

THE AGES DIGITAL LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

AN ANSWER TO DAVID OTIS FULLER

by Doug Kutilek

To the Students of the Words, Works and Ways of God:

Welcome to the AGES Digital Library. We trust your experience with this and other volumes in the Library fulfills our motto and vision which is our commitment to you:

MAKING THE WORDS OF THE WISE
AVAILABLE TO ALL — INEXPENSIVELY.

AGES Software Albany, OR USA
Version 1.0 © 1996

AN ANSWER TO DAVID OTIS FULLER

FULLER'S DECEPTIVE TREATMENT OF SPURGEON REGARDING THE KING JAMES VERSION

“By all means, let Spurgeon say what he did say; disagree if you will, DO NOT TWIST the good man’s words.”

“Loyalty to Christ and the Bible was his unswerving testimony in life and his glorious legacy in death.”

BY DOUG KUTILEK

DAVID OTIS FULLER'S DECEPTIVE TREATMENT OF SPURGEON

REGARDING THE KING JAMES VERSION

BY DOUG KUTILEK

[Author's Preface —

This paper was written in early 1986, and appears here slightly revised. My purpose in writing was twofold: first, to "rescue" Charles H. Spurgeon from the gross misrepresentation to which his views on inspiration and Bible translations had been subjected, by carefully documenting precisely what his views were; and, second,, to expose the virtually total unreliability of David Otis Fuller as a source of information on the text and translation issue. A copy of this paper was sent to Dr. Fuller when it was first written so that he might respond (before publication) and correct any errors I might have made. Though this was more than two years before his death, and even though we had exchanged a half dozen or so letters previously — and did so at least once afterward — he never replied in any way (in my experience, Dr. Fuller was always evasive in responding to challenges to his accuracy). The issue is not personalities, or even sincerity, but truth, facts, and accuracy. Those who rely on Fuller for information are in peril of being led very far astray.]

The Gospels tell of a woman who had a hemorrhage for a dozen years, and relate that "she had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors." It seems that these words aptly describe the treatment certain men from the past have undergone at the hands of some modern day "doctors" (these being D.D.s, not physicians) who distort and misrepresent their views and opinions on certain matters. Sometimes this misrepresentation is unwitting, based on incomplete knowledge or careless reading; but all too often the

misrepresentation is not accidental, is not unwitting, but is willful and deliberate. For the former case, we have patience and instruction, but for the latter, only contempt and rebuke. Why not let men say what they did say, and not: shade or distort or twist their words for one's own ends?

No man has been more misrepresented and abused by the present breed of theological writers than Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the great Baptist preacher of a century ago. Because of his pre-eminence as one of the greatest of God's servants, it is a popular practice to quote Spurgeon to back up one's own views. I do not object to this, indeed, I frequently quote Spurgeon because of the exceptional quality of much that he said and wrote. However, when the desired position in Spurgeon's works cannot be found, some authors resort to the subterfuge of lifting quotes out of context, presenting half quotes, or editing out parts of quotes which contradict the desired end of the quoter. So bad has the misrepresentation of Spurgeon been that one defender of Spurgeon felt compelled to write a book, *Searchlight on Spurgeon*, to which he gave the subtitle, "Spurgeon Speaks for Himself" (that book by Eric W. Hayden is published by Pilgrim Publications and is highly recommended).

But in spite of the above book, to say nothing of common honesty (not so very common even among Christians), the abuse of Spurgeon continues. I wish to address one particular subject on which Spurgeon's views are grossly distorted by some present day writers. I speak of the subject of the text and translation of the Bible. Some have taken it in hand to prove by hook or crook that Spurgeon agreed with their peculiar views of the text of the New Testament (namely, that the textus receptus with unalterable precision exactly and in every detail presents the original text of the New Testament, without scribal addition, deletion, or alteration of any kind whatsoever) and English Bible translations (namely, that the King James Version is directly and divinely inspired and is therefore infallible and inerrant, and that all other translations are therefore defective and erroneous). I have before me perhaps the most blatant case of such abuse and distortion that I am aware of. The author and compiler of the brief piece in question, David Otis Fuller, has excerpted and published quotations from an address delivered by Spurgeon at the Pastor's College Conference in April, 1891, less than a year before his death. The message was titled, "The Greatest Fight in the World," and is reported to have been published under that title in the tens of thousands.. One edition issued after Spurgeon's death carried the subtitle, "C. H. Spurgeon's Final Manifesto." ^{f1} I

had access to a copy of the message, via a reprint of the message by Pilgrim Publications. Using this reprint as the basis of comparison, Fuller has made the following alterations in Spurgeon's remarks: he has placed in boldface type 13 words Spurgeon did not and deleted the italics; on 12 more; he has altered Spurgeon's punctuation at least 10 times, changed Spurgeon's spelling 3 times, capitalized 5 words Spurgeon did not and eliminated the capital on 1 word; he has added 2 words Spurgeon did not have, accidentally deleted at least 2 words, and substituted 2 words (I allow that some of these differences may be ascribed to editorial license, but surely not all of them could be). I quote the excerpts verbatim and in full, indicating alterations from Spurgeon's word,;, spelling, punctuation, boldface and italics in brackets, and adding in parentheses the page in the Pilgrim reprint from which the quotes were taken.

It is sadly common among ministers to add a word or subtract a word from the passage, or in some way [CHS adds "*to*"] debase the language of sacred writ (p. 23)... Our reverence for the Great [CHS, "great"] Author of Scripture should forbid all mauling of His Words (p. 23)...

No [CHS,, not boldface] alteration of Scripture can by any possibility be an improvement

(P. 23)... Today it is still the self-same mighty Word of God that it was in the hands of our Lord Jesus (p. 14)...

If this Book [CHS, "book"] be not infallible, where shall we find infallibility? [CHS has all 11 words in this sentence in italics]. We have given up the Pope, for he has blundered often and terrible [CHS, "terribly"], [CHS, ";"] but we shall [CHS adds "not"] set up instead of him a horde of little popelings, [CHS lacks comma] fresh from college. (p. 27)

Are these correctors of Scripture infallible? Is it certain that our Bibles are not right, but that the critics must be so? (p. 27)... But where shall infillibility be found! "The depth saith, It is not in me" [CHS adds ":'"] yet those who have No [CHS, no capital] depth at all [CHS, none of these 4 words in boldface] would have us imagine that it is in them [CHS, no boldface and punctuated with ";"] or else by perpetual change they hope to hit upon it! [CHS, "."] (p. 28)

All possibility of certainty is transferred from the spiritual [sic] man to a class of persons whose scholarship is [CHS, "is" in italics] pretentious, but

who do not even pretend to spirituality. We shall gradually be so bedoubted and becriticized [CHS, adds, ","] that only a few of the most profound will know what is [CHS, no boldface] Bible [CHS, adds, ","] and what is not [CHS, no boldface] and they will dictate to all the rest of us. I have no more faith in their mercy than their accuracy [CHS, ":"] (pp. 28)

They [CHS, "they"] will rob us of all that we hold dear, and glory in the cruel deed. This same 'reign of terror' [CHS, no half quotes] we will [CHS, "shall"] not endure, [CHS has none of these in boldface] for we still believe that God reveals [CHS, "revealeth"] Himself rather to babes than to wise and prudent (p. 28-29) We do not despise learning, but we will never say of culture or criticism, "These be thy Gods, O Israel". (p. 29)

Do you see WHY [CHS, no capitals or boldface] men would lower the degree of inspiration in Holy Writ, and would fain reduce it to an infinitesimal quantity? It is because the truth of God is to be supplanted (p. 29)... whenever [CHS, "Whenever"] a man begins to lower your view of inspiration, it is because he has a trick to play, which is not easily performed in the light (p. 29)...To [CHS, "to"] these [CHS, "those"] who belittle inspiration and inerrancy [CHS does not have "and inerrancy"] we will give place by subjection, no, not for an hour! [CHS "."] (p. 29)

It must be added, that the Scripture reference at the top of the page of excerpts is inaccurate. Fuller gives it as Ephesians 6:12, when it is in fact I Timothy 6:12 (see title page of Pilgrim Reprint).

It is not: the lackadaisical carelessness with which alterations are made that disturbs me (though they serve as warning flags that Fuller is in all probability characteristically careless and inaccurate in his work, an impression confirmed by reading some of his other materials). Rather it is t]he false implication concerning Spurgeon's words that Fuller makes by the addition of a sentence at the end of the quotes, and Fuller's willful ignoring of the context of Spurgeon's remarks including statements on some of the very pages: quoted which clearly show that Fuller has misrepresented Spurgeon — it is these things which disturb me. That remark added by Fuller at the bottom of the page reads as follows:

This proclaimed ten years AFTER the Revised Version was published in 1881, engineered, domineered and dominated by Westcott and Hort whose Greek Text and theory ("the oldest is the best") have proven to be the worst imaginable.

Ignoring the misrepresentation of Westcott & Hort's theory, it is obvious that Fuller's plain and clear implication is that Spurgeon's quoted remarks were directed at the Revised English Version of 1881 and the revised Greek text of Westcott & Hort, published that same year. That version and that text do indeed differ in some places from the textus receptus and the KJV, and Mr. Fuller certainly wants the reader to believe that when Spurgeon spoke of adding or subtracting words from Scripture, the mauling of God's words, altering Scripture, Bible correctors, etc., he was denounc.-ing those differences and departures from the textus receptus and the KJV. When Spurgeon spoke of scholars without spirituality or accuracy, who rob Christians of their Bible, who denounce inspiration and deny infallibility, and to whom Spurgeon refused to submit for even an hour, Fuller wants the reader to believe that Spurgeon had reference to Westcott and Hort, to the other translators of the Revised Version, and to other editors of non-textus receptus Greek texts. The deduction that Fuller wants the reader to draw is that Spurgeon was hostile to any Greek text other than the textus receptus and that he rejected all translations but the KJV. Anyone who has a real acquaintance with Spurgeon's works knows that the implication and deductions imposed on the reader by Fuller are entirely false. (Of course, Fuller is not the first or the only one to misrepresent Spurgeon on this issue. One popular but terribly inaccurate writer from Florida included Spurgeon's name in a list of "real" Bible-believers, by which he meant Spurgeon believed the KJV was infallible. Another writer, this one from Ohio, matter-o f-factly declared that "Charles Spurgeon loved the KJV and vowed that he would withdraw fellowship immediately from any preacher or group of preachers who made light of, or downgraded the KJV!" Two letters to this man asking for the source of this quote failed to elicit any response.)

I prefer to believe that Mr. Fuller has misrepresented Spurgeon unwittingly, that it was merely a case of misdirected zeal and the characteristic carelessness mentioned above'. But I must confess that I am hard put to avoid the conclusion that he has knowingly and deliberately misrepresented Spurgeon merely to seemingly bolster his own position, that he has "put on a hairy garment in order to deceive." First, Fuller has previously edited and abridged for publication at least two of Spurgeon's work:; (including Spurgeon's massive commentary on Psalms), indicating that Fuller does have an extended acquaintance with Spurgeon; second, and most incriminating:; are the words of Spurgeon from this very-

message, from some of the very pages from which Fuller took quotations, indeed bordering some of these quotations or even sandwiched in between them, which betray the implications of Fuller as wholly false and untrue. The context of the three quotations from p. 23 is not about the revised Greek and English Bibles of 1881, but the question of preachers inaccurately and carelessly misquoting Scripture in their sermons. In the very same paragraph with the three quotes, and immediately following the third one, Spurgeon concludes:

Believers in verbal inspiration should be studiously careful to be verbally correct. The gentlemen who see errors in Scripture may think themselves competent to amend the language of the Lord of hosts; but we who believe God, and accept the very words He uses, may not make so presumptuous an attempt. Let us quote the words as they stand in the best possible translation, and it will be better still if we know the original, and can tell if our version fails to give the sense.

Notice how Spurgeon insists that quotes be from "the best possible version," not necessarily "from the KJV" (and I will demonstrate below that Spurgeon believed that the RV of 1881 not infrequently was the best available English translation, superior in not a few particulars to the KJV), and the original is the final court of appeal, since there are times when "our version fails to give the sense," by which he certainly meant that there are mistakes of translation in the KJV. Has Fuller deliberately and knowingly (for no other conclusion seems possible) left out these words because they made the position he wanted to impose on Spurgeon impossible? Then, on p 29, between the quotes from pages 28-29, and the first one from page 29, Fuller has skipped over these words:

and we are fully assured that our own English version of the Scriptures is sufficient for plain men for all purposes of life, salvation, and godliness.

Fuller might have quoted these words and abused them to his own purpose, but I suspect they were chopped out of their place between the words he does quote because they only call the KJV "sufficient," not "infallible" or "inerrant."

Anyone who has read this entire message by Spurgeon knows that Spurgeon's remarks and criticisms excerpted by Fuller were not at all addressed toward the matters of Bible translations (specifically the RV of 1881) or textual criticism of the Scriptures (specifically the Westcott-Hort

text). Rather, in every case Spurgeon was attacking and condemning those who denied the Bible doctrine of inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures as originally given, and who denied the truthfulness of Bible statements. Let it be carefully understood that there is a world of difference between "higher" and "lower" criticism of the Bible. Lower criticism is the study of variations in the wording of Bible manuscripts for the purpose of establishing exactly the original wording of the Scriptures. This area of study has never drawn the criticism and condemnation of Fundamentalists or Mr. Spurgeon (though some of the principles and methodologies followed in some cases have been criticized). Lower criticism must never be confused with higher criticism. Higher criticism addresses the questions of date, authorship, and canonicity of Bible books. And as long as higher criticism is restrained by the clear statements of Scriptures, even it is not condemned by conservatives (who would deny that it is proper to study and seek to establish the date of the writing of James, or the authorship of such unascribed books as Judges, Kings, or Hebrews?). But it is the higher criticism governed by rationalism, and bent on blatant denial of the plain teaching of Scriptures that Mr. Spurgeon was here objecting to, and to which all conservatives object — that higher criticism which denies that Moses wrote the Law though the Bible affirms that he did, that finds two Isaiahs when the Bible declares there to be only one, that denies that Daniel wrote Daniel or that Paul wrote the pastoral epistles though the authorship of these books is plainly stated in Scripture..All Bible-believing scholars renounce and reject this destructive higher criticism root and branch. To this and this alone was Mr. Spurgeon objecting in the remarks quoted by Fuller.

Spurgeon was a staunch believer in Biblical inerrancy, as anyone who has much familiarity with Spurgeon's works can testify. From the beginning to the end of his ministry, the foundation of all his preaching was an unshakable and unyielding conviction that the Scriptures are absolutely infallible and free from all error of doctrine, history, or science. It was viewed as wholly true in every detail (a mere sampling of Spurgeon's statements concerning infallibility may be found in *The "Down Grade" Controversy*, compiled from Spurgeon's own writings and published by Pilgrim Publications). Of course Spurgeon recognized that inerrancy and infallibility were qualities and characteristics of the Scriptures as originally given, and not, strictly speaking, of copies or translations:

I do not hesitate to say that I believe that there is no mistake whatever in the original Holy Scriptures from beginning to end. There may be, and there are, mistakes of translation; for translations are not inspired; but even the historical facts are correct there is not an error in the whole compass of them. These words come from him who can make no mistake, and who can have no wish to deceive his creatures. ^{F2}

Spurgeon entertained no such extravagant notion that an English translation, any English translation, could be verbally inspired. In denouncing an absurd interpretation of Genesis 1:10 by a Roman Catholic theologian on the basis of the Latin Vulgate translation, Spurgeon stated, "Such superlative nonsense may be indulged in if we forget that translations cannot be verbally inspired, and that to the original is the last appeal" ^{F3}

Spurgeon laid great emphasis on the original Hebrew and Greek texts of the Bible. At the laying of the foundation stone of the Metropolitan Tabernacle on August 15, 1859, he remarked,

It is to me a matter of congratulation that we shall succeed in building in this city a Grecian place of worship. My notions of architecture are not worth much, because I look at a building from a theological point of view, not from an architectural one. It seems to me that there are two sacred tongues in the world. There was the Hebrew of the old, and I doubt not that Solomon adopted Jewish architecture for the Temple, — a Hebrew form and fashion of putting stones together in harmony with the Hebrew faith. There is but one other sacred language, — not Rome's mongrel tongue — the Latin; glorious as that may be for battlecry, it is of no use for preaching the gospel. The other sacred language is Greek, and that is dear to every Christian's heart. Our fullest revelation of God's will is in that tongue; and so are our noblest names for Jesus. The standard of our faith is Greek; and this place is to be Grecian. I care not that many an idol temple has been built after the same fashion. Greek is the sacred tongue, and Greek is the Baptist's tongue; we may be beaten in our own version, sometimes; but in Greek, never. Every Baptist place should be Grecian, — never Gothic. We owe nothing to the Goths as religionists. We have a great part of our Scriptures in the Grecian language, and this shall be a Grecian place of worship; and God give use the power, and life of that master of the Grecian tongue, the apostle Paul, that here like wonders may be done by the preaching of the Word as wrought by his ministry! ^{F4}

Spurgeon pressed upon his students the importance of gaining some knowledge of Hebrew and Greek so that the Scriptures could be consulted in the original, which could spare them from gross blunders in interpreting the Bible:

A man to comment well should be able to *read the Bible in the original*. Every minister should aim at a tolerable proficiency both in the Hebrew and in the Greek. These two languages will give him a library at a small expense, an inexhaustible thesaurus, a mine of spiritual wealth. Really, the effort of acquiring a language is not so prodigious that brethren of moderate abilities should so frequently shrink from the attempt. A minister ought to attain enough of these tongues to be at least able to make out a passage by the aid of a lexicon, so as to be sure that he is not misrepresenting the Spirit of God in his discoursings, but is, as nearly as he can judge, giving forth what the Lord intended to reveal by the language employed. Such knowledge would prevent his founding doctrines upon expressions in our version when nothing at all analogous is to be found in the inspired original. This has been done by preachers time out of mind, and they have shouted over an inference drawn from *a shall*, or an *if* gathered out of the translation, with as much assurance of infallibility and sense of importance as if the same language had occurred in the words which the Holy Ghost used.^{F5}

Spurgeon, while commending its general accuracy and dependability, certainly did not believe that the KJV was verbally inspired or that it was inerrant like the originals:

Do not needlessly amend our authorized version. It is faulty in many places, but still it is a grand work taking it for all in all, and it is unwise to be making every old lady distrust the only Bible she can get at., or what is more likely, mistrust you for falling out with her cherished treasure. Correct where correction must be for truth's sake, but never for the vainglorious display of your critical ability.^{F6}

In the following quotation, notice how Spurgeon lays great emphasis on the very words of Scripture, expressing the final authority of the Greek (for the New Testament), yet recognizing the adequacy of translations as far as they agree with the meaning of the original:

How much may hang on what seems, to the unspiritual, to be nothing more than a slight verbal distinction or an unimportant turn of expression! A

thought of primary importance may turn upon a singular or plural of a word. If it be the Greek word itself, the importance cannot be overestimated; but in an English word, in the translation, there may well nigh be equal force, according as the word is true to the original. The many, who can only read our marvellous English Bible, come to prize its very words because the Lord has blessed them to their souls. A simple Welsh friend believed that our Lord must have been a Welshman, "because," said he, "he always speaks *to me* in Welsh." ^{F7}

Nor was Spurgeon hostile to the revised Greek text or revisions of the KJV when such revisions were based on solid evidence and judicious and sound reasoning. First, consider his comments concerning the Latin Vulgate translation, made by Jerome around 400 AD, which, in the New Testament, displays a Greek text rather more like that of Westcott and Hort than like the *textus receptus*:

That was a grand action of old Jerome, when he laid all his pressing engagements aside to achieve a purpose to which he felt a call from heaven... Away he went with his manuscripts, and prayed and labored, and produced a work — the Latin Vulgate — which will last as long as the world stands; on the whole a most wonderful translation of Holy Scripture. ^{F8}

Before the appearance of the Revised Version of the Bible (New Testament, 1881; Old Testament, 1884), the American Bible Union, a Baptist organization, sponsored a revision of the KJV by Baptist scholar T. J. Conant (for an account of this revision, see Thomas Armitage, *History of the Baptists'*, pp. 893-918); the revision was issued in individual books as they were completed. Of Conant's revised version of Job and Psalms, Spurgeon said, respectively, "An excellent translation" and "A trustworthy translation with a few notes." ^{F9}

When the English Revised Version New Testament appeared in 1881, Spurgeon did not heap scorn upon it as some did then and as some do today. In fact, from 1881 on, Spurgeon not infrequently expressly referred to the Revised English translation, commending it either in text or translation or both. In 1881., the very year the revision appeared, Spurgeon preached a sermon in which he expressly refers to the new Revised Version, noting its difference in text from the KJV and acknowledging the RV as here correct; he; then lays down some principles regarding the questions of the text and translation of Scripture to which all Baptists

ought to give hearty assent. His sermon text is part of Isaiah 61:1, "He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted."

I intended to have preached from these words in Luke iv, 18, but when I looked at: the Revised Version and found that the words were not there at all I was somewhat startled. I began to ask whether the omission was a correct one or not; and, without making pretense to scholarship, I feel convinced that the revisers are acting honestly in leaving it out. It was not in the original manuscript of Luke, but probably some pious person added it with the intention of making the quotation more complete. Whatever the intention may have been, and however natural the added words may appear, it is a pity that the unknown brother ventured to improve that which was perfect: from the beginning

Concerning the fact of difference between the Revised and Authorised Versions, I would say that no Baptist should ever fear any honest attempt to produce the correct text, and an accurate interpretation of the Old and New Testaments. For many years Baptists have insisted upon it that we ought to have the Word of God translated in the best possible manner, whether it would confirm certain religious opinions and practices, or work against them. All we want is the exact mind of the Spirit, as far as we can get it. Beyond all other Christians we are concerned in this, seeing we have no other sacred book; we have no prayer book or binding creed, or authoritative minutes of conference; we have nothing but the Bible; and we would have that as pure as ever we can get it. By the best and most honest scholarship that can be found we desire that the common version may be purged of every blunder of transcribers, or addition of human ignorance, or human knowledge, that so the word of God may come to us as it came from his own hand. ^{F10}

Again, in 1886, Spurgeon preached a sermon in which he expressly noted a difference between the RV and the KJV, plainly commending the former. In that sermon, titled, "*And We Are*": *A Jewel from the Revised Version*, based on I John 3:1, he said:

Dear friends, the most of my text will be found in our Old Version; but for once I shall ask you to look elsewhere for a part of it. A genuine fragment of inspired Scripture has been dropped by our older translators, and it is too precious to be lost The half lost portion of our text is restored to us in the Revised Version. Never did a translation of the New Testament fail more completely than this Revised Version has done as a book for general

reading: but as an assistant to the student it deserves honorable mention, despite its faults. It exhibits here and there special beauties, and has, no doubt, in certain places brought into notice words of sacred Scripture which had fallen out: we have a notable instance in my present text [to the KJV, the RV adds the words to I John 3:1, "And such we are"].

The word "such" is not in the original. We therefore leave it out, and we get the words — AND WE ARE. There are only two words in the Greek — "and we are." That the addition is correct I have not the slightest doubt. Those authorities upon which we depend — those manuscripts which are best worthy of notice — have these words; and they are to be found in the Vulgate, the Alexandrian, and several other versions. They ought never to have dropped out. In the judgment of the most learned, and those best to be relied on, these are veritable words of inspiration. So far as doctrine is concerned, it: does not matter whether they are or are not in the original text, because we get the same words farther on. ^{F11}

Note what Spurgeon does — he appeals to the original text as his final authority (in this case, for leaving out "such"); he recognizes the RV was not a great *literary* production (strong on the Greek, weak on the English); his conclusions are based on evidence and careful evaluation of it, *not* arbitrary whim or "preference;" he is certain that the words in question are genuine and original parts of I John; he is willing to rely on the judgment of learned and careful scholars who were specialists in the subject of the text; he recognizes that this textual variant, like virtually all others, carries no ultimate doctrinal importance, since the truth is taught elsewhere where its genuineness is not in doubt.

There are a number of other sermons in which Spurgeon employed or commended the RV over the KJV, or declared the KJV incorrect and amended the English on the basis of the original. By way of examples, see MTP 1884, pp. 5,386; 1888, pp. 111, 113, 115; 1889, p. 256; 1890, pp. 77, 182,457, 460; 1891, pp. 85, 86, 90 (in this last reference, Spurgeon quotes the RV of Isaiah 62:6 and says, "I quote the best translation"). The *Autobiography* (Banner of Truth Trust edition), vol. 2, notes some commendation and uses of the RV by Spurgeon (pp. 490,492,497). I am quite certain that an exhaustive search of Spurgeon's works would turn up many more such references. But never, never have I read any remarks by Spurgeon in which he denounced the reviser's Greek text or their translation as the "worst imaginable" or anything along those lines.

And just here, consider Spurgeon's evaluation of a book by Alex. Roberts, *Companion to the Revised Version of the English New Testament*. Roberts was one of the Revised Version translators, and tells plainly the reason for this little book, when in the preface he states,

The object of this little work is to explain to the English reader the general grounds of those many departures from the Authorised Version which he will find in the Revised translation. Not one of these alterations has been made without what appeared to a majority of the revisers an adequate reason. They are all to be traced to one or other of two causes — either to a change of the Greek text which it was found necessary to adopt, or to a change of translation which stricter fidelity to the original seemed to require. Under these two heads all necessary explanations (so far as space permitted), will be found in the following pages.

And what does Mr. Spurgeon have to say of this book that is bent on defending and justifying the RV in its numerous departures in text and translation from the KJV?

Every student of the Bible who can afford half-a-crown should get this most useful and entertaining volume. It contains the sort of reading which has the most charm for us, for it deals with the Scriptures themselves and their meaning in a most pleasant manner. Reading this "Companion," the alterations of the Revised Version become vastly more intelligible; for one sees the why and the wherefore for each of them. Sitting down to these pages with the two versions before us we forget all the worries of life, and beguile the hour in a manner which leaves substantial profit behind. Even if the reader should be innocent of Greek, Dr. Roberts will give him abundant instruction; but if he has a thorough acquaintance with the sacred tongue he will not find the work superfluous. We take the utmost pleasure in commending the little book to all Christian people, especially to those who are teachers of others.^{F12}

And I here subjoin, as a mere footnote, Spurgeon's evaluation of B. F. Westcott's book, *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*:

Worthy of high commendation. The author knows the German writers, but is not defiled by their scepticism. He is a man of deep thought, but displays no pride of intellect. A man had need be a thorough student to value this Introduction: it is not an introduction

to the Gospels, or to the reading of them, but to their study.^{F13}

It should be noted that Spurgeon placed these remarks in italics, something he usually reserved for books that got his highest commendation.

In view' of this great mass of indisputable evidence, there is not left a shred of doubt that Spurgeon, like all sound Baptists past and present, have insisted that the Scriptures as originally written were directly and entirely inspired by God, inerrant and infallible, and that the Scriptures in the original languages are the final authority in doctrine, standing supreme over any and all translations, be they ever so good. And yet, for all that, good translations will not fail to provide the reader with an adequate and sufficient guide to a knowledge of the true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent; to forgiveness of sin; to a life of happiness here and now, and peace with God hereafter. Spurgeon embraced both the text and the translation of the Revised Version as very frequently superior in accuracy to the KJV, though 'the RV's English lacked the literary charm and appeal of the KJV.

Nor can Spurgeon be charged with gullibly falling into Satan's trap on these matters, of being naive about the issues involved in questions of texts and translations, or of being swayed and impressed by mere scholarship. Spurgeon was certainly fully aware and informed on these matters, indeed, he lived in the midst of these events, and was widely read and fully informed on the issues. He knew full well the implications of the various sides of these issues, and I doubt that anyone could be found who was less swayed or impressed by mere scholarship for scholarship's sake. Loyalty to Christ and the Bible was his unswerving testimony in life and his glorious legacy in death.

It is impossible for me to imagine a worse example of misrepresentation of Spurgeon than this document by Fuller. Such distortion is appalling, and that it comes from one who claims to be an admirer of Spurgeon compounds the crime. By all means, let Spurgeon say what he did say; disagree if you will, but do not twist the good man's words, To employ Spurgeon's own phraseology against Fuller, "It is sadly common among ministers to add a word or subtract a word from the passage," or in some way debase the language of Spurgeon. Our respect for this great preacher of Scripture should forbid all mauling of his words.

A REPRODUCTION OF FULLER'S ARTICLE

“THE GREATEST FIGHT IN THE WORLD”

EPHESIANS 6:12

FROM C.H. SPURGEON'S

FINAL MANIFESTO,

given to his students at his Baptist College, April 1891

The greatest preacher since the apostle Paul went home to be with the Lord January 31, 1892

“It is sadly common among ministers to add a word or subtract a word from the passage, or in some way debase the language of sacred writ... Our reverence for the Great Author of Scripture should forbid all mauling of His Words.

No alteration of Scripture can by any possibility be an improvement... Today it is still the self-same mighty Word of God that it was in the hands of our Lord Jesus...

If this Book be not infallible, where shall we find infallibility? We have given up the Pope, for he has blundered often and terrible, but we shall set up instead of him a horde of little popelings, fresh from college.

Are these correctors of scripture infallible? It is certain that our Bibles are not right, but that the critics must be so? ...But where shall infallibility be found? ‘The depth saith, It is not in me’ yet those who have No depth at all would have us imagine that it is in them; or else by perpetual change they hope to hit upon it!”

All possibility of certainty is transferred from the spiritual [sic] man to a class of persons whose scholarship is pretentious, but who do not even

pretend to spirituality. We shall gradually be so bedoubted and becriticized that only a few of the most profound will know what is Bible and what is not, and they will dictate to all the rest of us. I have no more faith in their mercy than their accuracy.

They will rob us of all that we hold most dear, and glory in the cruel deed. This same 'regin of terror' we will not endure, for we still believe that God reveals Himself rather to babes than to the wise and prudent... We do not despise learning but we will never say of culture or criticism, 'These be thy gods, O Israel.'"

Do you see WHY men would lower the degree in Inspiration in Holy Writ, and would fain reduce it to an infinitesimal quantity? It is because the truth of God is to be supplanted... whenever a man begins to lower your view of inspiration, it is because he has a trick to play, which is not easily performed in the light... To these who belittle inspiration and inerrancy we will give place by subjection, no, not for an hour!"

(This proclaimed ten years AFTER the Revised Version was published in 1881, engineered, domineered and dominated by Wescottt & Hort whose Greek Text and theory ("the oldest is the best") have proven to be the worst imaginable).

FOOTNOTES

^{ft1} *C. H. Spurgeon Autobiography*, Vol. II, "The Full Harvest," Banner of Truth Publishers, pp. 427-8.

^{ft2} *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, 1889, p. 257.

^{ft3} *Commenting and Commentaries*, p. 25.

^{ft4} *C. H. Spurgeon's Autobiography*, original Passmore and Alabaster edition, vol. II, pp. 327-8.

^{ft5} *Commenting and Commentaries*, pp. 24-5.

^{ft6} *Commenting and Commentaries*, p. 31.

^{ft7} *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, 1891, p. 44.

^{ft8} *Lectures to My Students*, vol i, p. 51.

^{ft9} *Commenting and Commentaries*, pp. 75, 83.

^{ft10} *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, 1881, pp. 341,342-3.

^{ft11} *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, pp. 673-4.

^{ft12} *The Life and Labors of Charles H. Spurgeon* by Geo. C. Needham, pp. 338-9.

^{ft13} *Commenting and Commentaries*, p. 150.

PUBLISHERS NOTES

CONTACTING AGES SOFTWARE

For more information regarding the AGES Digital Library, whether it be about pricing structure, trades for labor or books, current listings, policies — or if you wish to offer suggestions — please write us at...

AGES SOFTWARE • PO BOX 1926 • ALBANY OR 97321-0509

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE DIGITAL LIBRARY?

The Library consists of books and other literature of enduring value to the Christian community. Our goal since the beginning has been to “make the words of the wise available to all —inexpensively.” We have had in mind the student, teacher, pastor, missionary, evangelist and church worker who needs a high quality reference library, one that is portable, practical and low in cost.

ON WHAT BASIS WERE THEY SELECTED?

Volumes in the Library have been added based on several criteria: usefulness, user request, breadth of content or reputation. This has meant that the collection is eclectic and may include works that contain positions with which we at AGES Software do not agree. This paradox is consistent with our design, however: any useful library consists of books on a wide variety of subjects and sometimes includes information for reference purposes only. The AGES Digital Library hopefully will reflect — as its components are released — the necessary breadth and depth for a solid personal library.

HOW WERE THESE VOLUMES PREPARED?

Most of the books and documents have been scanned or typed from works that have entered the public domain. Some have been reproduced by special arrangement with the current publisher or holder of the copyright. They have been put in a format that can be readily used by computer users everywhere.

ARE THESE EXACT COPIES OF THE ORIGINAL WORKS?

Usually not. In the process of preparing the Library, we at AGES Software have taken the liberty to make certain edits to the text. As we discovered errors in spelling, certain archaic forms, typographical mistakes or omissions in the original we have done our best to correct them. Our intention has been to remove anything that might obscure the meaning or otherwise detract from the usefulness of a book for the modern reader. We

have, however, attempted to retain the essential content and thoughts of the original — even when we found ourselves in disagreement.

WHY IS THE DIGITAL LIBRARY COPYRIGHTED?

While much of the content is in the public domain, the transcription, form and edits of these works took many people many hours to accomplish. We ask each purchaser to respect this labor and refrain from giving away copies of this or any volume of the Library without written permission from AGES Software. Our policy, however, is to work with each individual or organization to see that the price of Digital Library volumes not be a hindrance in their reaching the hands of those who need them. If price is an obstacle, please contact us at the address above and present your situation.