



THE REVISED STANDARD VERSION OF THE BIBLE IN THE LIGHT OF TRUE DOCTRINE

MUCH uncertainty prevails as to the merits or demerits of the new translation of the Bible known as the "Revised Standard Version" (R.S.V. for short). A 32-man committee, with 91 scholars representing 40 denominations eventually participating, completed it in 1952, after 15 years' work. It was published under the auspices of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Protestant churches in general set aside the week of Sept. 28—Oct. 5, 1952, timed to coincide with the 500th anniversary of the printing of the Gutenberg Bible, as "Religious Education Week." Celebrations were organized in 3,000 communities before the first copies even reached the market. Great sales campaigns were conducted, and by Nov. 30th 1,600,000 copies of the "new Bible" were sold.

However, knowing that the National Council of Churches is "modernistic" in its tendencies and that the translators in general are "liberals," many of the Fundamentalists viewed the R.S.V. with suspicion, especially because copies had not been made available for review before it was distributed generally. After examining the R.S.V., especially its Old Testament part (the N.T. was published in 1946), they found what they considered ample reason for opposing it. Some of their objections are well founded; others are not. Some have been very fair in their criticisms (several of which are very masterful), reminding us "that criticism of details does not mean wholesale condemnation." But others have sought to arouse public sentiment against it by vilifying and slandering the translators, and appealing to the mob spirit, rather than to consider it on its own merits. In the public press (under such headlines as, "The New Unholy Bible," "The New Blasphemous Bible," *etc.*) some of the more radical preachers have denounced the R.S.V. as a work of the devil, as a masterpiece of deception and a tragic fraud foisted upon themselves and others in general by a shrewd advertising campaign and "as part of a master plan to denature and devitalize our historical and evangelical Christian Faith" (this includes in large part, of course, their own erroneous theories as to what is correct Christian doctrine).

A few have gone so far as to burn these Bibles publicly, or threaten to do so, and to urge their congregations to do likewise! *E.g.*, in Rocky Mount, N.C., a preacher burned part of an R.S.V. Bible in his church, with his congregation looking on. While many condemned this Bible burning as a "deplorable sacrilege," Dr. Carl McIntire, President of the International Council of Christian Churches (a prominent Fundamentalist group), is reported in the public press to have said before an audience of 1200 at a Denver rally that, while he wouldn't burn the new Bible, he was "glad that old boy down in North Carolina did." He condemned the R.S.V. as the work of "Satan and his agents," "an unholy book" produced by "liberalists and modernists" who "do not believe in the deity of Christ." Another news report stated that when a Fundamentalist evangelist in Crestview, Florida, announced that he was going to burn an R.S.V. Bible, the city council immediately passed

an ordinance imposing a \$500 fine or 90 days in jail for such an act. What a shame it is—in this enlightened country of ours—that civil authorities have to pass laws to stop preachers from burning Bibles!

Of all the condemnations of the R.S.V. that we have witnessed, whether by act, word or in print, we have seen few indeed that in a calm, careful, sober and unbiased way examined it *pro* and *con*. Many of those who speak or write against it just pick flaws here and there, and sometimes even condemn correct translations and advocate instead corresponding incorrect translations in the A.V. that suit their purposes better. While we find the R.S.V. incorrect in many instances, some of its mistakes being indeed quite serious, and while we do not advocate it as a replacement for the A.V. (Authorized, or King James, Version), we do believe in fair play and honest criticism. Like all other translations, the R.S.V. has its good points and its bad points—for no translation of the Bible is perfect.

Some Fundamentalists condemn the R.S.V. because of its translators being largely modernistic in their views and because the R.S.V. reflects their liberal theological position. We are Fundamentalists in the strictest sense of the word, and we realize the dangers that lurk in Higher Criticism, Modernism and Infidelism. We believe in the inspiration of the Bible, the virgin birth of Jesus, the deity of Christ, the resurrection of the dead and all the other teachings of the Bible as God's infallible Word; but we believe that the R.S.V. should be judged on its own merits regardless of who authorized it, and who the translators were or what their personal views on doctrine might be. We disapprove of prejudice being aroused against any work by vilifying or impugning the motives of its author or authors. We decry the methods used by some of our brother Fundamentalists to this end.

MAIN OBJECTIONS TO THE R.S.V. NOTED

Without attempting an exhaustive examination, let us note the main objections to the R.S.V. itself. These are against (1) The text used in the O.T.—instead of using only the Hebrew text, the Latin Vulgate and the Greek Septuagint translations' variant readings were sometimes used and incorporated into the text, rather than as footnote comments; (2) Conjectural changes made in the text without any support from the Hebrew MSS., some being indicated by "cn" in the margin, but others not so indicated; (3) Modernization of the forms of expression in the original Greek and Hebrew, thus leaving words untranslated or inserting extra words, changing grammatical construction, sometimes paraphrasing rather than translating accurately; (4) Failure to italicize supplied words for which there are no corresponding words in the original; (5) A tendency to ignore the proper tense, thus sometimes straining out the prophetic element; (6) Translation of some Old Testament passages in a way that contradicts its own translation of the same passages where they are quoted in the New Testament. It is also objected to on the ground that (7) It is antagonistic to the blood atonement and that (8) It denies the virgin birth, pre-human existence and deity of Jesus. There are other (minor) objections, some of which we will consider, but these are the main ones offered by many of the Fundamentalists.

An unbiased examination of the R.S.V. in the light of these objections indicates that points (1) and (2) are serious defects. The original Hebrew text alone should be used as a basis for

translation. Any deviation from it should be indicated clearly. The same applies to conjectural changes. We also agree with objections (3) and (4). Some verses have been obscured by paraphrasing; but, in all fairness, we must say that some have been clarified, *e.g.*, in Psa. 119:147 (which the A.V. renders: "I prevented the dawning of the morning") the R.S.V. reads: "I rise before the dawn." We see no objection to paraphrasing, *if it is indicated as such*. Surely all words that have no corresponding words in the Hebrew or Greek original should have been so indicated, as is done by *italics* in the A.V. and other translations. The R.S.V. of Ps. 72 indicates that objection (5) is well taken. 1 Tim. 2:5, 6 is another example, as it uses the past tense: "the testimony to which was borne," whereas it should be in the future tense, as in the A.V. and the A.R.V. Objection (6) is also well taken, as we will see when we discuss (8).

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

Objection (7), if true, would be most serious, for the ransom through Jesus' blood is the Bible's central doctrine. While we cannot agree with the infidelistic tendencies of Higher Critics, Evolutionists and Modernists against the efficacy of Jesus' life blood as our all-sufficient ransom-price, still we decry the spirit manifested by some Fundamentalists. *E.g.*, a prominent preacher writes as follows: "Modernism, the bastard offspring of Talmudism, is an enemy, bloodless religion that rebels against the doctrine of Christ's vicarious atonement. This no doubt explains why the word 'blood' has been deleted from so many passages in the new 'Bible.' Col. 1:14 may be taken as an example: The King James Version says: 'In whom we have redemption through his *blood*, even the forgiveness of sins.' The Revised Standard Version says: 'In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.' ... True believers have no choice but to reject it, and try to keep others from becoming ensnared by what Peter would call its 'damnable heresies.'" It is such statements as this that unfairly and prejudicially arouse resentment against the R.S.V. and prepare people in a riotous mob spirit to take extreme measures, such as holding public Bible burnings, which are a disgrace, not only to the clergy, but also to the laity who join them in such shameful Dark-Age acts.

Let us now calmly, soberly and with the spirit "of a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7) examine the R.S.V. of Col. 1:14. First, we examine Dr. B. Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott translation and the original Greek text, and we note that there is no corresponding Greek word for *blood* in this text! The Diaglott's literal translation is: "In whom we have the redemption, the forgiveness of the sins." Hence the R.S.V. is correct in rendering it: "In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins," while the A.V. is wrong in adding the words "through his blood"—not that we do not agree that it is through Jesus' blood that we have redemption and forgiveness of sins, for surely this is a Scriptural doctrine, but the A.V. here adds to God's Word, regardless of whether the thought thus injected is correct or not. Note also that many of the standard and generally accepted versions do not add the spurious words "through his blood" found in the A.V. Why is it, then, that the preachers who lift their hands in holy (?) horror and shout to the high heavens because the R.S.V. omits the spurious words "through his blood" in Col. 1:14, and claim that therefore it should be rejected—why is it that they do not do likewise with all the other standard and generally accepted translations that also eliminate these words from this text as being spurious? There must be some special reason that is not openly revealed.

These preachers appear to be dishonest in charging that the R.S.V. in general eliminates reference to the blood of Christ for our salvation. Note, *e.g.*, the following R.S.V. translations: "This is my *blood* of the covenant, which is poured out for many" (Mark 14:24); "This cup is the new covenant in my *blood*" (1 Cor. 11:25); "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his *blood*, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my *blood* has eternal life ... For my flesh is food indeed, and my *blood* is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my *blood* abides in me, and I in him" (John 6:53-56); "the church of the Lord which he obtained for himself with his own *blood*" (Acts 20:28); "through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an expiation by his *blood*" (Rom. 3:24, 25); "now justified by his *blood*" (Rom. 5:9); "In him we have redemption through his *blood*" (Eph. 1:7); "without the shedding of *blood* there is no forgiveness of sins" (Heb. 9:22); "You know that you were ransomed ... with the precious *blood* of Christ" (1 Pet. 1:18, 19). The R.S.V. honestly refused to inject the words "through his blood" into Col. 1:14, for they were not a part of the original text, and whoever inserts them is adding to the Word of God (Rev. 22:18); but it did not neglect to translate these words in Eph. 1:7 (where they do appear in the Greek text): "In him we have redemption through his blood." Surely the R.S.V. emphasizes the necessity and merit of the blood of Christ! It has been grossly misrepresented on this matter.

THE VIRGIN BIRTH

Under Objection (8), we consider the R.S.V. of Isa. 7:14: "Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." The use of *young woman* instead of *virgin* is taken as a denial of the virgin birth, pre-human existence, and deity of Jesus. Some Fundamentalists condemn this as "blasphemous," claiming that it supports the Talmudic teaching that Jesus was born of fornication, the son of a lewd woman; extremists among them insist that this is sufficient reason for discarding the entire R.S.V.

We agree with our brother Fundamentalists that the R.S.V. gives a wrong translation of Isa. 7:14. We stand unreservedly for the defense of the virgin birth of Jesus, for it is clearly taught in the Scriptures. The redemption of father Adam and his race required someone with a perfect human life to be the ransom, or corresponding price (1 Tim. 2:6), for the perfect human life of Adam. None of Adam's race, which is fallen, imperfect, could by any means redeem his brother or give to God a ransom for him ("give to God the price of his life"—R.S.V., Psa. 49:7). Therefore, for Jesus to be Adam's redeemer, He could not have been a son of Joseph, for as such He would have inherited the fallen imperfect life of the Adamic stock; thus He would have been but another member of Adam's condemned race, unable to redeem Himself or anyone else.

By having Jehovah God as His Father (the word *father* means *life-giver*) and being made flesh through the Virgin Mary, Jesus could indeed be holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners (Heb. 7:26), in every way fitted to be the ransom (the corresponding or equivalent price) for Adam, his race being in his loins when he sinned, hence included (Heb. 2:6-10). By arranging for Jesus to be born of a virgin, God gave special assurance that Jesus was not begotten by a human father. By pouring out His soul (His human all) unto death (Isa. 53:12), Jesus provided the ransom-price with which to pay Adam's debt ("The wages of sin is death"—Rom. 6:23; Gen. 2:17), and is now in position to offer eternal life to Adam and his race: for "by one man sin entered into the

world, and death by sin"; "by one man's offence [Adam's sin] death reigned by one [came through Adam upon all his race]" (Rom. 5:12, 17). Therefore, "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15:22).

The Hebrew word in question, which the A.V. translates "virgin" and which the R.S.V. translates "young woman," is *almah*. This word *almah* undoubtedly means *virgin*. It occurs seven times in the Hebrew Scriptures (Gen. 24:43; Ex. 2:8; Psa. 68:26; Prov. 30:19; Cant. 1:3; 6:8 and Isa. 7:14); and in the plural (*alamoth*) it is also used, in connection with the heading of Psa. 46:1 and in describing certain psalteries in 1 Chro. 15:20, to indicate soprano music, and is to be translated, *in the manner of virgins, i.e.,* the soprano voice, the treble clef. Before Christians referred to Isa. 7:14 in proof of Jesus' virgin birth, Jewish scholars, as proven by the Septuagint, understood the word *almah* in Isa. 7:14 to mean *virgin*; but after Christians quoted it in proof of the Messiah's virgin birth, in order to evade the argument the rabbis *invented* for *almah* the meaning *young woman, young bride*, and they claim that "the Hebrew word for *virgin* is *bethulah*, not *almah*."

Let us see if this is true: In Gen. 24:16 we read that "the damsel [Hebrew, *naarah*—a girl] was ... a virgin [Hebrew, *bethulah*], neither had any man known her." If the word *bethulah* necessarily implied virginity, the explanatory clause following it would not have been used. Its use here proves that the word *bethulah* does not necessarily mean a woman of virginity. In view of the explanation concerning Rebekah in v. 16, she is properly called an *almah*, a virgin, in v. 43. Moreover, in Joel 1:8 the word *bethulah* clearly refers to an aged widow, mourning for the dead husband of her young years; for she is here used as a simile of God's people bidden to lament their loss of true teachers: "Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth." Thus we find that the rabbis' claims are not Scriptural; and we see that the Fundamentalists are right in their objection to the R.S.V.'s substitution of "young woman" for "virgin" in Isa. 7:14, for the word *almah* definitely means *virgin*, as just seen.

Another proof is found in the fact that in the Hebrew text the definite article occurs before the word for *virgin*. This strengthens the virginity thought, for the statement, "Behold, *the* virgin shall conceive," gives the thought that here someone unusual and important is referred to. Moreover, a miracle (Hebrew, *oth*, here translated *sign*) is here implied; and there would not be a miracle, if a non-virgin maiden would bear a son, a thing that unfortunately often happens naturally. The miracle consisted in this: that a virgin would conceive and bear a son, which implies that no sexual intercourse preceded the conception and birth. Jesus' name, in the sense of His office, was to be Immanuel ("*God with us*"),—for as High Priest He reconciles God and man, effects it that God is on our side, takes our part, favors us.

We note that the R.S.V. does not in general mistranslate texts that prove the virgin birth of Jesus and show that He was the Son of God. Note, *e.g.*, its translation of Matt. 1:18, 20: "before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit"; "that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit"; and in v. 23 it gives a true translation, which should have prevented the false translation in Isa. 7:14, the prophecy here quoted: "Behold, a *virgin* [Greek, *parthenos*] shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel." Many instances could be

cited where the R.S.V. correctly translates Jesus' words testifying that He was the Son of God, not of Joseph, but to note just a few: "I must be in my Father's [not Joseph's] house [business]" (Luke 2:49). The Pharisees maligned Jesus as an illegitimate child, saying, "As for this man, we do not know where he comes from" (John 9:29). Note how the R.S.V. gives Jesus' explanation: "He who sent me is true, and him you do not know. I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me" (John 7:28, 29). "They said to him therefore, 'Where is your Father?' Jesus answered, 'You know neither me nor my Father; if you knew me, you would know my Father also. ... You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world.' They said to him, 'We were not born of fornication [implying that Jesus was]; we have one Father, even God.' Jesus said to them, 'If God were your Father, you would love me, for I proceeded and came forth from God [not from Joseph]'" (John 8:19, 23, 41, 42). Also note the R.S.V. of Luke 3:23: "Jesus ... being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph"—which is a correct translation and implies that Jesus was not really Joseph's son, but merely was supposedly such. But how inconsistent the R.S.V. is, when, in the face of all these and many other Scriptures to the contrary, it in a footnote to Matt. 1:16 gives place to the thought that Joseph was the father of Jesus! Surely this is one of the serious blunders made by the R.S.V., as is also its translation of John 3:16, where the word *begotten* is dropped out of the text.

THE R.S.V. AND ROMAN CATHOLIC ERRORS

While many Protestants, including Fundamentalists, have improved their vision by more or less removing from their darkened eyes the man-made creedal spectacles inherited from the Dark Ages, and now see their path more clearly in the advancing light, which shines more and more unto the perfect day (which day is fast approaching), others still hold tenaciously to certain erroneous pet theories derived from the heathen religions by the Roman Catholics and adapted to the Christian religion, with certain Scriptures wrested, twisted and mistranslated in order to give a much desired support to them. The R.S.V. frequently gives better and more accurate translations than the A.V., thus assisting in exposing some of the Roman Catholic errors still held to by some Protestants as sweet morsels. This exposure is in large measure behind the name-calling, mud-throwing and Bible-burning activities on the part of some Fundamentalists, though we are glad to say the majority disapprove of their sensational, un-Christian methods.

It must be remembered that the so-called A.V., of nearly 350 years ago, tended to support the errors of the Dark Ages, partly due to the translators themselves being so thoroughly imbued with them, and also due to various spurious passages and interpolations that had crept into some of the manuscripts with which they had to work. Since that time many more ancient and more reliable manuscripts (especially of the New Testament) have been discovered. Those clerics who prefer to hold on to their pet theories and much-preached, Catholic-inherited errors, naturally oppose the more accurate translations based on these manuscripts, especially if they find that their errors are thereby exposed as such or spurious passages on which they were based are thus eliminated; and most especially if such exposures are advertised and circulated widely among the people.

One of the cardinal errors of the Dark Ages thus handed down to Protestants from heathen religions through the Roman Catholics is the doctrine of eternal life in torture as the punishment

for sin. This false doctrine was derived from the heathen religions, especially those of Greece and Rome, wherein Pluto was worshiped as the god of the infernal regions, where he ruled over the supposedly immortal spirits of the dead. The Greeks and Romans were "converted" in much larger numbers after they were made to feel more at home in the Christian religion by substituting the Bible's Satan for their Pluto and wresting the Bible hell to fit it to the heathen inferno. It was upon this basis that Dante's "Inferno" was written and many church walls were decorated with hideous paintings. In harmony with the spirit of this torment theory, the Holy (?) Inquisition was instituted; it also was similar to the practices of various heathenish religions, though much worse.

The eternal torment theory, *a doctrine of devils* (1 Tim. 4:1), is not taught in the Bible, even as we have shown (see, *e.g.*, our booklet on "The Hell of the Bible"). The blasphemous, God-dishonoring, faith-destroying, false doctrine of eternal life in torment, instead of death (Rom. 6:23), as the wages of sin, is "contrary to *sound doctrine*" (1 Tim. 1:10). However, while Modernists in general and many Fundamentalists have laid aside and rejected the Dark-Age doctrine of an eternal burning hell as a place prepared for the everlasting punishment of the wicked, there are still some who pose as shining lights in our day of greater enlightenment who still hold to this fireproof devil, eternal-torture theory as a precious morsel, and refuse to be deprived of it, even though, in view of the Scriptures to the contrary, it puckers their mouths like an unripe persimmon!

While some clerics stubbornly hold to their Dark-Age traditions, thus coming under the Lord's condemnation: "Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition" (Mark 7:9), we are glad to see that many of the clergy are now awakening to the fact that they have been deceived and are demanding the pure unadulterated Truth from God's own Word. To cite just one instance: A special investigating committee is reported to have asked the pastor and all the deacons, elders and officers of the Presbyterian Church in Chapel Hill, N.C., to resign for not adhering to "strictest Presbyterian doctrine." Failure to teach the doctrine of eternal torment was one of the things mentioned. It is said that those involved wanted to begin afresh and establish a new church entirely. It would indeed be well for all others similarly to repudiate this error!

Many of the laity also are awakening and rubbing the cobwebs of Dark-Age traditions from their eyes. *E.g.*, Clarence Poe, President and Editor of *The Progressive Farmer*, with a circulation of 1,200,000, has in at least two issues denounced the eternal torture theory. In his Dec. 1952 issue he says in part:

"We all agree that God will punish sinners—but how and how much? 1) Do they merely 'perish,' as so many Scriptures like John 3:15 suggest? Or 2) is a sinner's grief from being forever shut out from Heaven and his loved ones there sufficient punishment? Or 3) does a God who is Love somehow find it His pleasure to manage it so He can keep condemned sinners from 'perishing,' but instead stay alive in a fiery pit where they will suffer forever and ever through all eternity? Since some Scriptures *might* seem to approve No. 3 and others do not, I prefer to accept those that do not. And I do this for three reasons: First, God's nature: 'God is Love'—not Hate.

Second, Christ's precept: He didn't tell us to hate and punish our enemies, but to love and forgive—'forgive 70 times 7.' Finally, Christ's example: He even forgave those who killed Him and asked His Father to forgive. ... All my thinking and all my prayers lead me to feel that while some kind of punishment may be everlasting [Yes; it is everlasting death—"the Second Death"; for "all the wicked will God destroy"; "they shall be as though they had not been"; "they are extinct"—Psa. 145:20; Obad. 16; Isa. 43:17—*Editor*], everlasting torture is not in keeping with God's nature, with Christ's teaching or example. I should not be so much concerned about all this but for the fact that I believe the doctrine of everlasting torture is keeping millions of people from actually *loving* God. 'I may be terribly afraid of such a God,' they say, 'but how can I *love* Him?' Certainly we must *love Him* in order really to want to serve Him; and people who are only *afraid of Him* give Him only grudging and unhappy service."

THE R.S.V. AND HELL

Additionally, the R.S.V. is probably doing much to arouse Christians in general to a greater interest in the Bible and its real teachings and to repudiations of certain errors inherited from the Dark Ages. The word *hell* in old English usage, before papal theologians picked it up and gave it a new and special significance to suit their own purposes, simply meant to *conceal*, to *hide*, to *cover*; hence the *concealed*, *hidden* or *covered* condition. In old English literature records may be found of the *helling* of potatoes—putting potatoes into pits; and of the *helling* of a house—covering or thatching it. The word *hell* was therefore properly used synonymously with the words *grave* and *pit* to translate the words *sheol* and *hades* as signifying the secret or hidden condition of death. However, the same spirit that was willing to twist the word to terrorize the ignorant is willing still to perpetuate the error. Thus the R.S.V., like the A.R.V., has usually left *sheol* and *hades* untranslated, thus failing to help the English reader in his doctrinal study. Evidently the translators were afraid to tell the truth, and ashamed to tell the lie; so by leaving these words untranslated, they permit the inference to persist that these words mean the same as the word *hell* has become perverted to mean. Their course dishonors God and the Bible, which the common people are thus led to suppose teaches a "hell" of torment in the words *sheol* and *hades*.

Another source of confusion is the A.V.'s translation of the three Greek words, *tartaroo*, *hades* and *gehenna*, all by the one English word *hell*. Furthermore, in the O.T. the Hebrew word *sheol* occurs 65 times; the A.V. translates it 31 times *hell*, 31 times *grave* and 3 times *pit*. No wonder people are confused! While the R.S.V. falls short in not defining or in many instances not translating these words into English, it does endeavor to make a distinction between them, which the A.V. fails completely to do. The R.S.V. sometimes translates the word *hades* as *hell*, noting in the footnote that the Greek word is *hades*; at other times it leaves the word *hades* in the text untranslated. In all cases it translates the word *gehenna* as *hell*, but the footnote explains that the Greek word is *gehenna*, thus distinguishing it from *hades*. This lack of distinction in the A.V. has in part caused many to confuse *hades* with *gehenna* and think that they both refer to the same thing, thus causing them to consider Hades as the Lake of Fire (Gehenna, the Second Death), instead of the condition of oblivion, the unconscious condition of death, the hell into which Jesus went (Acts 2:27—translated *hell* in the A.V., but left "Hades" in the R.S.V.). Surely Jesus never went into Gehenna, the Lake of Fire, the Second Death—utter, complete and eternal annihilation, but He did give His flesh (His human life) for the life of the world; He gave "His soul an offering

for sin"; He "poured out His soul unto death" (John 6:51; Isa. 53:10, 12). Thus the R.S.V., in spite of its imperfections, is an improvement over the A.V. in its handling of the Hebrew word *sheol* and the Greek words *hades* and *gehenna*, and in its attempt to show a distinction between these words.

POLYTHEISM VERSUS MONOTHEISM

Another cardinal error imbibed from heathen religions and adopted by the papacy is the substitution of polytheism (the teaching that there is a plurality of gods) for the Bible's teaching of monotheism (one God). The Bible states plainly (1 Cor. 8:4-7): "There is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many). But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge." We see this knowledge lacking among the heathen religions which hold forth more than one god, and likewise we find this knowledge lacking among the Catholics and many Protestants, especially some of the clergy.

All the ancient heathen religions had their trinities of gods in one form or another, and in general they pointed back to Nimrod, the first king of Nineveh (Gen. 10:11—more correctly translated by the R.S.V.: "From that land he went into Assyria, and built Nineveh"), who was also known as Ninus and who married his own mother, Semiramis. According to ancient historians and archeological remains, Nimrod, under the name of Osiris, and Semiramis, under the name of Isis, went to Egypt and ruled there. After their death and that of their son Horus, the three were deified as a trinity, and thus came into existence the first trinity, after which others were patterned. *E.g.*, Confucius said: "Tao [God] is by nature one; the first begat the second; both together brought forth the third; these three made all things." The Japanese view is very similar. The Chaldeans, Phoenicians, Egyptians, Hindus, Greeks, the heathen Irish, Scandinavians, Germans, *etc.*, had similar trinities. Of course, the heathen generally worshiped also a multiplicity of other gods, though many of them were merely other names or forms for one of the gods of their trinities. For a helpful study on God's character and attributes, including false views of God, we recommend the 547-page book entitled, *God*, by Prof. Paul S.L. Johnson, which we can supply.

During the struggles of the early Christian Church, the Greeks, Romans, *etc.*, who had many gods, laughed and scoffed at the Christians, because they had only one God. As the apostasy came and the great Antichrist system began to develop, some thought it advisable to win heathen converts by appealing to them through the idea of more than one God. Jehovah was therefore gradually degraded to equality with an inferior—a thing that was one of Satan's purposes in inventing the trinity doctrine. By hocus-pocus methods these apostates gradually introduced the heathen mysteries of trinitarianism into the Christian religion, thus befuddling the heads and hurting the hearts of their followers. Justin Martyr, who died about 150 A.D., was the introducer of the error of the soul's indestructibility and eternal torment. He was a Platonic philosopher before his conversion to Christianity, and continued as a Christian to hold Plato's view of human immortality. He began the work of amalgamating Christian doctrine and Greek philosophy, and his errors gradually led to the God-man theory as the basis of trinitarianism as introduced from the heathen religions into Christianity.

Soon the Father and the Son were considered equal and co-eternal, and God's holy Spirit, power or disposition, was also personified, contrary to the Scriptures, and thus Christianity was also given a trinity of gods, similar to that of the heathen religions. And to make the counterfeit taken from heathenism complete, Satan palmed off Mary in the place of the highest of the goddesses of the heathen, who stood next below, and sometimes as one of, their trinities, and the canonized saints in the places of the lower gods and goddesses of heathenism. Thus Catholicism introduced heathen conceptions of the gods and goddesses under Christian names. Therefore it may rightly be classed among the polytheistic religions. While most Protestant sects have taken over the creedal trinity from Catholicism, they fortunately did not take over its Mariolatry and hagiolatry (worship of Mary and saints), thus avoiding these forms of Rome's polytheism.

While God is a person and Jesus is a person, their holy Spirit is not a person. There is no Scripture, apart from mistranslations, that speaks of it as a person. The trinitarian mistranslation, "Holy Ghost" (which implies personality), was rightly rejected by the A.R.V., the R.S.V. and other translations, in favor of "Holy Spirit." This is one reason why some Protestants so strongly oppose the R.S.V., for in this and other ways it exposes them as holding in their creeds to the Catholic doctrine of the trinity, *viz.*, that "there are three persons in the Godhead: the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God [3 X 1=1; 3=1; 1=3!], the same in substance [as though this were possible!], equal in power and glory"! This foolish impossibility would make a son be as old as his father, and even be his own father; it would make a part of God die on the cross, a part of God pray to another part of God no greater in power than Himself; it would even make the immortal God be tempted, suffer, die, remain dead part of three days and then raise Himself from the dead! That the Holy Spirit is not God Almighty is obvious from the fact that it can be quenched by us (1 Thes. 5:19), which would mean, if it were God Almighty, that we can destroy God Almighty! How Almighty would God be, if we could quench, destroy Him? We read in Acts 10:38 that "God anointed Jesus with the Holy Ghost" ("Holy Spirit"—R.S.V.). Thus, if the creedal trinity idea is true doctrine, then we have one person in the Godhead anointing another person in the Godhead with the third person in the Godhead, in spite of all three being only one God and of the same substance, therefore one being just as capable of being poured out as the anointing oil as either of the others! How absurd and how unscriptural! Furthermore, if the Holy Spirit were a person, instead of a holy power and a holy disposition, how could he be poured out (Joel 2:28, 29; Matt. 3:16; Acts 2:1-4; 10:44, 45)? And how could we be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18), if it is God Almighty, a person?

The Bible says of Jehovah: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD" (or "Yahweh is our God,—Yahweh alone"—Rotherham; Deut. 6:4); "That all the people of the earth may know that the LORD [Jehovah] is God, and that there is none else" (1 Kings 8:60); "I am the LORD [Yahweh, or Jehovah]: that is my name: and my glory [or supremacy] will I not give to another" (Isa. 42:8); "God is one" (Gal. 3:20; James 2:19). The R.S.V. has beclouded the matter and upheld the heathen, Catholic-adopted doctrine of the trinity more than the A.V. did, by translating the Hebrew word for "Jehovah" into "the LORD" in every case, while the name "Jehovah" did appear four times in the A.V. The omission of the name "Jehovah" by the R.S.V. has been condemned by some as

"Communitistic," and "atheistic." We do not agree with such criticism; we might just as consistently make the same charges against the A.V. for the several thousand instances in which it did not retain the name "Jehovah" untranslated. Though we believe that the R.S.V. made a very serious mistake (as the A.V. also did in most cases) in not leaving the Hebrew word for "Jehovah" untranslated, thus not properly distinguishing Jehovah from all others, we can at least say that they were consistent in always treating the word in the same way.

THE R.S.V. AND JESUS' PRE-HUMAN EXISTENCE

Jesus is not God, but "the Son of God" and the "mediator between God and men" (1 Tim. 2:5). Jesus Himself calls Jehovah "the only true God" (John 17:3); but He does not thereby deny His own pre-human existence; for in v. 5 He speaks of "the glory which I had with thee before the world was made"—R.S.V. Jesus did not believe in the doctrine of the trinity, nor did He teach it, but to the contrary, as evidenced in many Scriptures, *e.g.*, John 8:28, 29, 54; 5:19, 26, 36; 6:57, 58; 12:49, 50; 14:10, 24; *etc.*, Jesus tells us plainly that He was not co-eternal with His Father (*father* means *life-giver*), but that He was created by God—in fact He says that He was "the *beginning* of the creation of God" (Rev. 3:14; see also R.S.V.); "the firstborn of every creature" (Col. 1:15),—"of all creation"—R.S.V. Thus the R.S.V. upholds Jesus' pre-human existence.

Trinitarians object to the R.S.V. of Matt. 27:54, "Truly this was a son of God." They say that rendering it "*a* son of God" (see also Mark 15:39), instead of "*the* son of God," as in the A.V., is a denial of the deity of Christ, because it "lowers Him to the level of humans generally." In all fairness, let us ask: Would the translators have done right to inject the definite article *the* before "Son of God," seeing that the definite article for *the* is not in the ancient manuscripts? The E.R.V. and A.R.V. suggest "a son of God," and most other reliable translations throw out the word *the* as an improper translation. Would the preachers who so strongly object to the R.S.V. not injecting the word *the*, have put it in if they had been translating? Would they have thus proven themselves dishonest and unreliable as translators, injecting their own thoughts into the text, instead of merely giving a correct and unbiased translation?

The R.S.V. has been strongly faulted and opposed for its translation of Micah 5:2, which says of Jesus: "whose origin is from of old, from ancient days." Naturally, those who still believe in the Catholic, heathen-derived doctrine of a trinity of Gods would not like the thought of Jesus' having an "*origin*"—even though He Himself said that He did (Rev. 3:14—which text Trinitarians would scarcely want to use as a text for a sermon!). Also they sometimes combine with Psa. 90:1, 2 the A.V. of Micah 5:2 to try to prove that Jesus is Jehovah, and that Jesus also is "from everlasting"; hence they strenuously object to the R.S.V. translation: "from ancient days" (though the A.R.V. and the American Baptist Publication Society's Improved Edition likewise give "from ancient days" as a correct translation, and Dr. Young's Literal Translation—a Presbyterian authority—renders it "from days of antiquity"). But the efforts of Trinitarians to misuse this verse to prove that Jesus is Jehovah are futile, for in Micah 5:4 Jehovah is spoken of as Jesus' God! Thus the R.S.V. here, though upholding Jesus' pre-human existence, helps to dispel the darkness of polytheism in its trinitarian aspect.

The R.S.V. of Rom. 9:5 is also strongly objected to by Trinitarians, who, despite many Scriptures to the contrary, insist that Jesus was in His pre-human existence equal to, co-eternal and consubstantial with His own Father! It reads: "To them [the Israelites] belong the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ. God who is over all be blessed forever. Amen." They accuse the R.S.V. here of "tearing away from Christ the descriptive clause 'who is over all ...' and wrongly making out that the clause is an independent sentence not referring to Christ." But careful examination of the Greek text shows that it is the Trinitarians and the A.V. that are wrong here. The Greek words, *ho ōn*, should not be translated by the one word *who*, as trinitarian translators render this passage, for they so translate it to make the last clause refer to Jesus, instead of to God. The literal translation is "He being over all, God ..." The *He* refers to God, not to Jesus. The A.R.V. (margin) is a more correct translation: "Of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh; He who is over all, God, be blessed forever. Amen." The R.S.V. is very similar to this. They are both correct in translating the two Greek words, *ho ōn*, by the two English words, *God who*, or *He who ... God*. It is the A.V. that is at fault; and the Trinitarians, in translating the two Greek words by the one word *who* and trying to force it to refer to Jesus, instead of to God, make it contradict the universal teaching of the Bible that Christ is not God over all, *i.e.*, the Supreme Being, but that the Father alone, as God Almighty, is such (see, *e.g.*, 1 Cor. 15:24-28).

Another text used by Trinitarians to prove that Jesus is equal to God is Phil. 2:6, which in the A.V. says that Jesus, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." True, Jesus in His prehuman existence, ever since His creation by the Father (Col. 1:15; Rev. 3:14), existed in God's *form* (as a Spirit being), but the Catholic-imbued trinitarians who translated the A.V. gave us a most wretched translation here, which entirely perverts the sense of the passage and context, as agreed by all competent authorities. The original Greek text, as indicated in the Emphatic Diaglott, shows that Jesus, "though being in God's Form [mode of existence, *i.e.*, as a Spirit being], yet did not meditate a usurpation to be like God ["counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped"—A.R.V., as Satan did—Isa. 14:13, 14], but divested ["emptied"—A.R.V.] Himself [of His pre-human nature, office and honor], taking a Bondman's [servant's] Form [without His former office and honor as the Logos, God's Active Agent in the Universes, His great Vicegerent, Michael the Archangel, *etc.*], having been made in the Likeness of Men [thus becoming of a lower nature, even human nature, that He might thus be a ransom, a corresponding-price, for Adam, who forfeited his life by disobedience]." Thus we see that the A.V., translated by trinitarians about 350 years ago, here teaches contrary to the real Word of God; and by saying that Jesus "thought it not robbery to be equal with God," it favors the trinitarian thought that Jesus was actually equal with God, in fact *of the very same substance*, and it ascribes to Jesus the very same sin committed by Satan in saying, "I will be like the Most High"!

Let us now notice how the R.S.V., by giving a better translation of Phil. 2:6-11, shows the prehuman existence of Jesus, His laying aside that glory and becoming a human being, His death on the cross, and His resultant reward and high exaltation above every name [even higher than the glory that He had with the Father before the world was], and how it thus knocks the props out from under the trinitarian claim that Jesus in His pre-human existence was equal with God, yea, even God Himself. It reads: "Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality

with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Thus the R.S.V. does not deny Jesus' divinity or deity, though in the above text (and that in harmony with the original Greek) it eliminates the unscriptural thought that He was Divine in His pre-human and earthly existence. No wonder the trinitarians prefer instead the incorrect, trinity-favoring A.V. of Phil. 2:6!

Another trinity-favoring A.V. rendering is found in 1 John 3:16: "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us. ..." Trinitarians lay hold on this as a proof that God and Jesus are one and the same person, thus endorsing the papal claim that it was God who died on the cross. In effect they agree that it is quite all right to speak of Mary as "the mother of God"! It seems so hard for some to get away entirely from such absurdities and mysticism! The R.S.V. is faulted for deleting the words "*of God*" from this text. But they are not a part of God's Word. They were *added* in the A.V., as indicated by the *italics*. Most recent translations, including the Emphatic Diaglott, the E.R.V. and the A.R.V., omit them, though, of course, the trinitarian Roman Catholic Douay Bible inserts them, with no indication that they were added. The R.S.V. does well to omit these added words. How strange that some Protestants still hold to the papal teaching that Jesus and God are the same person, and even hate the light that exposes their darkness!

The last straw that breaks the trinitarian camel's back and thus exposes this heathen-invented, Catholic promoted, God-dishonoring, erroneous mysticism of the Dark Ages, is the R.S.V.'s omission of the spurious portion of 1 John 5:7, 8. In the A.V. only the first seven words of v. 7 and only the last 14 of v. 8 are a part of God's Word, and all of v. 7 after these first seven words together with the first nine words of v. 8 were added, or interpolated, centuries after John's Epistle had been written. This is universally recognized and admitted by Bible scholars who study original Greek manuscripts, in none of which does this interpolation appear prior to the fourteenth century, though it was inserted earlier into some Vulgate manuscripts. Trinitarians admit that there is no Scripture that clearly states their doctrine, for it entirely lacks genuine Scripture support. The sense of the need of some Scripture to support their theory doubtless led to inserting interpolations into 1 John 5:7, 8. Trinitarians naturally fight against this information getting too much into the hands of the public, hence they strongly oppose the R.S.V., so widely advertised and distributed. It is doing their Dark-Age trinitarian ideas much more harm than other less widely distributed translations that similarly reject this spurious trinitarian interpolation. However, in their many criticisms brought against the R.S.V., its rejection of this spurious trinitarian interpolation is passed by in silence, for to complain against this would be to expose the errors of the trinitarian critics themselves!

There are many other points we would like to discuss, but space will not permit. Above we have endeavored to note a few of the imperfections and a few of the virtues of the R.S.V. It makes some serious blunders, and it exposes some of the serious blunders of the A.V. and other versions. It is probably the best translation in *modern* English to be found anywhere. It makes clear the

real meanings of hundreds of words that in the A.V.'s Old English style are not easily understood. But with the Modernistic tendencies that are manifest in some of its translations, together with other outstanding defects, it should never be allowed to supplant the A.V., but should with various other translations, be considered as a valuable contribution to a fuller understanding of God's Word, and should therefore be used mostly for comparative study, but not as an unquestionable authority on correct translation.