

The TRUE Genealogy & Genesis of "KJV - Onlyism"

The Bloodline of History

by DOUG KUTILEK

BENJAMIN WILKINSON

- In the realm of "King James Version-Onlyism", just such a genealogy of error can be easily traced. All writers who embrace the KJV-only position have derived their views ultimately from Seventh-day Adventist missionary, theology professor and college president, Benjamin G. Wilkinson (died 1968), through one of two or three of his spiritual descendants. In 1930, Mr. Wilkinson wrote *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, a book of several hundred pages which attracted almost no attention in its day (no doubt chiefly because it was awash in a vast ocean of error).
- In that book, Wilkinson attacked the "Westcott-Hort Greek text," in large measure by attacking Westcott and Hort personally (the common but fallacious ad hominem method; I exposed and refuted his line of argument in "Erasmus and His Theology," *The Biblical Evangelist*, vol. 19, no. 20, October 15, 1985, pgs. 3-4)
- He also expressed strong opposition to the English Revised Version New Testament (1881), in particular objecting to it because it robbed Adventism of two favorite proof-texts, one allegedly teaching Gentile Sabbath-keeping (Acts 13:42), the other misused by the Adventists to teach soul sleep (Hebrews 9:27). [some of Wilkinson's grosser errors I documented in "Wilkinson's Incredible Errors," *Baptist Biblical Heritage*, vol. 1, no. 3, Fall, 1990]
- Wilkinson was the first to misapply Psalm 12: 6-7 specifically to the KJV as though the passage were a promise to preserve the words of verse six [when in fact the promise is the preservation of the persecuted saints of verse five, as I demonstrated in my essay, "A Careful Investigation of Psalm 12: 6-7," *The Biblical Evangelist*, vol. 17, no. 21, October 14, 1983, later issued in booklet form as "Why Psalm 12: 6-7 is not a Promise of the Divine Preservation of Scripture"]
- Wilkinson also manufactured the erroneous idea that the medieval Waldensian Bible was based on the Old Latin version and not the Vulgate, and that the Old Latin version was Byzantine in its text-type [all of which is demonstrably false, as I showed in "The Truth about the Waldensian Bible and the Old Latin Version," *Baptist Biblical Heritage*, vol. 2, no. 2, Summer, 1991] Thus Wilkinson , the first generation .
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J. J. RAY

- Wilkinson's book lay unused and unknown (and how good it would have been had his errors died with him!), until 1955 when J. J. Ray (died early 1980s), who is self-

described as "business manager, missionary, Bible teacher," published a little volume, *God Wrote Only One Bible*. In his book, Ray heavily plagiarized, without note or acknowledgement, Wilkinson's book, repeating and propagating wholesale Wilkinson's errors and misstatements [the Fact of Ray's plagiarism and dependence is documented in Gary Hudson's article, "The Real 'Eye Opener'," *Baptist Biblical Heritage*, vol. 2, no. 1, Spring, 1991]

- Ray's book has gone through numerous printings, with total copies numbering perhaps in the tens of thousands. I first saw a copy myself in 1971 as a first-year student at Baptist Bible College, Springfield, Missouri, where I was also introduced - by students from Ohio - to Ruckman's *Bible Babel* and Fuller's *Which Bible?* I find it of particular interest that Ray acknowledges that there are some erroneous translations in the KJV which do demand revision (pgs. 30-31, 102), a position today's KJV-Only mainstream would consider rank heresy. With Ray, the second generation . . .

DAVID OTIS FULLER

- The other chief disseminator of Wilkinson's misinformation was the late David Otis Fuller, a Regular Baptist pastor. Fuller must be counted as part of the third generation, since, according to Fuller's own words in the dedication of *Counterfeit or Genuine* (1975), Ray's book *God Wrote Only One Bible* "moved me to begin this fascinating study." Ray and his book were also repeatedly noted in *Which Bible?* (pgs. 2-4). I imagine the scenario went something like this: Fuller reads Ray; Fuller writes Ray for more information; Ray directs Fuller to Wilkinson; Fuller reads Wilkinson, is lead astray, then reprints Wilkinson in *Which Bible?*
- In 1970 Fuller issued *Which Bible?*, which was in its 5th edition by 1975 and contained 350 pages. Of these pages, ALMOST HALF were taken from Wilkinson's *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, with some editing, first to conceal from view Wilkinson's cult affiliation, and second, to correct some of the worst of his errors.
- According to D. A. Waite, long associated with Fuller in KJV-Only matters, Fuller knew full-well that Wilkinson was an Adventist and deliberately concealed that fact from the reader, and even from the publisher [noted at end of this section], because the Baptist brethren "wouldn't understand." Fuller's haphazard "back and fill" operation aimed at editing out some of Wilkinson's grosser errors failed miserably to make a silk purse out of a literary sow's ear, with most errors left untouched [see the expose, "The Great 'Which Bible?' Fraud," by myself and Gary Hudson, *Baptist Biblical Heritage*, vol. 1, no. 2, Summer, 1990]
- As reproduced in *Which Bible?*, Wilkinson's material is still plagued by blatant misstatements of the facts, distortions, misrepresentations and half-truths; what else would you expect to find in a devoted cultist's writings? [as noted above, see my article "Wilkinson's Incredible Errors," *Baptist Biblical Heritage*, vol. 1, no. 3, Fall, 1990].
- It is this same David Otis Fuller who knowingly misrepresented the views of Spurgeon regarding the Textus Receptus Greek text, KJV, and English Revised Version [I exposed Fuller's deception with extensive quotation and documentation from Spurgeon's own writings in, "Spurgeon & Bible Translations: the Abuse

Continues," Baptist Biblical Heritage, vol. 1, no. 1, Spring, 1990, published later in booklet form as An Answer to David Otis Fuller by Pilgrim Publications].

- And it is this same David Otis Fuller who grossly misrepresented the views of Robert Dick Wilson concerning the English Bible. Fuller claimed that the views of Wilson and himself in this regard were exactly the same, that is, that Wilson, too, found no errors in the English translation and none in the underlying texts in Hebrew and Greek. Anyone familiar with Wilson's writings at all knows that Wilson believed that only the original text was inspired, that often the translation must be corrected on the basis of the original, and that, though current Hebrew copies of the Old Testament are generally reliable, sometimes the ancient versions (Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, etc.) preserve the true original reading in places where the Hebrew has been corrupted in the copying process [see Wilson's remarks in Studies in the Book of Daniel, vol. I, pgs. 84-85, and A Scientific Investigation of the Old Testament, pg. 61].
- Fuller also dragged Anglican priest John William Burgon in as "witness" for his own point of view, even founding a "society" named in Burgon's honor, though the society [currently led by D. A. Waite] propagated views the late Dean Burgon would have rejected. Contrary to David Otis Fuller, not only did Burgon not believe the textus receptus was unalterably "perfect" and the KJV unchangeably correct, he was convinced that the textus receptus needed extensive revision (proposing more than 120 changes in Matthew's Gospel alone), and stated in print that in some places the English Revised New Testament of 1881 was a decided improvement over KJV obscurities and inaccuracies [see the direct quotations from Burgon's famous book The Revision Revised, in Baptist Biblical Heritage, vol. 4, no. 2, pgs. 4, 11, 16] and Gary Hudson's article, "Why Dean Burgon Would Not Join the 'Dean Burgon Society',"
- Fuller, in summary, was ready and willing to conceal the truth about Wilkinson, and deliberately distort the opinions of Spurgeon and Wilson, men he claimed to admire, and to invoke the name of John William Burgon, to deceive his readers and to bolster his own views, even though his (Fuller's) views were very much at odds with the beliefs of these men. Fuller's blatant dishonesty and disregard for the truth does not fill one with confidence in examining anything he wrote or edited on the Bible translation "controversy," and yet Fuller is a "founding father" & "leading light" of the KJV- Only "movement" !
- The book Fuller edited, Which Bible?, is a hodge-podge of writings, many by authors such as Robert Dick Wilson, Zane Hodges and others, who distinctly reject the Textus Receptus-Only/KJV-Only point of view [and at least one of the writers who gave Fuller permission to include something he had written, complained about the way Fuller had altered the writer's point of view in the editing process], and actually gives some information which refutes some of the extremes of this movement. In spite of its inherent defects, inherently contradictory points of view, and frequent errors, Which Bible? in numerous printings & at least five editions, has had a very extensive influence in shaping much of the current debate and disseminating much of the misinformation that characterizes KJV-Onlyism today. Without any doubt at all, I am convinced that the vast majority of this highly destructive controversy is a direct result of Fuller's deceptive and inflammatory book, Which Bible?, and that he must bear the odium of stirring up strife among brethren (Proverbs 6:19). [Fuller died in 1988]

- Note [by Bob L. Ross] : After repeated requests by Fuller and his friends, Robert Kregel of Kregel Publications printed Fuller's three "KJV-Only" books [not using the Kregel Pub. name]. He personally told me that Fuller "begged me to publish his books" but did not inform Kregel they contained the writings of an Adventist.

PETER S. RUCKMAN

Self-described " Restorer " of the ' Missing Link ' of KJV ' Final Authority '

Peter S . Ruckman on the KJV -

"I've NEVER said that the KING JAMES BIBLE was Inspired, although I've broadly intimated it sometimes ." [his booklet, "Why I Believe the King James Version Is the Word of God" pg. 6]

"Not one time did G OD guarantee that ONE of the translations was inspired ." [Bible Believer's Bulletin, Nov. 91, pg. 10]

"Now, at no time have I stated flatly that the A. V. 1611 was the ' verbally inspired Word of GOD . ' " Verbal inspiration has to do with 2 TIMOTHY 3:16 and deals with the O RIGINAL AUTOGRAPHS, as we all KNOW ." [Letter to Robert Sumner, 1971]

- Also in the third generation, without question the most arrogant and abusive of the KJV-Only partisans is Peter S. Ruckman, who passes for a Baptist preacher and whose ranting have been thrust upon the public in a monthly publication, Bible Believers' Bulletin, but especially in a series of uniformly bound and uniformly bad books that are claimed to be commentaries on various Bible books, topical books on Bible-related subjects, and books related to the Bible text and translation issue. All of his writings are characterized by the most vehement vilification and denunciation of everyone and anyone, lumping together great defenders of the faith such as B. B. Warfield, A. T. Robertson, & C. H. Spurgeon (when he's not falsely claiming Spurgeon's support for his own views), with the likes of Wellhausen, Adolf Hitler, and Harry Fosdick.
- Far worse is the torrent of errors that flood each work and virtually each page of Ruckman's every published work. He single-handedly has injected more misinformation into the controversy than all other writers combined.
- Note [by Bob L. Ross] : While Ruckman brays a lot about "Final Authority," his "hermeneutical" approach to the King James Bible is so nonsensical that he is nowhere close to what we understand to be the doctrinal, practical, and prophetic teachings of Scripture. He has various "plans of salvation," various "gospels," a 10-foot tall Antichrist who arrives on a UFO, a "mark of the beast" applied by "two huge

black lips," baptism for salvation on Pentecost, and other such nonsense. His "smoke" about "Final Authority" is just so much "hokey" to beguile the gullible. He twists and distorts the KJV to make it "say" what it does not say, and doesn't permit it to teach what it plainly says.

- It was Ruckman who first propagated the erroneous idea that the KJV has no copyright [I exposed and refuted this error with extensive documentation in "The KJV IS a Copyrighted Translation !" first published in The Biblical Evangelist, vol. 17, no. 11, May 27, 1983, and reissued in a revised and expanded form in Baptist Biblical Heritage, vol. 4, no. 3, October, 1993].
- It was Ruckman who manufactured out of whole cloth the false claim that no Protestant scholar has ever personally examined the Vaticanus manuscript [see for my refutation, "Ruckmanism: A Refuge of Lies," Baptist Biblical Heritage, vol. 4, no. 4, January, 1994]
- It was Ruckman who created out of thin air the absurd notion that there was no Greek translation of the Old Testament until one was produced by Origen in the third century A. D. [proven false in my article "The Septuagint: Riplinger's Blunders, Believe It or Not," Baptist Biblical Heritage, vol. 5, no. 2, Third quarter, 1994]
- And how was Ruckman drawn into the fray? What book influenced him? Ruckman's first-born book on the subject (unfortunately not "still-born"), The Bible Babel (1964) betrays unmistakable signs of heavy dependence on J. J. Ray. Ruckman's chart of "corrupt" texts and versions facing pg. 28 is an abbreviation of Ray, pgs. 56-70; Ruckman's "tree" of "good" versions facing pg. 73 is a virtual reproduction, with very minor alterations, of Ray's chart on pg. 109; on pg. viii of the footnote references, Ruckman specifically mentions Ray's book, though giving the title as "God Only Wrote One Book," which is typical of his level of accuracy! Just as Wilkinson misapplied Psalm 12: 6-7 to the KJV, as did Ray, well . . .so did Ruckman! Furthermore, in Ruckman's so-called The Christian's Handbook of Manuscript Evidence (1970), Ruckman specifically commends Ray (along with Edward F. Hills) as one of a very few reliable writers on text and translation issues (preface, pg. I).

EDWARD F . HILLS & OTHERS

- A word needs to be said here about Edward F. Hills, who wrote two books that in part address the text and translation controversy, Believing Bible Study (1967) and The King James Version Defended (1956, 1973), and who wrote a chapter on Burgon in Fuller's Which Bible? The theme of Hills' work is the defense of, not just the Byzantine text-type in general as the true original form of the text of the New Testament, but the defense of the specific textus receptus form of the Byzantine text, including the unique (i.e., unsupported) readings in the textus receptus introduced by Erasmus (as the textus receptus and the majority text as published by Hodges and Farstad differ in 1,838 specifics).
- Hills, who did not advocate the inerrancy of the King James Version nor the Origenian origin of the Septuagint, is neither a founding father nor a star of the first magnitude of the KJV-Only movement, but may be viewed as a secondary tributary,

whose works are commonly cited wherever his words can be made to support a writer's point. On the whole, Hills' writings are much better-informed and more accurate than nearly all of the KJV-Only literature, though he writes as one blinded to evidence by his presuppositions. [An extended analysis of Hills and his point of view was made by Dr. James A. Price, "King James Only View of Edward F. Hills," Baptist Biblical Heritage, vol. 1, no. 4, Winter 1990-91]

- From Ruckman, have sprung, like the serpent heads from Hydra, a teeming uncongealed mass of incredibly misinformed writers, editors, preachers and evangelists, imagining that they are "defending the true faith" when in fact, their ignorance of the truth is almost immeasurable. As John Broadus was wont to say, it is amazing how much ignorance some men have been able to accumulate. In truth, there are natural limits to everything, except human stupidity.
- Among those heavily influenced by Fuller can be named D. A. Waite, who now does a great deal of his own misleading, & E. L. Bynum. Also, Jack Chick, [CHICK PUBLICATIONS] whose comic books have espoused KJV-Onlyism, has acknowledged in letters that he is entirely dependent on Fuller and Ruckman for his research. [also see the footnotes in various Chick KJV - Only comics & books] I am reminded immediately of an ancient Jewish proverb: "If you wish to strangle, be hanged on a good tree," that is, if you must rely on an authority, you do well to make sure it is a reliable one.

GAIL RIPLINGER

- Now, women are getting in on the KJV-Onlyism act, promoting and profiting from the gullible multitude seduced by the sleight-of-hand tactics generally employed. The latest piece of perverse propaganda is a huge pile of wasted paper called NEW AGE BIBLE VERSIONS written by Ms. G. [Gail] A. Riplinger. This woman said that God was the "author" [!] and she was His "secretary" [!], hence "G" (God), "A" (and). . . Riplinger. She alleges a "Satanic inspired conspiracy"[!] on the part of "modern Bible versions" which is sponsored by the "New Age Movement." [!] [see link above for one of our reviews - more articles to come.]
- Along with other boasts, these claims were just "too much" for even some fellow KJV-Onlyites to swallow, and Gail Riplinger's work has been dubbed "an undependable book" by David W. Cloud, editor of O TIMOTHY Magazine (Vol. II, #8, 1994) [re-named "O MADMAN" by Ms. Riplinger]. Cloud remarks that the claim by Riplinger that God was the "author" is something that "even the most radical charismatic prophets hesitate to use such intemperate language." Yet the book has received the unqualified endorsement of KJV- Onlyites such as Chick, Ruckman, Jack Hyles, Texe Marrs, J. R. Chambers, D. A. Waite, Walter Beebe & others who are "peddling" it. There are a lot of KJV - Onlyites on the mailing lists of these men, hence a lot of money to be made by selling this book to the gullible!

SUMMARY

- From Wilkinson in the first generation, through Ray in the second, and Fuller and

Ruckman in the third, the entire KJV-Only movement has arisen, and every present-day KJV-Onlyite is, in varying ways, a direct spiritual descendant of these ill-informed men. And as the movement has progressed from one generation to the next, with each new generation arising from intellectually-incestuous in-breeding, the views have become more radicalized and extreme.

- First, the KJV was viewed as "better" than other English versions, though not above some revision and correction (thus Ray); then, the view was taken that the KJV was "error-free" (but not without insoluble problems; thus Fuller); then, the KJV came to be accepted as "perfect," and infallible, unalterably exact, "superior" even to the Greek and Hebrew texts from which it was made, and in fact contained "new revelations" not found in the Greek and Hebrew (thus Ruckman); and now it is alleged by some that a person "cannot be saved" unless through the English KJV (thus Hyles and others), and all foreign Bibles should be revised to conform to the KJV [a view pushed by some idiot Americans visiting in Romania, by an ignorant American missionary in Japan, and by a church in Arizona which insists that the 1960 Reina-Valera Spanish translation, which has brought the conversions of millions, is not the Word of God], a view so absurd that only an American could believe it.
- The movement has become a vulgar caricature of itself, rushing at break-neck speed to ever more extreme views, and as they grope about in the intellectual smog of "KJV-Onlyism", having lost all perspective and ability to discern truth from error, they become easy prey for every false doctrine. One leading KJV-Only advocate in the upper Midwest was recently ostracized from his circle of associates because he has begun espousing British Israelism, the view that the English-speaking peoples are Israel (the view of Herbert W. and Garner Ted Armstrong; this view arises naturally from KJV-Onlyism, for after all, the English-speaking people must be special, since to them alone God gave an infallible, inspired, perfectly preserved translation, . . .with 6 different revisions . . .right?).
- Every KJV-Only advocate is a lineal descendant of Wilkinson, Ray, Fuller and Ruckman, and all are the victims (unwitting, I hope) of the multitude of gross distortions, errors, corruption's, misunderstandings, misrepresentations, and, in some cases, out-right lies of these men. These men are collectively a bruised reed of a staff, upon which if a man leans, it will pierce his hand. They are unreliable in the extreme and are deserving of no confidence as to the truthfulness of anything they affirm. I have no doubt that some will blissfully continue in their ignorance, willfully ignorant of the truth, not seeing because they DO NOT want to see.
- "So then Wilkinson, when he had conceived, brought forth Ray, and Ray, when he was full-grown, brought forth Fuller, Ruckman, Chick, Riplinger, Hyles, Bynum, Gipp, Waite, Marrs ...unfortunately, others."

(End of Doug Kutilek's Article)

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