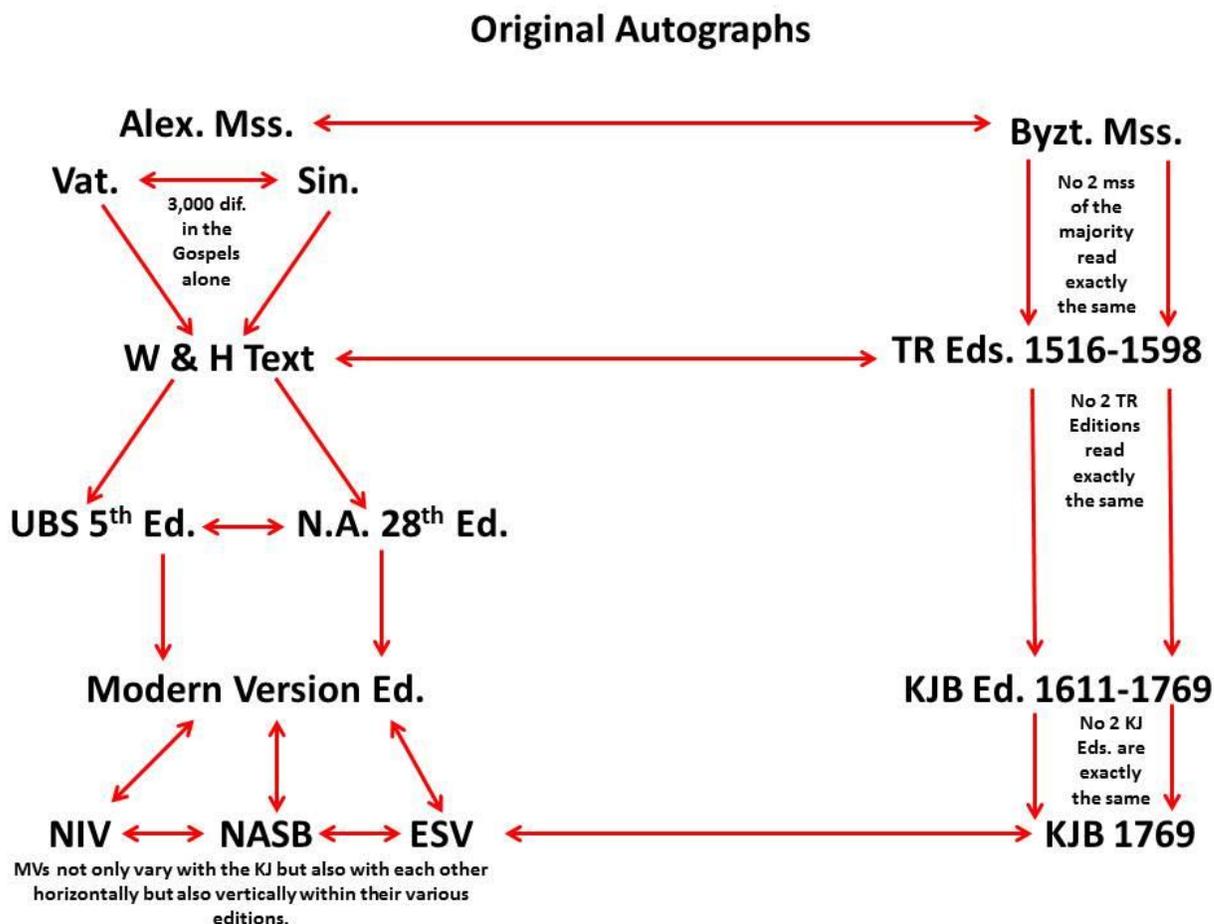


Sunday, September 18, 2016—Grace Life School of Theology—*From This Generation For Ever*  
Lesson 29 Introduction to Preservation, Part 2

### Introduction/Review

- Last week we resumed class by reviewing some key points from Term 1 (Lessons 1-27) regarding inspiration and preservation.
- The bulk of our time in Lesson 28 was spent on “Taking Stock of the Facts” as they pertain to the textual debate and the doctrine of preservation. In order to accomplish this task, I provided you with some written statements as I drew the following diagram on the board:



- After presenting the diagram we read the following summary statement from the pen of Kevin T. Bauder:
  - “If the preservation of the Word of God depends upon exact preservation of the words of the original documents, then the situation is dire. No two manuscripts contain exactly the same words. No two editions of the Masoretic Text contain exactly the same words. No two editions of the Textus Receptus contain exactly the same words. No two

modifications of the King James Version contain exactly the same words and the Bible nowhere tells us which edition, if any, does contain the exact words of the originals. These are not speculations, these are plain facts.” (Bauder, 155)

- From this we concluded that demanding “exact sameness” or “identical wording” as your standard of preservation reaches beyond the historical and textual facts and is ultimately unhelpful and detrimental to one’s position. Yet, this is exactly what many King James advocates argue for when they hold to “plenary preservation” or “identical preservation.” Opponents of the King James are more than happy to allow King James advocates to adopt this standard as their burden of proof because they know that the “verbatim” or “identical” preservation cannot be sustained in the light of the facts.
  - God promised to persevere His word.
    - Psalms 12:6-7; 105:5; 119:89, 111, 152, 160; Isaiah 30:8; Matthew 24:35; I Peter 1:23-25
  - God did not see fit to preserve His word by preserving the originals.
    - This is self-evident because the originals no longer exist.
  - God did not supernaturally over-take the pen of every scribe, copyist, or typesetter who ever handled the text to ensure that no differences of any kind entered the text.
    - Differences exist at every level of this discussion.
  - If the standard for preservation is “plenary” or “pristine” identity, why did God not just preserve the originals and thereby remove all doubt.
- So how do we make sense of all of this? One could adopt a completely humanistic or naturalistic approach and try to reason through the conundrum on the basis of human viewpoint alone. Or, one can look to God’s word for guidance and insight into how to think about the problem, just as we did in our investigation of inspiration. I believe that we should allow the Holy Spirit to instruct us how to think about the issue. When in doubt, the viewpoint of faith is always best.
  - Drs. Westcott & Hort maintained that the Bible should be treated like any other book on account of their low view of inspiration. They maintained that corruption could have entered the text at the hands of the original writers and thereby refused to ascribe “absolute infallibility” even to the original autographs. (See Lesson 28 for supporting quotations.)
- Today, I want to finish my point regarding the book of Jeremiah and its importance in terms of framing the discussion.

### Using the Book of Jeremiah to Frame the Discussion

- Practically speaking, we need to not put more emphasis on something than God does. Please consider the following questions about Mary as an example.
  - Was Mary the mother of Jesus?
  - Was Mary a virgin?
  - Was Mary a perpetual virgin?
  - Was Mary the mother of God?
- Only two of these statements are true. What happens when someone embraces all four and thereby places more emphasis on Mary than God does? They wind up with a statue (idol) in their front yard.
- Likewise, we need to not ascribe more importance to the original autographs than God does. Nor should we demand more from the doctrine of preservation than God does in His word. I want to use the book of Jeremiah to illustrate both of these points.
- Jeremiah 36:1-4—Baruch writes from the mouth of Jeremiah the original manuscript of Jeremiah 1-36 (Original #1).
  - Jeremiah 36:20-24—Jehoiakim and Jehudi destroy the original manuscript of Jeremiah. Note that the text explicitly states in verse 24 that “they were not afraid.” Don’t they know that they just destroyed an original autograph?
- Jeremiah 36:27-32—God re-inspires Jeremiah in chapters 1 through 36 and adds “many like words” to what was destroyed in the fire by Jehoiakim (Original #2).
  - Jeremiah 45:1—these additional words comprise chapters 45 through 52 at a minimum and possibly chapters 37 through 41 as well.
- Jeremiah 51:61-63—Jeremiah writing at the bidding of God the Holy Spirit tells Seraiah to destroy Original #2 by tying a stone to it and throwing it into the Euphrates River after it is read in Babylon. God almighty orders the destruction of Original #2. Why would God do this? Didn’t God know that a bunch of Fundamentalists in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century would be looking for the originals?
- Daniel 9:2—over 70 years later Daniel comes to understand, by reading the book of Jeremiah, that the captivity was supposed to last 70 years. How is that possible if Original #2 was destroyed? Copies were made prior to the captivity. Once the copies were made, God did not care what happened to the original. The original contents of Original #2 were preserved via the copying process. Daniel had access to the inspired word of God through the copy he had in front of him.
- Matthew 2:17-18—contains a quotation from Jeremiah 31:15. First, how did Matthew have access to what Jeremiah said over 470 years (70 year captivity + 400 years of silence) later if God

had not preserved His word. So God secured the contents of the book of Jeremiah despite directing Jeremiah to have Original #2 thrown in the Euphrates River.

- This seems to suggest that modern attempts to search for, find, and/or reconstruct the originals are out of step with how the Bible would teach you to think about things.
  - *Searching for the Original Bible* by James Price
  - *The Quest for the Original New Testament* by Comfort
- Second, notice that Jeremiah 31:15 and Matthew 2:18 do not possess identical or verbatim wording i.e., they are not exactly the same even within the KJB.

<b>Jeremiah 31:15</b>	<b>Matthew 2:18</b>
Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, <i>and</i> bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they <i>were</i> not.	In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping <i>for</i> her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.
A voice was heard in Ramah,	In Rama was there a voice heard,
lamentation, <i>and</i> bitter weeping;	lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning,
Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children,	Rachel weeping <i>for</i> her children, and would not be comforted,
because they <i>were</i> not.	because they are not.

- These facts demonstrate that demanding “exact sameness” as the standard for preservation is excessive and reaches beyond how the Bible would teach you to think about the matter. Necessitating “plenary verbal preservation” or “identical preservation” demands that the words be preserved exactly as they were given under inspiration without any wording differences of any kind.
- While these two verses (Jeremiah 31:15 and Matthew 2:18) do not exhibit identical wording, they are “substantively equivalent” with each other i.e., they possess a “doctrinal equivalence.” They say/teach/communicate the exact same doctrinal content without using the exact same individual words. Put a different way, they constitute a different way of saying the same thing NOT a substantive difference in meaning.
- Psalms 12:6-7—what the doctrine of preservation assures is exactly what verse 6 states, namely the preservation of a **Pure Text i.e., a text that does not report information about God, His nature or character, His doctrine, His dispensational dealings with mankind, history, archeology, or science that is FALSE. In short, God’s promise to preserve His word assures the existence of a text that has not been altered in its “fundamental character” despite not being preserved in a state of “exact sameness.”**

- This understanding of preservation is in line with the definition of the word provided by Noah Webster in his *American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828).
  - **“The act of preserving or keeping safe; the act of keeping from injury, destruction or decay; as the preservation of life or health; the preservation of buildings from fire or decay; the preservation of grain from insects; the preservation of fruit or plants. When a thing is kept entirely from decay, or nearly in its original state, we say it is in a high state of preservation.”**
- Once again, I believe that the key to untying this knot resides in recognizing the difference between: 1) a different way of saying the same thing, and 2) a substantive difference in meaning.
- I believe that God preserved His word for the same reason I believe that God inspired it. Preservation is the Bible’s claim for itself. **The doctrine of preservation impacts how one ought to look at the textual and translational issues and ensures that we have more than just a shell of the “original Bible” as the Originals Only position maintains.**
- In the coming weeks, we will begin to further elaborate on these matters.

#### Works Cited

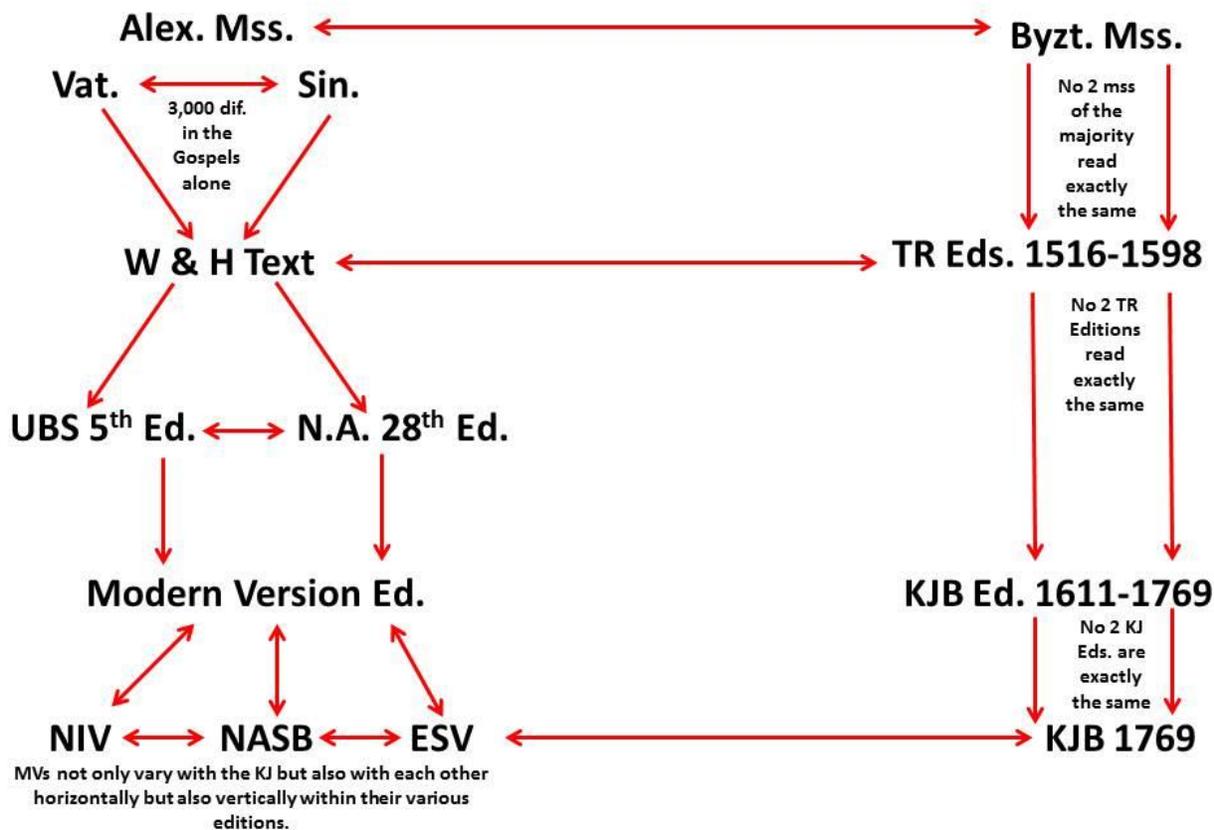
Bauder, Kevin T. “An Appeal to Scripture” in *One Bible Only? Examining the Exclusive Claims for the King James Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2001.

## Appendix A

### *Taking Stock of the Facts: Exact Sameness Chart and Explanation*

This appendix seeks to combine the written description provided in Lesson 28 with representative chart produced and presented in Lesson 29. In short, the written description and the chart are designed to work in concert with each other.

### Original Autographs



- Fact 1—the original autographs are not extant i.e., they no longer exist.
- Fact 2—no two Greek manuscripts are exactly the same.
  - Alexandrian manuscripts ⌘ (Codex Sinaiticus) and B (Codex Vaticanus), the two so-called oldest and best, differ with each other in over 3,000 places in the gospels alone.
  - The manuscripts comprising the Alexandrian Text Type differ from those comprising the Byzantine Text Type.
  - No two Byzantine manuscripts read exactly the same.

- Fact 3—no two printed editions of the Greek New Testament are exactly the same.
  - Editions of the TR are not exactly the same.
  - The TR differs from the Critical Text
  - Critical Text editions are not exactly the same.
    - United Bible Society 5<sup>th</sup> Edition
    - Nestle-Aland 28<sup>th</sup> Edition
- Fact 4—no two editions of the King James Bible are exactly the same.
- Fact 5—the King James differs from modern versions.
- Fact 6—no two modern versions read exactly the same.
- Summary Statement:
  - “If the preservation of the Word of God depends upon exact preservation of the words of the original documents, then the situation is dire. No two manuscripts contain exactly the same words. No two editions of the Masoretic Text contain exactly the same words. No two editions of the Textus Receptus contain exactly the same words. No two modifications of the King James Version contain exactly the same words and the Bible nowhere tells us which edition, if any, does contain the exact words of the originals. These are not speculations, these are plain facts.” (Bauder, 155)