripture, let's see what their modern textual criticism teaches us...

The basic criteria for internally assessing variant readings is as follows:<sup>2</sup>

- (1) The more difficult the reading the better.
- (2) The shorter the reading the better.
- (3) The reading that is in verbal dissidence with other readings is better.
- (4) The less refined and more rough reading is to be preferred.

The modern textual critic believes that the reading in dissidence with other readings is better! That's hardly a case for internal consistency.

We also see the doctrine of preservation vanishing among Bible translators and Greek Text editors. I will look at two popular evangelical translations as well as the critical Greek Text put out by the United Bible Society.

2 Chronicles 31:16 (NASB):

without regard to their genealogical enrollment, to the males from thirty years old and upward—everyone who entered the house of the LORD for his daily obligations—for their work in their duties according to their divisions;

All ancient manuscripts contain “3 years old” and not the 30 that we see in the NASB. This shows that the translators feel a need to correct the Scriptures. This need to correct clearly goes against any honest teaching on preservation.

1 Samuel 13:1 (ESV):

Saul was ... years old when he began to reign, and he reigned ... and two years over Israel.

Here the ESV translators show that there is missing text in the Scriptures. Clearly you cannot show that there is missing text and still believe the text has been preserved. Remember that the definition of pure includes completeness. Besides, this would sound very strange if read in public.

The editors of the UBS critical Greek text also have a different idea of preservation. The UBS critical Greek text at Acts 16:12 uses “*protes*” - which is found in no manuscript. The reading should be “*prote*” without the “s.” The “s” makes the noun genitive, which changes the meaning. Instead of reading that Philippi is a foremost city of Macedonia, it reads that Philippi is a city of the first district of Macedonia. They do this

because they do not think the text has been preserved, but rather it needs correcting.

I strongly urge Christians to consider where a denial of the preservation of Scripture will lead the Church. Without preservation there is no purity. Without purity the text can be questioned. When the text can be questioned we have no final authority. The early Protestant Church understood the importance of this doctrine. We should seek to embrace it again as something that is dearly beloved to us.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, sv, “pure.”

<sup>2</sup> Bruce M Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 209.

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### College News

The Far Eastern Bible College **reopened on January 3, 2007** with a Day of Prayer and Registration. The new semester saw the matriculation of **nine new students**: (1) Yeob Biswas (Bangladesh), (2) Chun Hae Jung (Korea), (3) William Goh Boon Kai (Singapore), (4) Jeong Hyeon Heni (Korea), (5) Kim Hyeon Woo (Korea), (6) Lee Ji Hyun (Korea), (7) Tranh Thi Kim Hoa (Vietnam), (8) Daud Latif (Indonesia), and (9) Samson Hutagalung (Indonesia) who earned his BTh in 1999 and MDiv in 2001 has returned for his ThM. Total enrolment currently stands at **119 day-time students from 18 countries**. A combined total of **266 students** registered for the Basic Theology for Everyone night courses—“Calvin’s Institutes I” and “Book of Genesis” taught by Dr Jeffrey Khoo and Dr Quek Suan Yew respectively.

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Continued on page 114

## **NOT EXPOSING ERROR: A SERIOUS ERROR OF PREACHERS**

Prabhudas Koshy

We have no shortage of “evangelical” pastors and preachers who preach biblical and helpful messages. But, in modern times, an erroneous trend is increasingly found among such preachers. The error is not that they outrightly teach false doctrines, but they do not preach truth explicitly so as to uncover the widespread sinful and worldly habits in their congregations or the apostasy and compromise in the modern Christian world.

A great number of preachers of our times prefer to leave the errors and evils among their flocks untouched in their preaching. Though they preach that repentance is a necessity, they will not rebuke immodesty, carnality and materialism in their congregations. They are only concerned about giving cosmetic beauty to their preaching. Their preaching seldom goes beyond surface; it hardly touches the raw nerve of the people’s conscience.

### **Why Preachers Do Not Expose Error?**

#### **Popularity**

Whenever a preacher stands up and preaches, he does so with the hope that his voice will be heard and that his message will be received in full by the congregants. Herein lies the danger. When people’s opinion becomes predominant in the mind of the preacher, he seeks to cater to their pleasure rather than preach the will of God in its entirety, which is expected of him. The ultimate duty of every preacher is not to please the crowd but God. The preacher who is a man-pleaser is an entertainer, not a servant of the Lord, neither a faithful minister of His Word.

Another problem of a preacher who is preoccupied with the acceptance of the people is that he will be constantly under great pressure not to apply the truth of God’s Word in a way that would unsettle the



“comfort” of the errant ones. A popularity-conscious preacher will be silent even when he is aware of unrestrained sinful ways of his congregants. Such a man will rather cherish the comfortable relationship that he enjoys with the congregants than the holiness and glory of God. He feels more at ease with the abominable ways of men and women of his congregation than with uneasiness resulting from bold rebuke of their immodest, carnal, materialistic ways. So he develops a style of preaching which appears to be biblical and yet without full, appropriate and necessary application of God’s Word into the lives of his hearers.

### **Pragmatism**

Pragmatism is the mindset and principle which engages those who pursue fame and recognition. It is the notion that meaning or worth is determined by practical consequences. Where pragmatism reigns, only visibly productive ideas and practices are pursued. All else, even biblical principles, are considered secondary. Pragmatism pushes aside holiness, faithfulness and the fear of God from its primacy in preaching and replaces it with bigger crowds, human appeasement, more money, more glamour, etc.

In so far as preachers, and their preaching, ministry and life are concerned, the present pragmatism of modern Christianity is at odds with Scripture. It is leading preachers away from being admonishers of sin and false doctrines to being their accommodators. Pragmatism’s road to popularity is too often paved with deception and lined with vagueness. The sign posts on such a highway to acceptance are always indistinct. Pragmatic pastors are leading their flocks into puddles of sin and devil’s pastures. This has become an acceptable way of life for those on the way to the top of the ladder of success in the business of entertainment.

The world thinks little of using improper manoeuvres to gain its goals. A vast number of people have obviously determined that morality is no longer a needed asset in the social, political and spiritual fields. Immodesty and immoral lives are quietly overlooked.

Smooth-sounding professionalism of pastoral preaching largely turns a blind eye to apostasy and compromise. More and more preachers and churches are toning down and paring down their messages. Once in a while, this will be hinted at, but it will not be dealt with in a plain manner.

None of these should surprise us. The Spirit of God already cautioned us in His Word: “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 Tim 4:2-4).

### **Personal Gain**

To offend listeners means loss of income and influence. So pragmatic ideology of modern preachers has filled many church pulpits with “dumb dogs”, who refuse to bark and alert men of the spiritual calamities that encircle them. Pragmatism has produced a breed of “greedy dogs” who rather remain silent for their own gain, even at the expense of the souls placed under their guard.

This reality of modern preachers reminds us of Paul’s words, “*If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself*” (1 Tim 6:3-5).

The Lord also spoke of such pastors in Isaiah 56, “His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant” (vv 10-12).

As Isaiah said, one of the reasons for the silence of many pastors in the face of increasing sinfulness in their congregation is their own love for sinful pleasures, such as wine drinking, immorality and worldliness.

### **Exposing Error: Is It Worthwhile?**

Exposing error is a very unpopular work. Objection is often raised even by some who are sound in the faith—regarding the exposure of error as being entirely negative and of no real edification. But from every Scriptural standpoint, it is most worthwhile. Proverbs 24:25 affirms, “But

*NOT EXPOSING ERROR: A SERIOUS ERROR OF PREACHERS*

to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them.” A wise pastor will rebuke the sins of his congregation, and a wise congregation will gladly receive it with submission and obedience for its own blessing.

When a godly pastor or elder or a brother or a sister points out your errors, you ought to be thankful rather than resentful. Psalm 141:5 says, “Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities.” You should not go against the loving act of the one who rebukes you. Neither should you smear his or her good intention with false accusations and with your own false self-exaltation. The Scripture says such angry responses belong to the scornful and the foolish ones. “Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee” (Prov 9:8).

God’s Word says, “Open rebuke is better than secret love” (Prov 27:5). And the next verse reiterates, “Faithful are the wounds of a friend.” It is the duty of every loving pastor to rebuke and correct his flock, even if it would cause some form of emotional hurt to the offender. If rebuke is necessitated by sin or a doctrinal error, then godly love demands the intense rebuke of it. Unfortunately, today, rebuke is much rather the neglected duty of love. (I do not advocate harsh treatment of an errant brother – cf Gal 6:1-2; though I fully agree that a church should take biblical disciplinary actions against unrepentant men and women in its congregation – cf Matt 18:15-20.)

At this juncture, I would like to bring to my readers’ attention the words of a famous godly preacher of yesteryear, A H Ironside (1876–1951), “Error is like leaven of which we read, ‘A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.’ Truth mixed with error is equivalent to all error, except that it is more innocent looking and, therefore, more dangerous. God hates such a mixture! Any error, or any truth-and-error mixture, calls for definite exposure and repudiation. To condone such is to be unfaithful to God and His Word and treacherous to imperiled souls for whom Christ died.”

I end this article with the advice of the Apostle Paul to all preachers, “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; *reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine*” (2 Tim 4:2). He advised Titus concerning some malicious men, who infiltrated the church, “whose

mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. This witness is true. *Wherefore rebuke them sharply*, that they may be sound in the faith" (Tit 1:11-13).

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### **Continued from page 109**

We were privileged to have **Miss Kimiko Goto** to share a word of encouragement to the college family. Miss Goto graduated from FEBC in 1984 with a BTh, and went on to earn her MDiv and ThM from Biblical Theological Seminary (USA). She is a missionary to Indonesia, having served for seven years in Kalimantan, and then nine years in East Java, lecturing at the Aletheia Theological Institute. She intends to conclude her ministry in Indonesia this August to begin a new ministry in Japan, her home country.

We thank the Lord for Bethel B-P Church (Melbourne) who has released the **Rev Stephen Khoo** to teach Eschatology and Homiletics this semester. Rev Khoo earned his BTh from FEBC, MDiv from Grace Theological Seminary (USA), and MA from Pensacola Christian College (USA). He is also a member of the FEBC Board of Directors.

**Mrs Janice Lai Ching Fun** was appointed tutor in Church Music (wef April 18, 2006), and conducts the choir class. She holds music qualifications—ACLM, LLCM (TD)—from the London College of Music, and the MRE from Far Eastern Bible College. She is currently a Master in Sacred Music (MSM) candidate at Foundations Bible College, USA.

**Dr Raymond Saxe** (DMiss, TEDS; ThD, Dallas) preached at the College Chapel on February 26, 2007. Dr Saxe is one of the external examiners in FEBC's Doctor of Theology dissertation committee.

# WHY CALVIN WROTE HIS INSTITUTES

Jeffrey Khoo

Who was Calvin and what is Calvinism? John Calvin was a great teacher and defender of the Christian Faith in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Protestant Reformation, and the pioneer of Reformed and Covenant Theology. Calvinism, in the words of the Rev Dr Timothy Tow, “is Paulinism systematised.” Calvin’s magnum opus—*Institutes of the Christian Religion*—is a systematic exposition of Pauline theology.

John Calvin published the first edition of his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* in 1536, and finally completed all 80 chapters in four books in 1559. His *Institutes* are still well loved and studied by many a believer today. There can only be one reason for this: his writings are based on God’s unchanging Truth. One of Calvin’s favourite verses was 2 Corinthians 13:8, “*For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.*” Truth is Truth and it can never die or be destroyed!

## Reasons for the Institutes

Why did Calvin write his *Institutes*? There were two reasons: (1) to teach the Biblical foundations of the Christian Faith to sincere believers, and (2) to defend the Christian Faith from the attacks of those who were opposed to it. Calvin wrote concerning his primary purpose,

My purpose was solely to transmit certain rudiments by which those who are touched with any zeal for religion might be shaped to true godliness ... very many of whom I knew to be hungering and thirsting for Christ: but I saw very few who had been duly imbued with even a slight knowledge of him. The book itself witnesses that this was my intention, adapted as it is to a simple and, you may say, elementary form of teaching.<sup>1</sup>

Another reason why Calvin wrote his *Institutes*, and no doubt an equally important reason, was to defend the Christian Faith from the false accusations of certain madmen who wanted France to be purged of Calvin and all who believed in the doctrines of divine grace and faith. Calvin wrote,

But I perceived that the fury of certain wicked persons has prevailed so far in your realm that there is no place in it for sound doctrine. Consequently, it seemed to me that I should be doing something worthwhile if I both gave instruction to them and made confession before you with the same work. From this, you may learn the nature of the doctrine against which those madmen burn with rage who today disturb your realm with fire and sword. And indeed I shall not fear to confess that here is contained almost the sum of that very doctrine which they shout must be punished by prison, exile, proscription, and fire, and be exterminated on land and sea.<sup>2</sup>

The enemies of Christ and His Gospel had leveled many false and malicious accusations against the reformers before the king. Calvin wrote,

Indeed, I know with what horrible reports they have filled your ears and mind, to render our cause as hateful as possible to you. ... [this doctrine] has in part been violently rejected by the partisanship and power of its opponents, and in part insidiously and fraudulently oppressed by their falsehoods, subtleties, and slanders. It is sheer violence that bloody sentences are meted out against this doctrine without a hearing; it is fraud that it is undeservedly charged with treason and villainy. ... for dreadful reports are being spread abroad among the people. ... Who can now wonder that public hatred is aroused against it, when these most wicked accusations are believed? This is why all classes with one accord conspire to condemn us and our doctrine.<sup>3</sup>

It can be seen that Calvin faced no small opposition and persecution in his day. What lies were spread to stir up hatred against Calvin and the reformers! The lies were no doubt meant to silence the truth and cause the general populace to hate the truth even before hearing it.

### **False Charges Refuted**

The false charges of the antagonists against the Reformed doctrine were these: It is (1) a new doctrine, (2) unknown and uncertain, (3) unsupported by miracles, (4) not taught by the Church Fathers, (5) not the custom of the majority, and (6) schismatic.<sup>4</sup>

#### **(1) A New Doctrine**

Calvin argued that by calling the Reformed doctrine “new,” his opponents “do great wrong to God, whose Sacred Word does not deserve to be accused of novelty.”<sup>5</sup> Calvin preached the same Jesus Christ whom the Apostle Paul preached, that Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose again for our justification according to the Scriptures (Rom 4:25, 1 Cor 15:3-4). Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, and in Christ

alone. Calvin went on to argue that it was “new” to the detractors because they were blind to the truth and that the fault rested solely on their impiety.<sup>6</sup> The light has always been shining and is not new, but the people were just too blind to see it.

## (2) A Theory

Calvin’s detractors charged him for teaching something that was “doubtful and uncertain” (ie, a theory and not dogma). Calvin replied that they were ignorant, and repeated the complaint of the Lord through His prophet Isaiah, “*The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider*” (Isa 1:3). Why did those who professed Christ not hear His voice, nor believe in His words? Did not Jesus say this of those who rejected His Truth, “*But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me*” (John 10:26-27). Calvin testified that believers of the Reformed Faith were very sure of whom and what they had believed, and were not at all afraid to suffer and die for their Faith.<sup>7</sup>

## (3) Unsupported by Miracles

Calvin denounced as dishonest those who demanded miracles in support of the Reformed Faith. Calvin explained, “For we are not forging some new gospel, but are retaining that very gospel whose truth all the miracles that Jesus Christ and his disciples ever wrought serve to confirm.”<sup>8</sup> The ministry and message of the Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles have been authenticated by numerous miracles as recorded in the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, but they would not believe (Mark 16:20, Acts 2:22, Heb 2:4, Rom 15:18-19).

Calvin went on to argue that true doctrine is not ascertained by the performance of miracles but by the infallible principle of the glory of God. Calvin wrote, “Yet, if one does not tend to seek men’s glory but God’s (John 7:18; 8:50), this is a mark of true doctrine, as Christ says.” Calvin went on to warn against counterfeit miracles, lying wonders and deceitful tricks that seek to mislead the simple-minded and the untaught. Did not Jesus say, “*A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign*” (Matt 16:4)?

#### **(4) Not Taught by the Church Fathers**

Calvin refuted this charge by arguing that great men of God in the past were nonetheless men and therefore fallible. The infallible Christ and His inerrant words should be the believers' sole and supreme authority of faith and practice. Calvin wrote,

Now, these fathers have written many wise and excellent things. Still, what commonly happens to men has befallen them too, in some instances. For these so-called pious children of theirs, with all their sharpness of wit and judgment and spirit, worship only the faults and errors of the fathers. The good things that these fathers have written they either do not notice, or misrepresent or pervert. You might say that their only care is to gather dung amid gold.<sup>9</sup>

Calvin said that those who quote human authorities “will have nothing certain in religion, inasmuch as these holy men were ignorant of many things, often disagreed among themselves, and sometimes even contradicted themselves.”<sup>10</sup>

To those who use Proverbs 22:28 to prove their point, Calvin replied that the text dealt with the boundaries of fields, and not the obedience of faith. Calvin went on to show how his enemies had fallaciously interpreted and applied the Scriptures, “But if they love to allegorise so much, why do they not accept the apostles (rather than anyone else) as the ‘fathers’ who have set the landmarks that it is unlawful to remove (Prov 22:28)?”

If believers reject the sole and supreme authority of the infallible Christ and His inerrant words, and begin to depend on the ever-changing comments and opinions of fallible men, they will only end up having a most unstable and vulnerable faith, “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Eph 4:14).

#### **(5) Not the Custom of the Majority**

Calvin refuted this false charge by pointing out that the majority is no determiner of the truth for the majority are usually pleased with error than with truth. Calvin argued,

But, granting public error a place in the society of men, still in the Kingdom of God his eternal truth must alone be listened to and observed, a truth that cannot be dictated to by length of time, by longstanding custom, or by the conspiracy of men. ...



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Even though the whole world may conspire in the same wickedness, He has taught us by experience what is the end of those who sin with the multitude. This He did when He destroyed all mankind by the Flood, but kept Noah with his little family; and Noah by his faith, the faith of one man, condemned the whole world (Gen. 7:1; Heb. 11:7).<sup>11</sup>

Truth is truth no matter what the majority say. What is Truth? God's Word is Truth (John 17:17). The truth will always prevail. "For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth" (2 Cor 13:8).

### (6) Schismatic

Calvin's enemies charged the Reformed doctrine for creating schisms and divisions in the church. These charges were unjust. Calvin said, "The blame for these evils is unjustly laid upon it, when this ought to have been imputed to Satan's malice."<sup>12</sup> Calvin observed that Satan becomes most destructive when God's kingdom of light is gaining ground against his kingdom of darkness. His usual strategy to halt the advance of God's kingdom is to raise up evil and wicked men to oppress the saints and suppress the truth. Calvin wrote,

With violent hands of men he tries to uproot that true seed, and seeks (as much as lies in his power) to choke it with his weeds, to prevent it from growing and bearing fruit. But all that is in vain, if we heed the Lord our monitor, who long since laid open Satan's wiles before us, that he might not catch us unawares; and armed us with defenses firm enough against all his devices. Furthermore, how great is that malice that would ascribe to the very word of God itself the odium either of seditions, which wicked and rebellious men stir up against it, or of sects, which imposters excite, both of them in opposition to its teachings! Yet this is no new example. Elijah was asked if it was not he who was troubling Israel (1 Kings 18:17). To the Jews, Christ was seditious (Luke 23:5; John 19:7 ff.). The charge of stirring up the people was laid against the apostles (Acts 24:5 ff.). What else are they doing who blame us today for all the disturbances, tumults, and contentions that boil up against us? Elijah taught us what we ought to reply to such charges: it is not we who either spread errors abroad or incite tumults; but it is they who contend against God's power (1 Kings 18:18).<sup>13</sup>

### Appeal to the King

In his plea to King Francis I of France, He wrote, The wicked poison of our calumniators has, O King, in its many details, been sufficiently disclosed that you may not incline an ear credulous beyond measure to their slanders. ... Your mind is now indeed turned away

and estranged from us, even inflamed, I may add, against us; but we trust that we can regain your favor, if in a quiet, composed mood you will once read this our confession, which we intend in lieu of a defense before Your Majesty. Suppose, however, the whisperings of the malevolent so fill your ears that the accused have no chance to speak for themselves, but those savage furies, while you connive at them, ever rage against us with imprisonings, scourgings, rackings, maimings, and burnings (cf. Heb. 11:36-37). Then we will be reduced to the last extremity even as sheep destined for the slaughter (Isa. 53:7-8; Acts 8:33). Yet this will so happen that “in our patience we may possess our souls” (Luke 21:19); and may await the strong hand of the Lord, which will surely appear in due season, coming forth armed to deliver the poor from their affliction and also to punish their despisers, who now exult with such great assurance.<sup>14</sup>

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, believers and defenders of the truth of the immutable and impeccable Christ (Heb 13:8), and His verbally and plenary preserved words (Ps 12:6-7, Matt 5:18) continue to face the same wicked strategies of Satan to attack and destroy the Faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints (Jude 3). Calvin has set for us a good example of what it means to earnestly contend for the Faith. He was no man-pleaser, no fence-sitter, no coward, not lukewarm, not a compromiser, but valiant in the battle for truth, and faithful to His Lord till the very end. Calvin offered to the Lord a heart on fire for Him and His service, “*prompte et sincere in opere domini*,” “promptly and sincerely in the work of the Lord.” Dr Timothy Tow testifies, “Through Calvin’s inspirational teaching ... this writer has found a new, radiant confidence for living in perilous end-times like these. For, Calvin has taught, as no other theologian, that ‘salvation is of the Lord’ (Jonah 2:9).”<sup>15</sup>

May the Lord raise up more Calvins today to the glory of His Name!

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols, ed John T McNeill, and trans Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), 1:9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:10-11.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:14-15. “Despite this, they do not cease to assail our doctrine and to reproach and defame it with names that render it hated or suspect. They call it ‘new’ and ‘of recent birth.’ They reproach it as ‘doubtful and uncertain.’ They ask what miracles have confirmed it. They inquire whether it is right for it to

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prevail against the agreement of so many holy fathers and against most ancient custom. They urge us to acknowledge that it is schismatic because it wages war against the church, or that the church was lifeless during the many centuries in which no such thing was heard. Finally, they say that there is no need of many arguments, for one can judge by its fruits what it is, seeing that it has engendered such a heap of sects, so many seditious tumults, such great licentiousness. Indeed, it is very easy for them to revile a forsaken cause before the credulous and ignorant multitude. But if we too might speak in our turn, this bitterness which they licentiously and with impunity spew at us from swollen cheeks would subside.”

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 1:16.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 1:18.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 1:19.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 1:23.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 1:27.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 1:28-29.

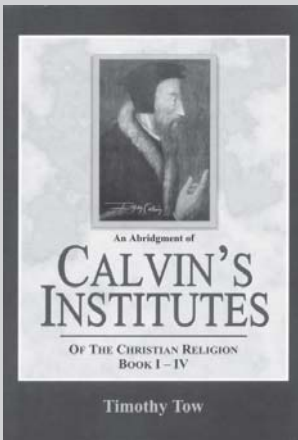
<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 1:30-31.

<sup>15</sup> Timothy Tow, ed, *An Abridgment of Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Singapore: Far Eastern Bible College Press, 1997), vi.

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## **21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY REFORMATION MOVEMENT IN EAST AFRICA**

Jeffrey Khoo

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Reformation Movement is on the move in the great continent of Africa by the grace of God with the East Africans taking the lead. On August 29, 2006, I departed for Kenya with 36 kilogrammes of luggage full of Biblical and Christian literature for the participants of the East Africa Christian Alliance (EACA) Conference, August 28-September 1, 2006.

The EACA is an affiliate of the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC). Annual conferences are convened to take an uncompromising stand “for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev 1:9), and “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). The beautiful 10-acre sylvan campus of the Bible College of East Africa (BCEA) in Nairobi was a most suitable conference venue.

It was my privilege and joy to be invited by the EACA to speak on a most pertinent theme, “Discerning the Spirits.” Using 1 John 4:1-6 as my text, I spoke on how to discern the spirits by asking the right questions. Specifically, I dealt with discerning the spirits of Docetism, Gnosticism, Arianism, Roman Catholicism, Charismaticism, Modernism, Neo-Evangelicalism, and Neo-Fundamentalism. The conference speakers included FEBC alumni, Rev Dr Mark Kim Kyung Soo (Principal of BCEA), Bishop Richard Kivai, Rev Stephen Masila. Others were Rev Gary Johnson, missionary of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions (IBPFM, USA), and Rev Dr Choi Kwang Jai, pastor of Glory B-P Church (Korea) and ICCC president, who gave the closing message. Select messages will be published in the *Morning Star* which is the official organ of the EACA. The conference drew an attendance of 200 African pastors representing 22 member denominations. The Q&A sessions were especially spontaneous and edifying. Without question, the

participants are looking forward to the next meeting scheduled for April 2007 (DV).

September 2, 2006 saw the inauguration of BCEA Tanzania. The inauguration service was held in the college chapel with a seating capacity of 200. The new college is located on the fertile fields of Usa River in the city of Arusha. The college campus is scenically sandwiched between two majestic mountains—Mount Meru (14980 ft) and Mount Kilimanjaro (19340 ft, Africa's highest). The building project began in 2003, and there are now 5 buildings on campus, namely, the office and classroom block, the chapel, the dormitories, the dining hall, and the guesthouse. Glory B-P Church, Korea, gave money to purchase the land, and funds for the buildings came mainly from Singapore churches (True Life, Calvary Pandan, Calvary Tengah, Berean), and other well wishers. US\$200,000 have thus far been spent, a most profitable investment for God's Kingdom. The new BCEA is established as a reformed and fundamental college independent of any denomination. It is to be an *international* Bible College, not just Tanzanian or African, in obedience to Christ's Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20). BCEA Kenya and Tanzania with FEBC are part of the Bible College movement. FEBC is training young men and women not only for national but also international missions. Our international alumni, namely, Mark Kim, Stephen Masila, Peter Elibariki, Eben Yoon, Richard Tiu, Christine Kendagor, and Violet Malongo form the backbone of the BCEA faculty.

A multinational congregation comprising local Tanzanian pastors, and missionaries from USA (Dr and Mrs Howard Carlson and Rev Gary Johnson), Korea (Rev Dr Choi Kwang Jai and Eld Lyu Myung Ha), Kenya and Singapore, graced the occasion with their congratulatory words and prayers. I preached a sermon on the need to lay right and solid foundations which are Christ and His Word (Ps 11:3, Eph 2:20), forever infallible and inerrant (Ps 12:6-7, Matt 5:18, 24:35, Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33, 1 Pet 1:23-25), quoting the late ICCC President—Dr Carl McIntire—on the perfect preservation of the inspired words of the Holy Scriptures (in his January 11, 1992 sermon on Psalm 12). The Dean Burgon Oath that the Bible is 100% perfect without any mistake to the last word, syllable and letter in the original languages was reaffirmed and taken, and translated into the Swahili tongue by Rev Peter Elibariki, BTh and MDiv graduate of FEBC, and academic dean of the new Bible college.

On the Lord's Day, September 3, I preached in the Africa Missions and Evangelism Church (AMEC) at Karangai formerly pastored by Judah Kundael Pallangyo, now an MDiv student at FEBC, who should return to Tanzania by 2008 to augment the faculty. From September 4-6, I offered a course on the "Theology of Salvation" to 15 pioneer students, teaching 5 hours a day for one credit with exams.

On the way back to Nairobi on Thursday, September 7, I stopped by to visit the Kiluani clinic of Chan Pui Meng, missionary of Life B-P Church. Half a dozen Maasai women were sitting outside the clinic waiting to see her for antenatal counsel. The clinic grounds have been transformed into a botanical gardens with fruit trees and flowers. The Jacaranda tree our pastor planted at the dedication of the clinic 4 years ago now stands 10 feet tall and doing well despite the harsh and dry conditions of Maasailand. A beautiful red-stone church serves as the spiritual clinic. Stephen Omweri, a BCEA graduate, is the resident preacher.

The Lord mightily used the Rev Dr Mark Kim to build up BCEA Kenya and Tanzania. He also had a hand in setting up the Kiluani schools and clinic. All this was a result of his humble obedience to God's directive will to serve in Africa. Although he wanted to go to Indonesia, the Lord led him to Africa (like He did the Apostle Paul who had planned to go north and eastward, but was directed by the Spirit to head west in answer to the Macedonian call, Acts 16:6-10). For the last 17 years, Rev Dr Mark Kim has been serving faithfully at BCEA as an IBPFM missionary, and will continue to do so until the Lord calls him home. He is ably helped by his beloved wife, Hannah. They have two lovely daughters—Hayoung and Chanmi—who are spiritually minded to follow after their parents' footsteps.

My last assignment was to preach at the morning chapel of BCEA Kenya on Friday. I spoke from Philippians 3 about beginning well and ending well in the Lord's service. Twelve hours of uneventful flying saw me back home in Singapore on Saturday, September 9, touching down at 1.05 pm only to hear that Eld Eric Mahadevan—founding elder of True Life B-P Church and secretary of the FEBC Board of Directors—had just been laid to rest that very morning. Eld Mahadevan stood solidly with Rev Dr Timothy Tow and the FEBC faculty on the present perfection of the Holy Scriptures, and readily took the Dean Burgon oath at every FEBC convocation. Without question, Eld Mahadevan was faithful unto

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death. “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: *be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life*” (Rev 2:10).

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*Rev Dr Jeffrey Khoo is the academic dean of Far Eastern Bible College, and a teaching elder of True Life Bible-Presbyterian Church.*

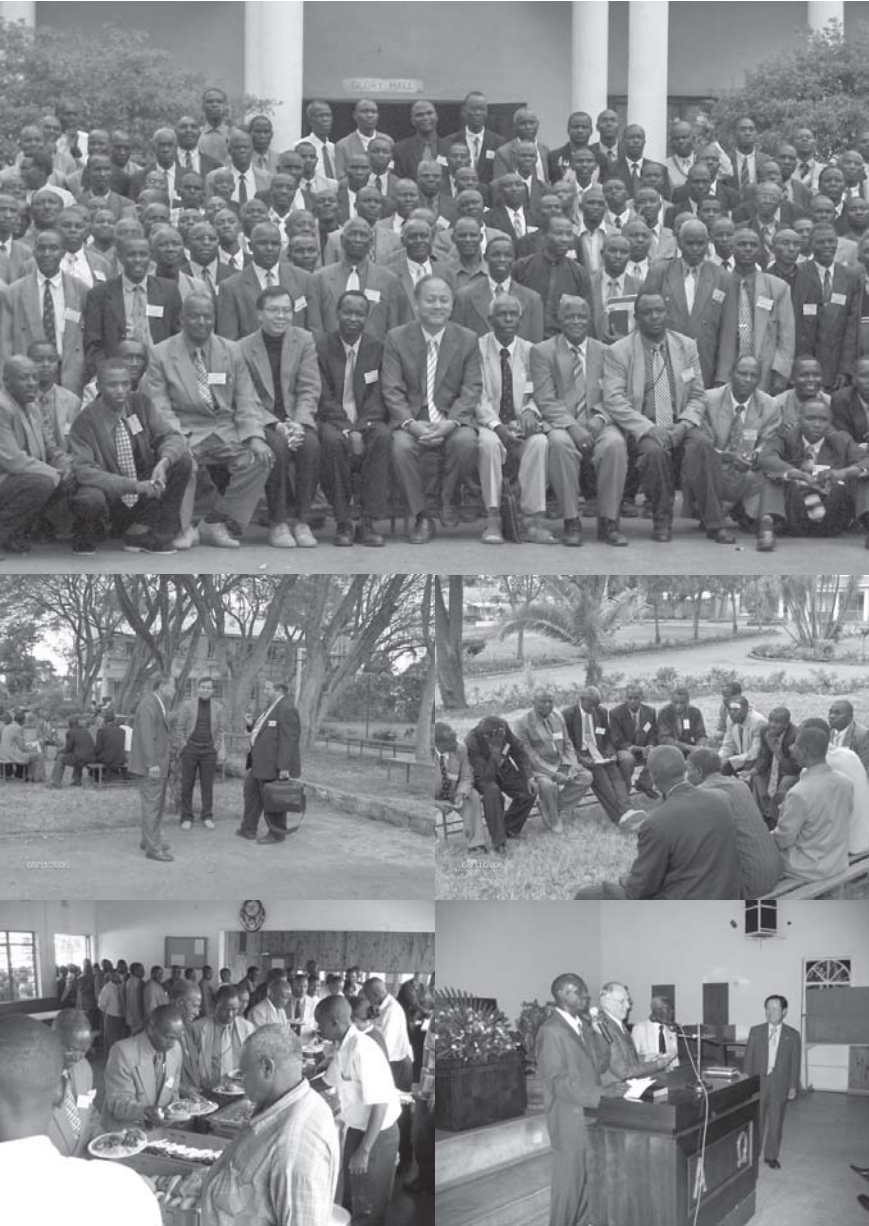
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Dr Choi Kwang Jai's (ICCC President) closing message to EACA pastors and leaders.



*The Burning Bush 13/2 (July 2007)*



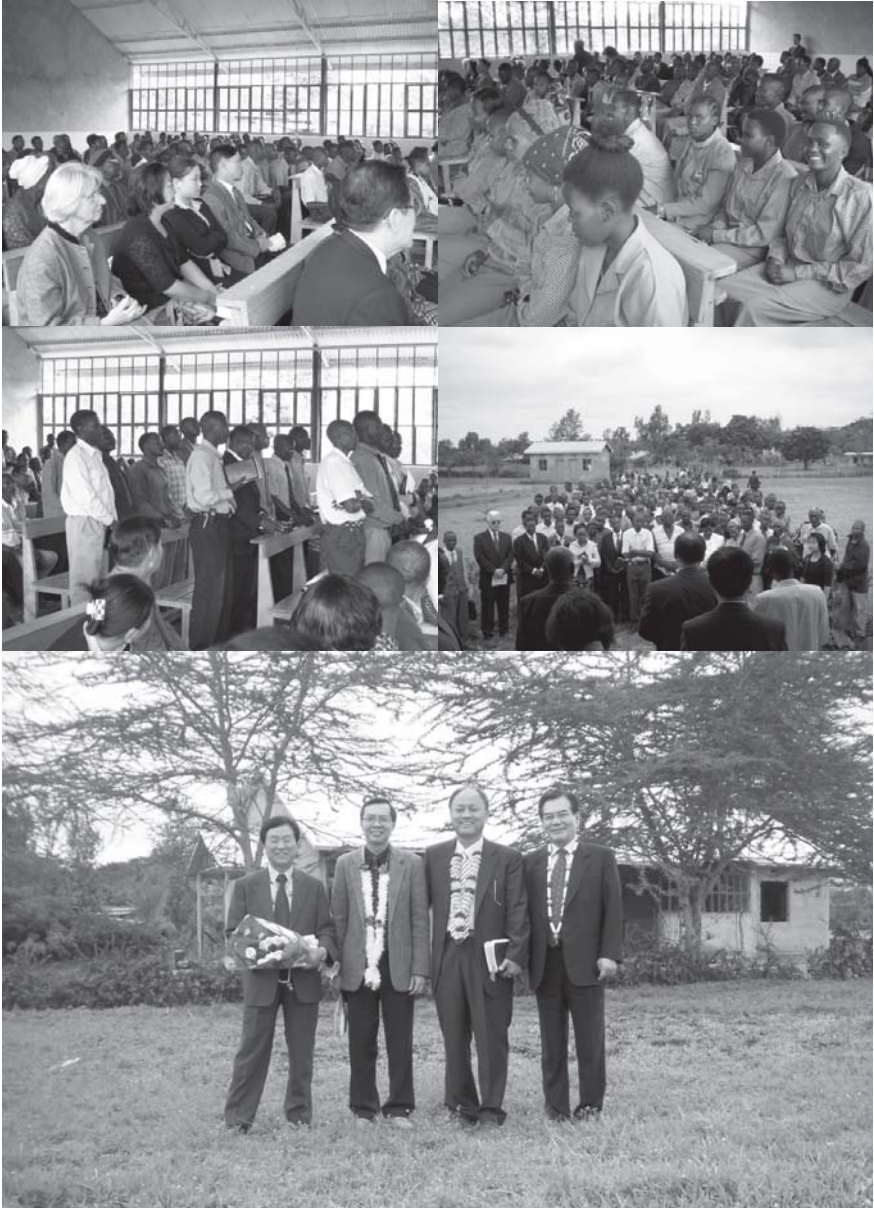
From top, L-R: Group photo of EACA pastors and leaders; fellowship; discussions; special lunch hosted by Eld Lyu Myung Ha; Rev G Johnson presenting a gift to Dr Choi on behalf of the EACA.



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From top, L-R: Group photo of participants at the inauguration of BCEA Tanzania; Rev Dr Mark Kim & Rev Peter Elibariki; Dr J Khoo delivering the inauguration message; Rev G Johnson reading Dr W Leroy's (IBPFM) greetings; BCEA faculty introduced.

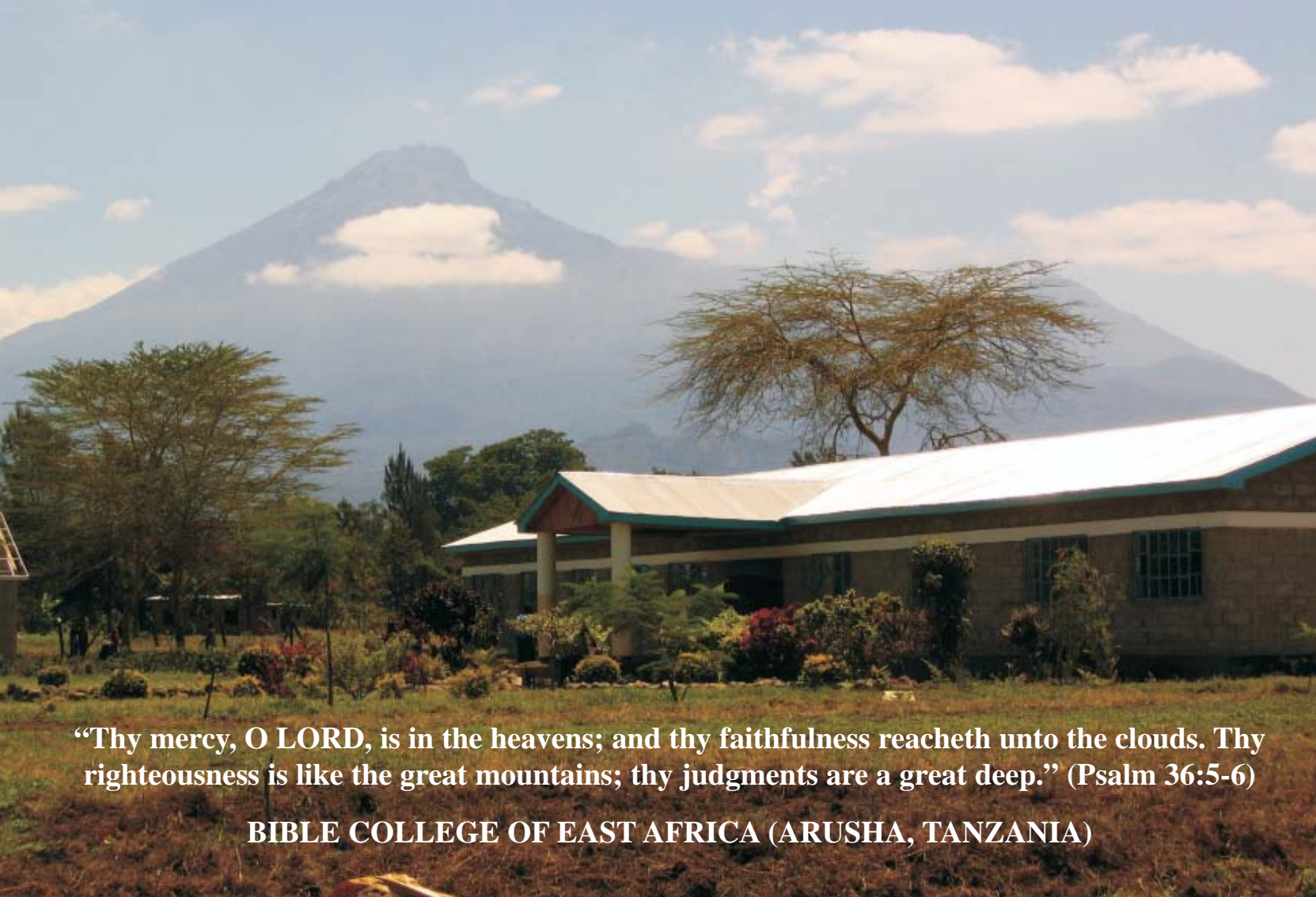


From top, L-R: International congregation at inauguration service; Church choir & worshippers; Pioneer students; Ribbon cutting ceremony; Rev Dr Choi Kwang Jai, Rev Dr Jeffrey Khoo, Rev Dr Mark Kim, Eld Lyu Myung Ha.



**Bible College of East Africa (Nairobi, Kenya)  
Bachelor of Ministry Students 2006**





**“Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep.” (Psalm 36:5-6)**

**BIBLE COLLEGE OF EAST AFRICA (ARUSHA, TANZANIA)**