

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 considering translation, there are three main families of Greek manuscripts from which to choose. These are the Textus Receptus which is the printed Greek text represented by the KJV and NKJV, the Majority (or Byzantine) Text which represents the majority of known Greek manuscripts (regardless of age), and the Alexandrian Text family which represents a small number of the earliest Greek manuscripts from Egypt. Each of these text families has its strengths and weaknesses.

The Alexandrian Text's strength is its greater age, and the fact that it does not reflect later evolution of theology. Its weaknesses are its extremely small numbers, internal discrepancies among its witnesses, and its limited geographical area.

The Majority Text's strength are its numbers and the very wide geographical area represented by its witnesses. Its weakness is the later date of its witnesses which sometimes reflect later evolution of theology. It also ignores ancient versions and patristic evidence.

The Textus Receptus' strengths are that it usually follows the majority of Greek manuscripts and sometimes takes into account very old patristic quotations and other ancient versions. Its weakness is that it occasionally follows very obscure readings for

which there is scant evidence, especially in support of the later credal developments of the doctrine of the Trinity.¹

Most modern English translations follow the Nestle – Aland Greek text. This is a printed Greek edition of the New Testament which represents the latest critical analysis of the various Greek manuscripts. While the LGV generally follows the Nestle – Aland critical Greek edition, there are times when it follows the Majority Text, and on rare occasions follows a reading that has strong support among the patristic evidence. Footnotes are provided where important textual variants occur.

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, and the theological traditions of the organizations underwriting the translations which apply pressure to conform. Bias is always present 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 choices in 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.

The LGV, like all translations, is influenced by theological bias as well. However, it does not contain Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Reformed, or Dispensational bias in this translation or its notes. Instead it tends to favor the theology found in the writings of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, the earliest Christian pastors, apologists, and martyrs, without any pressure to conform to the interpretations of modern theologians.

¹ The best example is the Trinitarian statement in 1 John 5:7 found in the KJV & NKJV but is not found in any of the Alexandrian or Majority Text manuscripts.

Theologically Shaded Terms

There are certain 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, most English Bibles have “transliterated” these terms instead. Transliteration is the process of conveying the 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 of “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 instead of translating it, 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 together for a particular purpose. “Congregation,” “assembly,” and “gathering” are the best English equivalents.

The LGV translates these terms accurately rather than using the traditional transliterations. The exception is proper names. Here we follow the pattern that Jesus' Emissaries used regarding names, following the precedent established by the Septuagint and carried over into the New Testament.

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

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² The name and location of the translator must also be included in any translations.