

LAST GENERATION VERSION

of the New Testament

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Purpose

This entirely new English translation of the New Testament from the Greek is being produced specifically for the last generation of Christians who will live to see the return of Jesus Christ to earth and face the end-time trial of faith. It is a very accurate representation of the Greek text in current English, although sacrificing some readability for the sake of accuracy. The more rigid style is best for those who wish to do in depth study. It is a work in progress.

Greek Text

In making a translation, there are three families of Greek texts from which to choose. They are the Textus Receptus from which the KJV and NKJV are translated, the Majority (or Byzantine) Text which represents the vast majority of known Greek manuscripts, and the Alexandrian Text which represents a very small number of very ancient Greek manuscripts from Egypt. Each of these text families has its strengths and weaknesses.

The Textus Receptus' strengths are that it usually follows the majority of Greek manuscripts and takes into account patristic quotations and other ancient versions. Its weakness is that it occasionally follows a very obscure reading for which there is scant evidence.

The Majority Text's strength is its numbers, and the very wide geographical area represented by its witnesses. Its weakness is that it often ignores ancient versions and patristic evidence.

The Alexandrian Text's strength is its greater age. Its weaknesses are its extremely small numbers, many internal discrepancies among its few witnesses, and its very limited geographical area. It is the local text of Alexandria, and does not likely represent the

text of other areas, particularly Asia Minor, the cradle of early Christianity where the original autographs were kept by the local churches founded by the Apostles.

The LGV generally follows the Textus Receptus. However, in the rare cases where the Textus Receptus follows an obscure reading, the LGV follows the Majority Text reading under the following circumstances: the Majority and Alexandrian Texts agree together against it and there is no patristic or early version support for the TR reading. Footnotes are provided where important textual variants occur. In one passage in Revelation, the Alexandrian Text is followed because overwhelming internal evidence makes the TR and MT readings theologically impossible.¹

Theological Bias

Most translations of the Bible are affected by pressure to conform to certain theological traditions. All translations are to some degree influenced by the personal theological biases of the translators. This is true because the text must be understood in order to be translated. And the theological filters and presuppositions in the minds of translators strongly influence their understanding of the text, and consequently their translation. Catholic translations are influenced by Roman Catholic theology. Eastern Orthodox translations are influenced by Orthodox theology. Protestant Bibles are influenced by Reformed theology. Evangelical Bibles are influenced by both Reformed and Dispensational bias. The diligent student of the Scriptures should be aware of this fact, and the particular biases of the translators of any version he chooses to use.

You will not find a Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Reformed, or Dispensational bias in this translation or its notes. You will find a bias that is usually favorable to the writings of the earliest Christian pastors, apologists, and martyrs, and is far less favorable to the interpretations of modern theologians.

Theologically Shaded Terms

There are certain special theological terms in our English translations that were not special theological terms in the Greek culture or the Greek text of the Bible, but were ordinary words used in common speech. Instead of translating these terms into English, they have been “transliterated” instead. Transliteration is the process of conveying the

¹ See notes on Revelation 5:8-10

phonetic sound of a Greek word into the target language rather than conveying its meaning using an English word of the same meaning. For example, the Greek word βαπτίζω (baptizo) is the normal Greek word meaning to submerge in a liquid. It was used for anything from soaking dishes to the sinking of a ship. It was not a theological term at all in Greek. A proper translation would be “submerge” or “immerse.” By not actually translating this term, but merely carrying over the phonetic sound into English (thus creating a new English theological term), various denominations have cover for importing their own theological spin to the term rather than being forced to convey its true meaning. Christian “baptism” today in various denominations means different things, from a purely spiritual experience to making the sign of the cross on the head of an infant with a few drops “holy water.” Another example is the rendering of ἀπόστολος (apostolos) as “apostle” instead of translating its true meaning (one personally sent on a mission with the authority of the sender – an “emissary”). Thus an “Emissary of Jesus Christ” requires that Jesus Himself personally sent that person with His own authority to act on His behalf. By transliterating the term, cover is given to certain Charismatics to claim that they are “Apostles of Christ” (even though they were never commissioned personally by Jesus). Likewise, ἄγγελος (angelos) is the Greek word that means “messenger,” and is used in the Bible for both human and heavenly messengers. But by transliterating this term as “angel” instead of translating it as “messenger,” an entirely new theological term is created which changes the sense from merely one who delivers a message to a certain kind of creature that is not human.

Sometimes the English word used has no resemblance at all to the Greek word it supposedly translates, either in meaning or phonetic sound. The best example is the English word “church” which is given for the Greek word ἐκκλησία (ekklesia). The Greek word literally means an assembly of people, called assembled together for a particular purpose. “Congregation,” “assembly,” and “gathering” are the best English equivalents.

The LGV translates these terms rather than using the traditional transliterations. The exception is proper names. Here we follow the pattern of the Apostles who also transliterated into Greek the proper names from the Old Testament, no doubt following the example of the Septuagint.

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The Last Generation Version of the New Testament is an ongoing project, being periodically reviewed and continuously refined by peers. Only the latest revisions will be posted on this site.

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