

The Remnant

*“Even so then at this
present time also there
is a remnant according to
the election of grace.”
Romans 11.5*

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ARE MEN JUSTIFIED IN RE-TRANSLATING BIBLE WORDS?

Some people think it is a bit too much to always be appealing to the original languages of Hebrew and Greek. They ask: Is not the English of the King James Version (KJV) good enough? To which we would reply, for most purposes, yes, it usually is. But for exactness, no, it sometimes is not.

The Bible is an international book. It is full of translations. Joseph spoke to his brothers through an interpreter (Genesis 42.23). Daniel interpreted the strange language written on the wall for Belshazzar (Daniel 5.17-28). Matthew interprets or translates *Emmanuel*, Mark translates *talitha cumi*, *Golgotha*, and *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani* (5.41, 15.22, 15.34). John translates *Rabbi*, *Messias*, *Cephas*, and *Siloam*, (1.38, 41-42, 9.7). Luke translates *Barnabas*, *Tabitha*, and *Elymas* (Acts 4.36, 9.36, 13.8); and so on. There has been a need for adequate translations, the choice of exact words, and the interpretation of words from different languages ever since the tower of Babel.

No one here is trying to turn everyone into experts on the Hebrew and Greek languages, nor do we profess to be such ourselves. However, we do often refer to Greek and Hebrew words and their dictionary meanings. We do so with a firm belief that our readers want to know exactly what God has said and what He meant, and not to be bombarded with the opinions of men. God inspired the writing of the Bible in the original languages, but, other than

the “King James Only” people, most folks do not claim that verbal inspiration applies to the words in the King James Version or other *translations*. Yet we do not at all deny that, in His predestinating, overriding providence, God saw to it that each and every word in the translations, including the KJV, is exactly what it is. But that in itself is not inspiration.

In one of my KJV Bibles John 2.6-7 says “waterpots”; in another of my KJV Bibles the text says “water pots.” That is not **inspiration**. It is **divine providence** that each detail is exactly as it is.

Believing in the absolute predestination of all things, I believe I have seen evidence of God’s providence exactly controlling even the printing errors. Even those typographical errors (yes, there are some, even in the Bible) are part of the “all things” we know *work together for good* to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose (Romans 8.28).

JOTS AND TITLES

Christ said, “For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled (Matthew 5.18).” By “jots” and “tittles,” our Lord was referring to the tiny marks within the letters of the original Hebrew, the language in which (for the most part) the Old Testament was written.

We don’t have jots and tittles in our alphabet. Our closest equivalent to jots and tittles is found in the dots over the i and the j, the cross-bar of the t, and the tail on the capital Q. Leaving the cross off the t would leave us with an l, which would change

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Elder C. C. Morris
Editor and Publisher
P O Box 1004
Hawkins, Texas 75765
Phone 1-903-769-4822

The Remnant is sent free of any obligation
to all interested persons.

Address all correspondence to:

THE REMNANT PUBLICATIONS
P O BOX 1004
HAWKINS, TX 75765-1004
Phone 1-903-769-4822

E-mail: ccmorris@the-remnant.com

Web sites: www.the-remnant.com
and www.primitive-baptist.com

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a word, sometimes drastically. We would end up with lime for time, lack for tack, lo for to, and little (or worse, *lille*) for tittle.

It was the same in the Hebrew to which Christ referred, only more so. The jots and tittles in the Hebrew words actually made the difference in what a word was and what it meant. In God's inspiration, not only could no *word* be changed, but even the letters and smallest parts of letters could not be changed—in the mind of the reader, such an alteration would alter what God has said into something He had not said.

To those who take the Scriptures casually, God's inspiration of the Scriptures is not all that important. They are content with multiplying "translations" and even "paraphrases" endlessly.

EXAMPLES OF PARAPHRASE

A paraphrase is "a restatement of a text, passage, or work giving the meaning in another form" (Webster). It is this *restatement in another form* to which we strenuously object when considering the multitudes of so-called "Bible translations" flooding the marketplace today.

Someone might say, "*The mailman came, and, having come, he left us nothing.*" Such a sentence might be paraphrased as "*We didn't get any mail,*" but that is not a word-for-word translation. The original sentence gives two important facts about the

mailman that the paraphrase ignores. That is one of the major problems with a paraphrase. The problem is serious because a paraphrase comes down to what *the “translator”* considers important or unimportant. One who paraphrases is at best only dealing with ideas, whereas a translator of necessity is working with the exact words that convey the ideas. When dealing with Bible translations and paraphrases, no man has a right or the authority to judge any word God said as unimportant.

“*The Living Bible*,” one of the many “versions” or *perversions* available today, is a *paraphrase*, **not a translation**, its own writers bearing witness against themselves. On the flyleaf of my copy of “*The Living New Testament*” the title and subtitle reads:

THE LIVING NEW TESTAMENT
Scripture Paraphrase: Ken Taylor
Additional Text: Dave Grant
Illustrations: Jack Wiens

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Let us compare a couple texts to see how the *Living New Testament* fares.

Romans 9.10-21 is a text of interest that is familiar to most of those who have been given to see God’s absolute sovereignty in all things, including the affairs of men. The KJV reads as follows:

And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; 11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) 12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. 13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. 14

What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. 15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. 17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. 19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? 20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? (249 words)

Mr. Taylor’s “Living” version reads as follows:

And years later, when this son, Isaac, was grown up and married, and Rebecca his wife was about to bear him twin children, God told her that Esau, the child born first, would be a servant to Jacob, his twin brother. In the words of the Scripture, “I chose to bless Jacob, but not Esau.” And God said this before the children were even born, before they had done anything either good or bad. This proves that God was doing what he had decided from the beginning; it was not because of what the children did but because of what God wanted and chose.

Was God being unfair? Of course not. For God had said to Moses, “If I want to be kind to someone, I will. And I will take pity on anyone I want to.” And so God’s blessings are not given just because someone decides to have them or works hard to get them. They are given because God takes pity on those he wants to.

Pharaoh, king of Egypt, was an example of this fact. For God told him he had given him the kingdom of Egypt for the very purpose of displaying the awesome power of God against him: so that all the world would hear about God's glorious name. So you see, God is kind to some just because he wants to be, and he makes some refuse to listen. Well then, why does God blame them for not listening? Haven't they done what he made them do?

No, don't say that. Who are you to criticize God? Should the thing made say to the one who made it, "Why have you made me like this?" When a man makes a jar out of clay, doesn't he have a right to use the same lump of clay to make one jar beautiful, to be used for holding flowers, and another to throw garbage into?" (320 words)

Anyone can see Mr. Taylor's version takes 71 more words to say a lot less than God said, including the "Living Bible's" conveniently doing away with God's hatred of Esau.

One other example: Romans 4.24-5.2 (KJV):

But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (75 words)

Again, Mr. Taylor's "Living New Testament" version:

It was for us, too, assuring us that God will accept us in the same way he accepted Abraham—when we believe the promises of God who brought back Jesus our Lord from the dead. He died for our sins and rose again to make us right with God, filling us with God's goodness.

So now, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith in his promises, we can have real peace with him because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. For because of our faith, he has brought us into this place of highest privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to actually becoming all that God had in mind for us to be. (127 words)

Spoken like a real Arminian. You notice that God said by Paul, "we **have** peace with God," and it is "through our Lord Jesus Christ." Mr. Taylor's version says "we *can have* real peace," and it is "*because of our faith.*" Mr. Taylor has given us the bare possibility of "real peace" instead of "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"; he said it is "because of **our faith**" instead of because of the finished work of Christ's justification of His people; he has given us a total perversion of what Paul said. In his paraphrase Mr. Taylor has done away with doctrinal words like **imputation, justification, righteousness, grace, and the glory of God**, all of which are represented in the KJV text. In their place Mr. Taylor's words say we can have *real* peace. Is this an improvement over peace with God? Where did he get "filling us with God's goodness"? Is Mr. Taylor's "place of highest privilege" an improvement over **God's grace**? Does his "confidently and joyfully looking forward to actually becoming all that God has in mind for us to be" really paraphrase "**rejoice in hope of the glory of God**"?

So much (at least for now) for paraphrases which ignore the original Hebrew and Greek texts.

WHAT DO YOU EXPECT FROM A BIBLE?

To those of us who take God's word seriously, however, we want to know exactly what God said, not some human paraphrase that has man's wisdom forever trying to improve on God's wisdom. We do not want a poor or incorrect translation of a Hebrew or Greek word into the wrong English word.

That is why we strenuously object to casual misquotes like saying "the kingdom of God" when God said "the kingdom of heaven" or vice versa. That is one reason why it is our practice in editing and publishing *The Remnant* to quote Bible verses exactly,

as much as enabled by God's grace, to quote enough of a passage so as not to take it out of context, and to give the verses' citations for friend and foe alike to verify that what we have said is in harmony with the Scriptures, should they so desire (and we hope they do). Our word is nothing.

The only reason we are doing what we are doing is to print and publish only (a) that which is in harmony with **God's word**, and (b) **for His honor and glory**. Some, reverting to the Latin, refer to these two principles as *Sola Scriptura* (the Scriptures alone) and *Sola Dei Gloria* (For God's glory alone). As we said before, that is not our approach here; we are not trying to get our readers to speak fluent Greek or Hebrew, and least of all would we use Latin to accommodate the Roman organization. Our desire is to say as simply as possible what God's word says and means. That is why in matters of doubt or controversy we unhesitatingly go to the best authorities available for the correct understanding of the original Hebrew and Greek words.

Old Testament Hebrew and New Testament Greek are dead languages. **They are dead because in His providence God killed them**, thereby freezing forever in time the exact meaning of every word. We can now know exactly how the ancient Hebrews and Greeks used each and every word.

In contrast, English is a living language that grows and changes, usually for the worse. The evolution of the English language (and others) is why some, impatient with the old KJV English, continually want to come up with a newer "version" that people can understand in modern English, jive-talk, or children's slang. In so doing, God's word is invariably watered down and changed according to the whims of these "translators" in accord with the *slanguage* of the day. If a translator is an Arminian, he will choose words that imply free-will doctrine wherever possible. If he is a Unitarian, he will play down any text that teaches the deity of Christ or the equality of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son in the Godhead.

None of us is any better. If I were charged with producing a new version or translation of the Bible, you can well believe that whenever there are two or more English words that might convey the original language and meaning, I would pick words as care-

fully as possible to express not only what the Bible teaches, but *what I believe the Bible teaches*. So would you.

We now have the KJV, translated into the English language almost four hundred years ago. Are we now, today, justified in retranslating words from the Hebrew and Greek? We unashamedly say we are so justified, on occasion, when such a resorting to a standard dictionary of Hebrew, Greek, or English will clarify what the original Scriptures say. Our Principle #2 on the back page says:

“The Old and New Testaments in their original languages are the verbally inspired word of God, and they are the complete and only valid guide of faith and practice; the King James Version is the preferred English translation.”

Nowadays many think of inspiration as being that wonderful puffy feeling in one's chest (or head) that makes us want to write sonnets about beautiful sunrises and the objects of our affection. That is not what is meant by "verbally inspired," which means God inspired the original Bible books word for word, letter for letter, exactly, down to the dotting of the i and the crossing of the t—down to the jot and tittle.

Why do we say the KJV is our "preferred English translation"? Not because it is perfect, not because it, in itself, is verbally inspired, but because we believe the KJV translators were in God's providence the best-suited men of their day for the awesome task set before them. They were over forty honest, God-fearing men who believed in the supernatural three-one God of the Scriptures, men who believed in the basic doctrines of Jesus Christ, His miracles, and His resurrection. Briefly, they believed the historic Christian doctrines of God and believed the Bible in its original manuscripts was supernaturally inspired by the Holy Spirit.

If you should compare two or three versions of the writings of Plato, Aristotle, or some of the other classic Greek writers translated into English, the English language and words would vary from version to version, sometimes so much you might wonder if you are reading translations of the same original document. On the other hand, the KJV translators be-

lieved they were dealing not with men's words, as if translating Plato, Aristotle, or Homer, but "...the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter 1.21)." The Bible is not to be handled as if we are dealing with the writings of ordinary or even extraordinary mortals.

TRANSLATING WITHIN THE BIBLE

The problem of translation from one language to another has been with us ever since the confusion of tongues—languages—at the tower of Babel in Genesis 10.

Even within the same language we might be confused by someone's using a regional dialect different from our own. By way of illustration, we have probably all had our fun with the different meanings of a *poke*: to one from the southern USA a poke is a brown paper bag; to one from the north it is being hit in the face with a fist. But even these definitions are time-dated; we do not hear either of these uses of the word *poke* much any more. This emphasizes why we do not need to produce new Bibles "versions" and "translations" every year or so. Today's changeable language is outdated all too soon, and with it so is any Bible version in "current" language.

The Septuagint Version was a translation of the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. It was completed around 270 B.C. It is evident from their quoting the Old Testament Scriptures that, at least some of the time, Christ, Paul, and others who wrote and spoke in the time of the New Testament used and quoted from the Septuagint Version, and not from the original Hebrew. From a practical standpoint, this was because in God's providence Greek was one of the most common languages of the Roman Empire. Again, God had His reason for this. In the New Testament times, many if not most Israelites who could read and write did so in Greek rather than in Hebrew.

But thousands of Israelites could still understand and speak "the old language," Hebrew, and did so, much as *some* first-generation immigrants to the English-speaking nations become bilingual, speaking English in public but speaking their native language in their homes. Think of that as a model of what the people of Israel were up against in first-century Is-

rael: Israelites whose historic language was *Hebrew*, speaking *Greek* in a *Latin-Roman* Empire.

That is one reason why, from the human standpoint, Pilate posted the "charge" against Jesus on the cross, as Luke records, "And a superscription also was written over Him in letters of **Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew**, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS (Luke 23.38)." (From God's standpoint, He had His own purpose!)

John says it this way: "And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in **Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin** (John 19.19-20)."

Matthew says, "And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS (Matthew 27.37)."

Mark, who was always direct and to the point, says, "And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS (Mark 15.26)."

When the Lord appeared to Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus way, Paul later reported "I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the **Hebrew** tongue...(Acts 26.14)." Why did not Christ speak to him in Greek or Latin? Because Hebrew is the language of God and His revealed religion. He did not speak the creation into existence in Greek, nor did He call Adam in English. Evidence supports the contentions that (1) Adam and Eve spoke Hebrew with God in the garden of Eden and (2) Hebrew was the one language of all races until God confounded the men and their languages at Babel.

When Paul was taken into protective custody by the Roman soldiers (Acts 21.35), he asked to speak to their chief captain, who mistook Paul for a renegade Egyptian fugitive. He asked Paul, "Canst thou speak **Greek**?" But Paul said, "I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city...." Paul did not need to give him a yes-or-no answer. His answer in effect said yes, of course, I certainly can speak Greek. That "no mean city" of Tarsus had one of the greatest secular colleges in the Roman Empire, and, little or no doubt about it, Paul got his secular education there. He

received his religious education at the feet of Gamaliel (before learning at the feet of Christ), thought by some to have been one of the greatest Rabbis since Moses.

Yet, a few moments after he verified that he could speak **Greek**, when he was granted permission to speak to the Jewish mob, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the **Hebrew** tongue. And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence.

Greek was such a universal language in the Roman Empire that in the Jewish mind the Greek nationality (with its wonderful language) was synonymous with being a non-Jew (Gentile). Hence Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to **the Jew first**, and also to the **Greek** (Romans 1.16)." "For there is no difference between **the Jew** and **the Greek**: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him (Romans 10.12)."

What Paul said is true, that "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one IN CHRIST JESUS (Galatians 3.28; likewise, see Colossians 3.11.)." That is, distinguishing between Jews and Gentiles is dropped among God's elect, those who are IN CHRIST JESUS. In their neighborhoods and market-places and in ours, there *are* Jews and Greeks, bond and free, males and females. We cannot say there is now no Jew or Greek, universally. That was not what Paul was saying; we cannot take what Paul said out of the context in which he spoke, which was "in Christ Jesus." There alone, in HIM and not otherwise, is the distinction abolished. Here, there are Jews and Greeks who speak their own languages and do not necessarily understand the language of others. We English-speaking folks, two thousand years after Christ and His apostles, still have a similar problem.

John likewise resorted to translating from one language to another in the book of Revelation: "And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the **Hebrew tongue** is Abaddon, but in the **Greek tongue** hath his name Apollyon (Revelation 9.11)."

Why would John, writing by God's inspiration, translate Abaddon/Apollyon if it were not both necessary and proper to do so?

Again, in the prophecy of the battle of Armageddon, John calls the reader's attention to the Hebrew/Israelite nature of the prophecy by naming the location not in Greek, Latin, or in any language other than Hebrew: "And he gathered them together into a place called in the **Hebrew** tongue Armageddon (Revelation 16.16)."

THE SUPERScription, THE OBJECTION

It was mentioned earlier that God had His own purpose in the complete superscription that was written over Christ in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew—I say complete, as the words are pieced together from the accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John:

"THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS."

Of the four gospel accounts, John gives the most complete quote of Pilate's charge that was posted on the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What our sovereign God was saying in Pilate's writing was all too obvious to the Jews who, reading the Hebrew inscription over Jesus, so strenuously objected to Pilate's wording: "Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that *he said*, I am King of the Jews" (John 19.21).

The reason the Pharisees objected is not obvious to readers of these words in English or any other language in the world, other than in **HEBREW**. Perhaps most of us assume that the Jews' objection was merely that the chief priests were saying that Jesus was not really entitled to be called King of the Jews. That, however, was the least of their worries that day. I will say why this is so in a moment; but first, perhaps a little background on the peculiarities of the Hebrew language would be helpful:

(a) We read English and many other languages from left to right; Hebrew is read from right to left.

(b) Biblical Hebrew does not have vowels in their letters. Instead, they have "vowel points," which are part of those tiny little jots and tittles we see among

their letters. These vowel-points are the Hebrew equivalents of our vowels—a, e, i, o, and u.

(c) As in many languages, the letter I and letter J, and their sounds, were interchangeable. The name “Jesus” was pronounced more like “Yeshua.” The English name **Ian**, which is a variation of the name **John**, is an example of this principle.

We sometimes see the abbreviation of the Latin superscription on the cross: **INRI**. It is in most good dictionaries. The Latin version of the superscription is:

IESUS NAZARENUS REX IUDAEORUM

It means, “Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.”

d) The V-sound and the W-sound were also reversed in many ancient languages, as they are in English and German to this day. Is the automobile name pronounced “Volkswagen” or “Wolkswagen”? It depends on which language is being spoken—English or German.

(e) Thus, putting it all together, what we call “JeHoVaH,” or JHVH without the vowels, would in Hebrew be “YHWH” and the best pronunciation of the ineffable name of God that experts have been able to come up with is something like “YaHWeH.”

The actual **Hebrew** wording of the superscription on the cross consisted of four words. They are transliterated into:

Jesus = Yeshua
 Of Nazareth = HaNazarei
 King = V’Melech
 Of the Jews = HaYehudim

What the Jewish leaders saw in the initial letters of the four words in that title was the acrostic, **Y H V H**, the name of their God, **YeHoVaH**! They saw **JEHOVAH** on the cross!

Is it any wonder the Pharisees objected to what Pilate had written on the cross above Jesus? The charge that “the Jews crucified their God” did not originate in modern times. Jehovah God Himself, who told Pilate, “Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above,” originated the charge and by His all-pervading providence inscribed it over His dying head, and the chief

priests who stood at the foot of the cross of Christ saw it and knew it. Only an **ABSOLUTE** Sovereign God by absolute predestination could arrange **all** the actions of men and details of language in such a manner; and the Bible is full of such examples.

SUMMARY

Any time inspiration so dictated, in order to make an inspired point, the Bible speakers and writers would not hesitate to translate from one language to another or to call the reader’s attention to a word in a certain language.

Not one letter of the *original* Scriptures, not even part of a letter, is to be changed, left out, added to, paraphrased, or otherwise tampered with. The *originals* are as inspired as if they were actually written by the finger of God, no less than when He Himself inscribed the commandments on tables of stone at Mount Sinai with His own finger (Exodus 31.18). God makes no mistakes. Men make mistakes. Many of the mistakes that men make are made trying to improve on God-given religion and truth. Other mistakes include our not seeing the proper importance of the things that are important to God. Particularly, God sent the confusion of tongues and languages not in frustration because men were behaving so badly, but in the bigger picture He did so to suit His divine and eternal purpose. In writing, printing, and publishing, I have no personal doubt that even the misspellings and typographical errors fulfill God’s counsel and serve His eternal purpose. And whenever and wherever a biblical word may be better translated to more clearly convey God’s meaning, it should be done.

—C. C. Morris

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PREMILLENNIALISM AND OUR PRINCIPLES

As the doctrines of grace did not originate with John Calvin, so it may be pointed out that the doctrine of Christ's return to earth prior to His establishing His kingdom on earth to rule for one thousand years did not start with those "dispensationalists" who usually get the credit (or blame) for it. The prophetic doctrine known as *premillennialism* is plainly rooted in the twentieth chapter of Revelation. This view of prophecy has nothing to do with Arminianism other than the fact that many of the Arminian denominations have hijacked it for their own use, and, in so doing, they have perverted it into a tool to further their own purposes.

In reality, the doctrine of Christ's second advent and His ruling in the midst of His enemies is in full harmony with the doctrine of grace. There is neither clash nor contradiction between the premillennial understanding of the Scriptures and the sovereign grace principles of Predestinarian or Old School Primitive Baptists in general and the principles of *The Remnant* in particular. Consider our **Statement of Principles** as printed on our back page, reproduced here with comments:

"The following is an outline of principles the readers of *The Remnant* may expect to see maintained in this publication. Under no circumstances do the publishers or writers for *The Remnant* seek to delineate herein a standard of doctrine or views to be imposed upon the readers. Rather, we set these principles before the readers that they may know what general principles guide our efforts. All attempts at declaring articles of faith will be marred by prejudices and frailty, and ours are by no means any exception.

"We believe these principles are, in the main, harmonious with the articles of faith published by predestinarian associations and churches of the old order of Baptists known as Primitive, Particular, or Old School Baptists the world over."

The fifteen principles outlined on the back page of each issue of this magazine remain as a constant

reminder both to our readers and to our writers. As our preamble states above, we do not seek to impose our views on any subject (prophecy included) on any individual who does not see eye to eye with us. Our just concern is to set forth the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ as honestly and as plainly as we are enabled to do. An intrinsic part of His gospel is the fact of His promised return and the events prophesied to take place before, during, and after that return.

We are fully aware that there seems to be as many ideas as to the details of His second coming as there are men who have ideas about it. That is a major reason why we strive as much as within us lies to shun the opinions of men, no matter how popular they might be, and to search the Scriptures daily for the truth of all matters doctrinal and spiritual, no matter how unpopular they might be.

In any case, each of our fifteen doctrinal principles may be weighed, point for point, against anything we print about prophecy, or the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of heaven, or any other subject. When one that is of a skeptical mind does so, he might be surprised that none of these prophetic things undermine the doctrine of man's total depravity and ruin, God's unconditional election of His people, Christ's full and efficacious atonement for His elect, His irresistible grace, His preserving His people through grace to glory, or any other part of the doctrine of God's sovereign grace. Indeed, the prophetic truths of premillennialism, in their proper place, actually highlight and complement the subject principles.

1—The eternal existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence, and perfections of Jehovah God; He has revealed Himself as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and these sacred Three are One; Jesus Christ was and is God manifest in the flesh, and in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

The perfections of God imply His everlasting unity in His Being, His will, and His purpose.

From everlasting, The Creator had a more noble purpose for this earth than to make it, to let Satan ruin it, and finally to destroy it after six thousand years. To say that is what God will do is the equivalent of the Arminians' saying that God is a failure and He has given

up on His original plan and purpose because He cannot bring it about.

What, indeed, is His purpose for the earth? He has said plainly why He created this earth. “For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, **he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else (Isaiah 45.18).**”

Some raise objections against anyone saying anything positive about “this old world,” as if the material creation was somehow very bad. It is not. That is not where the problem lies. “And God saw **every thing that he had made**, and, behold, **it was very good (Genesis 1.31).**”

The idea that *the material universe is intrinsically evil* is the doctrine of the **Manicheans** and the **Gnostics**. Look them up, find out what they believed (and still believe), and you will find this is so. And you will find that these groups were called heretics by the early church. And, given a bit of discernment, anyone might see that their doctrines are still being preached to this day.

You will notice that, in speaking of the creation, our God often distinguishes between the *earth* and the *world*. Having created the *earth* to be inhabited, His intention will not be frustrated. It will be inhabited in eternity, exactly as is described in the last two chapters of Revelation and many texts in the prophets.

2—The Old and New Testaments in their original languages are the verbally inspired word of God, and they are the complete and only valid guide of faith and practice; the King James Version is the preferred English translation

The King James Version (KJV) remains our preferred English-language version, in spite of some obsolete words and usages. It is preferred because the King James translators, as frail as they were, being fallen men, were nevertheless believers in the existence of our truly supernatural God, the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the miracles of the Bible, including the creation, the flood, and most importantly the miracles of our Lord, including His miraculous virgin birth, His deity, His miracles, and His death and bodily resurrection to save His people from their sins, His ascension into Heaven, and His yet future return.

That being the case, we believe the promises made in the Bible to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Judah, David, and other Old Testament patriarchs and their flesh and blood national descendants are as true, valid, and binding today as they were when God made those promises.

Further, the first coming of Christ is only part of the gospel testimony. “And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again**, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also (John 14.3).” “And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? **this same Jesus**, which is taken up from you into heaven, **shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven (Acts 1.10f).**”

Immediately before Christ ascended back to His Father’s throne, His disciples asked him a valid and specific question: “**Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?**” He did not at all rebuke their “literalism” for believing the kingdom of heaven they had been proclaiming as being “at hand” for the last three years was the same kingdom Israel had waited for and expected since the days of their captivity. There was no “bait and switch” involved, no promise to the old Israelites of an earthly kingdom in the promised land, the extension of the Davidic covenant, only to be *switched* for an invisible kingdom among the Gentiles. He merely told them, “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power (Acts 1.7).” In other words, He was telling them, you don’t need to know when God will restore the kingdom to Israel. That is in His own power, not yours. He will do it in His own good time. For now, as for you, “ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth (verse 8).”

James, who was there at that time, understood well enough. Years later, at the council held in Jerusalem, he said: “...God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, **After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David**, which is fallen down; and **I will build again**

the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the **residue of men** might seek after the Lord, and **all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world** (Acts 15. 14-18).”

Where are we now, in this divine design?

First, God visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. We are still in that time. He is still taking out a people for His name and will do so until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. How do we know that? Because (a) He is still calling or taking out of the Gentiles a people for His name (“Christians”). (b) “The times of the Gentiles” is not yet fulfilled, because Jerusalem is still being trodden down of the Gentiles (Luke 21.24). (c) Blindness in part still covers Israel (Romans 11.25); (d) national Israel is not yet “saved”, we know, because (e) the Deliverer has not yet turned away ungodliness from Jacob (Romans 11.26). (e) Christ obviously has not yet returned and built again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down. We know this because the ruins thereof are still fallen down, and He has not yet set it back up as James prophesied.

All will know when this change of administration occurs, **from observing both Jew and Gentile:** (a) national **Israel** will no longer be blinded, and (b) the fullness of the **Gentiles** (the completion of the church as the body of Christ) will have been brought in.

When I say “we know” this or that, I am not speaking subjectively, as of you or I making any boast of what we might know or think we know in our little heads. I am speaking objectively: We know these things because God has said them in His inspired word by His Son, His prophets, and His apostles.

His second coming is spoken of throughout the Scriptures even more than His first coming. *How* He is to come, *with whom*, *for what reason*, to what *purpose*, *where*, and *why* are all spelled out in great detail in the volume of the Book.

How shall He come? “Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven **with power and great glory** (Matthew 24.30).”

With whom shall He come, and *why*? “the LORD my God shall come, and **all the saints with thee** (Zechariah 14.5).” “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, **the**

Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him (Jude 14f).”

“...the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) **in that day** (2 Thessalonians 1.7ff).”

“I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel (Psalm 2.7ff).”

The only question that is not answered is exactly *when* He will return. “But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only (Matthew 24.36).”

3—The will of the eternal God is the first cause of all causes

The will of God includes not only the creation of this world but also *why* He created it, to what purpose God purposed the fall of man and the redemption of His elect, and what will ensue after this present age and on into eternity. The Lord has a grand overarching purpose, of which we can scarcely conceive, that spans all of time and eternity. We can barely lisp the words, “**Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure,**” let alone understand their full meaning, by God’s grace. This text is a statement of God’s predestination, certainly; but far more, it says that He has an unswerving purpose, a designed end in mind to which He will bring all creation. Never think that all the word “end” means in this text is “That’s all there is; there is no more.” **End** means “the object or purpose aimed at; the issue, consequence, the

ultimate state” (Webster). What that ultimate or eternal state will be like is not completely unknowable to God’s children. Some may quote, “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him (1 Corinthians 2.9),” as though the text proves we cannot know anything about the future or eternal state. If you are going to quote verse 9, why not continue with verse 10? “But **God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit**: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” Go ahead with verses 11-13 while you are at it. It will take getting to verse 14 before some are on comfortable ground again.

How has God revealed “the things He hath prepared for them that love Him”? By His Spirit. How has His Spirit revealed these things to them? By authoring and inspiring the holy Scriptures (point 2, above). Therein is His record of the facts for His children to know in this life, including what is to be known about the eternal state, **the end** that was declared from the beginning, or eternally.

Paul said in verse 9, quoted above, “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen....” I would hope and pray the Lord would give our readers a divinely inspired curiosity about *where* “it” is written, and what the Old Testament writer’s point was.

Paul’s quote is from Isaiah 64.4. It is *always* to be recommended that we check the Old Testament context of a verse quoted in the New Testament. For considerations of time and space we can here only go back to verse 1:

Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence. 2 As when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence! 3 When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence. 4 **For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him.**

What Isaiah had in prospect, then, is when Christ would rend the heavens, and when He would come

down, and the mountains would flow down at His presence, when a melting fire would cause waters to boil, that will make His name known to His adversaries, and that the nations may tremble at His presence! It will be a time when the Lord does “terrible things which we looked not for,” including, “Thou camest down,” and “The mountains flowed down at thy presence.” Strange, is it not, that His “coming down” and “the mountains flowing down at His presence” are repeated in verse 3 from verse 1?

The “flowing down” of mountain ranges is referred to throughout the prophetic Scriptures (e.g., see Zechariah 14.4-10), linked with that final series of earthquakes prophesied of in the Revelation (6.12, 8.5, 11.13-19, 16.18).

But, not to stray too far from our subject, to sum up this point: All that exists springs from God’s holy will, either (a) to show forth His love, mercy, grace, patience upon the vessels of mercy before prepared unto glory, or (b) to show His holy, righteous, wrath, power, justice, and judgment as meted out upon the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.

God has an unchangeable will and purpose for this creation. The revelation of His will and purpose will only be getting started as the book of Revelation closes. All eternity will be devoted to His revealing Himself to the objects of His love and to their unalloyed worship of Him. He has given His people a foretaste by His Spirit’s inspiration of the prophetic Scriptures. That is “what it is all about.”

4—The absolute predestination of all things

God has an eternal purpose for the past, present, and the future as we commonly understand the terms. This eternal purpose includes His purpose for the material creation which shall be renovated in the future as has been done before on at least one clearly-recognized occasion, the flood of Noah’s time. The chief difference is, in Noah’s time it was renewed by water, but the next time it will be renewed by fire.

It is our firm belief that God’s predestination embraces not merely time, but all of eternity, including all the details of how His people arrive there and what they will be doing in that glorified state. Above all else they will worship and adore their creator God. They will eternally “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of

our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen (2 Peter 3.18).”

There is nothing in the prophetic scriptures that would contradict the absolute predestination of all things. Indeed, it has long been our contention that every fulfilled prophecy is proof of predestination. That means, for example, that when Isaiah prophesied over seven hundred years before Jesus’ birth that He would be born of a virgin, and Micah prophesied over five hundred years before His birth that He would be born in Bethlehem, and in the fullness of time He was born of a virgin in Bethlehem, then we are limited to very few conclusions: Either (a) The manner and place of His birth was determined, fixed, and predestinated *at least*(!) five hundred years in advance, or else (b) Isaiah’s and Micah’s prophecies were fulfilled by a most marvelous chain of lucky, random, chance coincidences. Of course His birth was fixed in God’s decrees and predestination in eternity, as was all else in time and eternity that ever has or ever will come to pass. We leave the alternative to the god of this world and his followers.

There have been hundreds of prophecies fulfilled, and there will be hundreds more, until *all* be fulfilled (Matthew 5.18, Luke 21.32-33). We unhesitatingly continue to say that all fulfilled prophecy is proof of the fact that whatever was prophesied was predestinated to come to pass, and that includes the future prophecies as well as those that are past.

5—The eternal personal election of the redeemed in Christ, before the world began, and their eternal, vital union with Him; their number is fixed, certain, and sure, and can neither be increased nor diminished; their fall in their federal head Adam into spiritual death, total depravity, and just condemnation; their utter inability to recover themselves from this fallen state

We will combine our comments on point 5 with those about point 6, following.

6—The blood atonement and redemption by Jesus Christ are for the elect only, and are both efficacious and effectual in accomplishing the will and purpose of God to reconcile His people unto Himself

Principles 5 and 6 cover several closely-linked points not usually thought of as relating to prophecy, yet, as they hold true for all eternity, all biblical prophecy is consistent with them: the eternal election of God’s people and their eternal union with Christ; their fall in Adam and their resultant spiritual death, depravity, and just condemnation; their inability to recover themselves from this state; Christ’s effectual blood atonement for them, whereby God reconciled them unto Himself. Coupled with number 8, below, we have an even more complete picture of God’s electing love and mercy in the eternal effect. All His elect will be brought from their fallen state into life in Christ, and by His grace they will be preserved into the eternal state of glory. Only God knows how many saints there will be to enjoy worshiping in His presence in eternity.

Perhaps it is only when we begin to inquire into the details of the eternal state that we are brought again to delve into the prophetic word for specifics. Many in this world have only some vague notion of the eternal state as being populated with winged and haloed spirits in golden sandals and white togas, walking on golden streets, plunking harps in a bright sky filled with fluffy, silver-lined cumulus clouds at their feet, singing “Holy, Holy, Holy...,” and that’s about it. About all the masses of this world “know” concerning heaven is what they have derived from Rome, Michaelangelo’s paintings, and Hollywood cartoons.

When presented with the prophecies of Scripture—the prospect of a perfect, renewed earth, populated with a perfect race of “the nations of them which are saved” (Revelation 21.24-26, 22.2), all saved and living in perfect harmony with all of God’s creation in nature and in grace; all ruled over by our Creator God, the glorious Lord Jesus Christ, with His glorified saints ruling with Him as kings and priests in heaven and on the earth (Revelation 5.9-10); all with the heavenly prospect of growing in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ *now and for ever, world without end*—there are yet many who know only their cartoon parody of heaven instead of the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

May the Lord grant His people the discernment to see His truth.

(To be continued, if the Lord wills)

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CAUGHT! EXPOSED!

We have heard a few comments about our chart on page 11 in the March-April 2007 issue. Some were quick to point out that the chart indicated the **When** of the kingdom of heaven would be "**Future**: at His [Christ's] return," but elsewhere I have indicated the kingdom of heaven is present **now**; therefore I am guilty of contradicting myself!

Charts are of necessity brief summaries. You cannot say everything you would like to say in a little box of one or two square inches.

The chart's emphasis in the box in question was on the *full manifestation* of Christ's kingdom of heaven. On page 1 of the same issue, and elsewhere in it, I said as I have since the subject originally came up, that "*all of everything* is in the kingdom of heaven...He now rules all nations invisibly and providentially...At Christ's second advent, He will rule visibly upon this earth as completely, literally, and as surely as any world ruler has ever ruled," etc.

I do not wish to rest in a sense of false security, but if the weak spot in my chart (to which I admit) is the worst the opponents of premillennialism can find fault with, that does not seem to be much for them to go on. If anyone yet wishes to gloat over catching my contradiction, that is their privilege. I love what Walt Whitman said in a similar situation: "Do I contradict myself? Very well, then, I contradict myself!"—*CCM*

FREE SERMON TAPES OF ELDER J. F. POOLE AVAILABLE

The e-mail message below, from Dr. T. W. Jackson, is self-explanatory. We do hope our readers will avail themselves of his kindness in making these sermon tapes of Elder Poole, first Editor and Publisher of *The Remnant*, available to interested readers. Dr. Jackson writes:

I have numerous messages of Elder James F. Poole on 90 minute audio tapes. I will be glad to send these to any that would desire to have and listen to them. There will never be any charge for these.

I am sorry that I do not have these tapes listed by Title. I only have the Bible verses that he speaks on. These date back from the late 1970s until the present. Anyone who would like just a few, I can send, and if they desire more, I will then be delighted to send them more to keep at NO COST.

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A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The following is an outline of principles the readers of *The Remnant* may expect to see maintained in this publication. Under no circumstances do the publishers or writers for *The Remnant* seek to delineate herein a standard of doctrine or views to be imposed upon the readers. Rather, we set these principles before the readers that they may know what general principles guide our efforts. All attempts at declaring articles of faith will be marred by prejudices and frailty, and ours are by no means any exception.

We believe these principles are, in the main, harmonious with the articles of faith published by predestinarian associations and churches of the old order of Baptists known as Primitive, Particular, or Old School Baptists the world over.

1—The eternal existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence, and perfections of Jehovah God; He has revealed Himself as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and these sacred Three are One; Jesus Christ was and is God manifest in the flesh, and in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

2—The Old and New Testaments in their original languages are the verbally inspired word of God, and they are the complete and only valid guide of faith and practice; the King James Version is the preferred English translation;

3—The will of the eternal God is the first cause of all causes;

4—The absolute predestination of all things;

5—The eternal personal election of the redeemed in Christ, before the world began, and their eternal, vital union with Him; their number is fixed, certain, and sure, and can neither be increased nor diminished; their fall

in their federal head Adam into spiritual death, total depravity, and just condemnation; their utter inability to recover themselves from this fallen state;

6—The blood atonement and redemption by Jesus Christ are for the elect only, and are both efficacious and effectual in accomplishing the will and purpose of God to reconcile His people unto Himself;

7—The sovereign, irresistible, effectual work of the Holy Spirit in quickening the elect of God; the new birth is by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit without the use of any means;

8—The final preservation, perseverance, and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace alone;

9—No works are good works other than those which God Himself has so designated; none of the works called good are left up to men to perform or not, at the creature's discretion; nor do the works of the creature, either before or after regeneration, result in merit accruing to his account in God's sight;

10—The peaceable fruits of righteousness are the certain result of God's working in His people both to will and to do of His good pleasure, and His people will be found walking in paths of righteousness for His name's sake;

11—The separation of church and state;

12—The principles outlined in the Black Rock Address of 1832;

13—The bodily resurrection, first of Christ, and also that of all the dead;

14—The final and eternal judgment; and,

15—The bliss of the redeemed and the torment of the wicked are both eternal and everlasting.