AN INFALLIBLY PERFECT TRANSLATION?

AGES-ETERNAL-ETERNITY-EVERLASTING-EVER-FOREVER-EVERMORE

This author (myself) sees a real problem with most of these seven words or /phrases in the English language. It seems quite apparent at least in the English language, that most English speaking people unconsciously equate the above words/phrases with the preconceived false definition to only mean absolute total endlessness, except perhaps 'ages' (or ages and ages!). The English language of today has fairly well permanently convinced most Bible students that the above 7 or so phrases or words can *only mean* permanently/without end. Therefore the early English versions naturally seem to teach endless punishment for the wicked, and who is brave enough to question the early translators?

The problem with making all of these English word translations from the original Greek (or the original Aramaic Peshitta) to all of them meaning absolute endlessness is in serious error. They do not all mean the same thing and are not all equal to each other in English meaning/equivalence. The early Greek (and Aramaic) manuscripts prove that. Also it is well to point out that the original Aramaic is even clearer to that end. It is an indisputable truth that our Lord Jesus never used the term 'endless' (in His original language/ tongue) to signify the duration of punishment for the wicked in the coming final judgment, the Lake of Fire (nor in Hell at that). "Long term" yes, "indefinite duration" yes, "ages and ages," yes, but not permanently/endless punishment in Hell or the Lake of Fire! Notice the following verse in Matthew. 25:45

MATTHEW 25:46

And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

Going to Strongs exhaustive concordance, the reference to eternal is as pertaining to the underlying Greek, '166 (aionios) defined by Strong as "...world, perpetual, Messianic period present or future, age, course, eternal, (for) ever, everlasting, world (began) without end etc. These two English words 'eternal and everlasting' in this verse no doubt are commonly defined as permanent, no end, forever and ever endless by most English speaking people. This author (myself) never had one ounce of idea that the Greek 'Aionios' in this verse meant anything other than endless, permanent absolutely time without end. I do believe that most English speaking people have the same take on the underlying Greek behind eternal/everlasting, as well as the dozens of times in the New Testament it is translated differently (coupled with different English words). The very important point to remember is that the adjective eternal/everlasting underlying the English is the Greek 'Aion' (again see Strong's) which is a time word with a beginning and an ending. I.e. 'Literally 'day and night.' The simple fact is that in itself, it cannot literally mean 'permanent/forever, never ending, <u>unless</u> it is modified to mean such as "...our aionios God."

Simply said to say differently is to add to the divinely inspired text. Yes, there is punishment in both places, (Hell and the Lake of Fire) but such punishment which is not remedial but rather retribution. Yes retribution or 'payback' for wickedness, but remember that such payback can

also be remedial in its end effects. It must be remembered 2 Thess. 1:9 is not referring to Hell or the Lake of Fire but to our Lord's return at the rapture, and His raining fiery judgment down on the wicked lost during the terrible period called 'the great day of His wrath.' (The Lake of fire and the final White Throne judgment is reserved for the unsaved according to their "temporal works." Revelation 20 is very clear that the wicked unsaved dead are resurrected to be judged 'according to their works.') The damnationists sometimes without proof refer to 2 Thess. 1:9 as a proof text that this coming judgment is not temporary but final. Also that its real purpose is not remedial, or meant to be corrective in its end results. The fact is that this verse is not the final judgment. The final judgment is fully retributive or a means to bring full recovery to the lost forcing them to admit to the truth. At the final judgment the scripture is clear, "...Every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord/God..." The judgment taking place in 2 Thess. take place immediately after the rapture (at the sixth seal) and are fully retributive (payback) but not remedial. The final judgment at the Lake of Fire (Philippians 2:10-11) is remedial and eternally permanent in its effect! What else can the wicked do but (gladly) bow their knee in humble submission, (having just experienced such terrible punishment in the Lake of Fire) and give Jesus the ultimate praise!

This final total (unconditional punishment) surrender by the unsaved at the White Throne Judgment, no doubt happily and gladly precipitates their new birth into the family of God. Romans 10:9-10-13. Eternal Damnationists on the other hand attempt to rewrite God's Word and make Jesus the author of eternal death, which He is not. He is plainly the author of eternal life and the scripture is clear that the last enemy our Lord Jesus destroys is DEATH. NO MORE DEATH... PERIOD... FOR ANYONE! 1 Cor. 15:26-27. Our Lord is not going to be burning the lost with fire and brimstone for eternity! To say the unsaved do choose that fate is a vicious lie and a horrible slanderous accusation against a Savior who loves all men and who would have ALL men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim. 2:4). The damnationists as well reject

Revelation 21:4

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes and there shall be <u>no more death</u>, neither sorrow, neither crying, nor pain anymore, for the former thing are passed away."

Again remember the 'former things' were mentioned which were the old heaven and earth in which included the terrible Lake of Fire and the experiences of pain and death.

The word 'retribution' comes from the Latin word 'retribution' which means "Giving back what is due" whether that is reward or punishment. In English it means 'Vengeance or Punishment' for evil deeds done. For those who depend on Augustus Strong for correct translating, it must be remembered that he in his exhaustive concordance, held that the primary focus for his work, was to reveal the English words which were used by the King James translators in their translation of the Greek etc. Of course that approach was no guarantee that the English words used by them (the translators) to represent the underlying Greek would properly and exactly represent the words in the original tongue(s). The curse of Ruckmanism (and King James only isms) rears its ugly head and attempts to give the A.V. 1611 version standing as an infallibly correct translation for us today.(?). No...stop here... yes a wonderful and beautiful translation, but infallibly perfect as a translation (?) which not even the King James translators claimed such. The one thing we can be sure of is that the A.V. 1611(when rightly divided) can perfectly gives us 100 % clarity on every Bible doctrine we can study from it

AGE OR AGES

John 17:3, "And this is (Aion) eternal life that they may know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom You have sent,"

In this phrase "eternal (*Aion*) life" it is plain to see the adjective Aion modified as by 'to know' indicating life eternal' being 'in Christ' thus in knowing Jesus is endlessness aions. John 17:3.

We will start with the word 'age' which comes from the Greek word 'aion.' In this verse and many others in the English translation the word 'eternal' here, is from the Greek 'aion' which is a time word, of indefinite or long term duration but which in itself does not mean 'endless.' John 3:16 uses the Greek 'aion' or 'aionios' (translated as eternal) to indicate indefinite long term duration, which when coupled with the salvation in Christ forces it to carry the idea of 'endlessness' in regards to the salvation we have in Jesus. The word must be modified to carry the meaning of endlessness! That is the same throughout the rest of the New Testament wherever it is used as 'forever,' or 'everlasting,' This word must be modified to carry the meaning of endlessness! It's no wonder damnationism has so many followers.

We say again that 'Aion', in the original language is an age, or era (plainly an 'age or time word' not endless or eternity) which signifies a period of indefinite duration, or <u>time</u> viewed in relation to what takes place in that period. It certainly cannot have as foremost meaning 'endless.' So 'Aion' is well established as a 'time word' and not an indication of endlessness! (Again, unless it is plainly modified by a word referring directly to God/Christ etc., or that which plainly is eternal in itself such as our salvation in our Lord.)

This force attaching to the words is not so much that of the actual length of a period, but to that period marked by spiritual or moral characteristics. (Much of this is from Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words.) Also it must be noted that this phrase in the original must be consistently used with its sense of 'indefinite duration.'

REVELATION 20:10 AND FOREVER AND EVER

Where the beast and the false prophet are and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever...

The damnationists love to use this verse also to teach endless damnation in hell fire and brimstone for all of eternity but the original language does not bow in that direction. Yes, no doubt long term, indefinite duration punishment according to their temporal works in the Lake of Fire, but not endless. We find in Vine's expository of New Testament words that he shows the same underlying Greek uses the terms, '...unto the ages of the ages, ...forever and ever...or unto many ages...' The damnationists thus attempt to manufacture a new doctrine of God/Christ meeting out endless punishment for finite sins! Vine shows a few verses along this line, such as Rev. 14:11, Hebrews 1:8, 2 Peter3:18, Heb. 13:8 etc. (and many others.) These verses were not locked into the damnationists false doctrine of endless punishment. Please see Vines for many more Biblical examples Again, the 'time word' aion must be modified to carry the meaning of endlessness! That is indisputable. So to 'know' in this case Jesus, one has endless life or endless aions or eternities of life!

One very important point most damnationists ignorantly overlook, is the "time" element in this verse, verse 10! Plainly it states "...day and night..." thus the verse points out that the time element in the duration of punishment for the wicked will be "day and night" clearly 'on and on, and on and on' for definite "Time" periods of 24 hours each..." going on and on days and nights of limited duration in punishment. No reference of 'aidios' or endless eternal punishment.

Vine well points out that the two Greek terms, 'aidios' and 'aionios' are two entirely different words and need to be understood as following. He says "Aionios should always be translated as 'eternal' and Aidios as everlasting. He further points out that 'aionios' negatives the end of either a time or space, or of unmeasured time and is used chiefly where something future is spoken of (one day coming to pass), whereas aidios excludes interruption and lays stress upon permanence and unchangeableness.' Again, our Lord Jesus never used the description of Hell or the Lake of fire as a place of endless punishment for the lost that go there. For Jesus to reward endless punishment for finite sins would make Him a wicked, vengeful, sadistic God!

Then, lastly there is always the perplexing question of the final fate of the beast, false prophet, and the fallen angels. In the light of the Biblical doctrine of final restoration of all things pertaining to the fall of man. (That all will eventually come to salvation in Christ); It is this author's belief that since our Lord did not die for the fallen angels, that they therefore fall outside the realm of possible salvation. That of course means that just as easily the Lord spoke them into existence at their creation (by Him) that He as well can and no doubt will speak them out of existence in that final day of judgment, when every knee (of mankind not fallen angels) shall bow and every tongue confess unto salvation that Jesus is Lord. In that final day, all things will be made or restored to new for endless eternity.

Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary published an article by a Bill Combs which was called,

THE EMBARRASSING PREFACE TO THE KING JAMES VERSION

Posted by Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary. Mr. Bill Combs. When the King James Version of the Bible came off the press of Robert Barker in 1611, it contained an eleven-page preface titled "The Translators to the Reader." This preface is primarily a defense of the new translation, but it also provides important information about the translators' views on the subject of Bible translation. It is an embarrassment (or should be) to King James-only advocates because it contains statements from the translators that are in direct opposition to the KJV-only

position. It is most unfortunate that this preface is no longer included in modern copies of the KJV. This post is the beginning of a series that will examine the actual words of the preface in order to refute the erroneous ideas of KJV-only movement with the words of the translators themselves. But before beginning that examination, I will summarize the contents of the preface.

The preface begins by noting, along with examples, that all new endeavors of whatever kind will commonly face opposition. This is also true for persons who attempt to change and improve anything, even if they are important people like kings. However, the greatest opposition and severest vilification is reserved for those who modify or change the current translation of the Bible, even if that translation is known to have defects.

Next there follows a long section praising Scripture, noting its great value and divine origin. But the perfections of Scripture can never be appreciated unless it is understood, and it cannot be understood until it is translated into the common tongue. Translation is therefore a good thing. Thus, God in his providence raised up individuals to translate the Old Testament into Greek. The Septuagint, though far from perfect, was still sufficient as the Word of God, such that the apostles quoted it in the NT. And even thought the Septuagint was the Word of God, scholars believed it could be improved, which led to the Greek versions of Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus, as well as the Hexapla of Origen. Both testaments were then translated into Latin, culminating in Jerome's Vulgate. Finally, the Scriptures were translated into many tongues, including English. However, the preface observes, the Roman Catholic Church has generally not allowed the Scriptures to be rendered into the common tongues. Recently, they have produced their own translation of the Bible into English though they seem to have been forced to do it against their better judgment due to the number of Protestant English Bibles available.

The preface then returns to the problem of opposition to the new translation, and translations in general, by answering several objections. The main argument against the new translation questions the need for it, that is, since there had already been a number of English translations of the Bible, why is there need for another? If previous translations were good, there should be no need for another; if they were defective, why were they ever offered in the first place? The answer is, of course, that "nothing is begun and perfected at the same time." While the efforts of previous English translators are to be commended, nevertheless, they themselves, if they were alive, would thank the translators of this new translation. The previous English Bibles were basically sound, but this new translation affords an opportunity to make improvements and corrections.

The translators argue that all previous English translations can rightly be called the Word of God, even though they may contain some "imperfections and blemishes." Just as the King's speech which he utters in Parliament is still the King's speech, though it may be imperfectly translated into French, Dutch, Italian, and Latin; so also in the case of the translation of the Word of God. For translations will never be infallible since they are not like the original manuscripts, which were produced by the apostles and their associates under the influence of inspiration. However, even an imperfect translation like the Septuagint can surely be called the Word of God since it was approved and used by the apostles themselves. But since all translations are imperfect, the Church of Rome should not object to the continual process of correcting and improving English translations of the Bible. Even their own Vulgate has gone through many revisions since the day of Jerome. Combs continues...

Finally, the translators state the purpose and plan of the present translation. They have not intended to make a new translation, but to make the best possible translation by improving upon previous ones. To do so they have, of course, carefully examined the original Hebrew and Greek since translation should only be done from the original tongues. Also, they did not work hastily, as did the translators of the Septuagint, who, according to legend, finished their work in only seventy-two days. The translators also availed themselves of commentaries and translations of the Scriptures in other languages. In their work they felt it was essential to include marginal notes, despite the fact that some might feel such notes tend to undermine the authority of the Scriptures. These notes are essential since the translators confess that oftentimes they were unsure how a word or phrase should be translated. This is especially true in Hebrew, where there are a number of words which only occur once in Scripture, and even the Jews themselves are uncertain about their translation. And so, as Augustine notes, a "variety of translations is profitable for finding out of the sense of the Scriptures." Lastly, the translators observe that, in spite of criticism from some quarters, they decided not to always translate the same Hebrew or Greek word with the same English word and have retained, over the objections of the Puritans, the old ecclesiastical words like "baptism" instead of "washings." Mr. Combs continues:

In my first post on this subject, I argued that the KJV-only position believes that only the KJV of the Bible is the Word of God, and I suggested that the somewhat official beginning of this movement should be traced to the publication of the 1881 revision of the KJV, the Revised Version (RV).

In my second post, I argued that Dean Burgon might rightly be considered the father of the KJVonly movement. He contended in his book The Revision Revised that the RV must be rejected because in its use of the eclectic Greek NT of Westcott and Hort, the RV had departed from the Traditional Text of the church, the Textus Receptus (TR). According to Burgon's understanding of the doctrine of preservation, the TR must be closer to the original writings than the "grossly depraved" Greek text behind the RV.

In my third post, I remarked that the reason I tie Dean Burgon so closely to the KJV-only movement is that not only did he reject the eclectic text for the TR, like modern KJV-only advocates, but he strenuously objected to the very idea of revising the English words of the KJV, which were to him almost sacrosanct.

In my last post I continued to note that it was not primarily the appearance of new eclectic or critical texts of the NT that motivates KJV-only proponents. Instead, it is the publication of new English versions based on those Greek New Testaments, rather than the TR, that accounts for the continued existence and growth of the KJV-only movement. And as I pointed out, the arguments of Dean Burgon were retransmitted by individuals like Philip Mauro in his 1924 volume, Which Version? Authorized or Revised? But since the RV never really challenged the KJV for dominance, there was not much to which KJV-only advocates had to object in the early decades of the 20th century. This began to change with the publication of the Revised Standard Version (RSV) in 1946, which was itself a revision of the RV, though more particularly of the the American Standard Version (ASV), the American edition of the RV.

The RSV presented a new challenge to the dominance of the KJV. Moody Bible Institute's magazine Moody Monthly praised the RSV NT in 1946. Even the well-known fundamentalist leader John R. Rice initially promoted the RSV in his widely-read paper, Sword of the Lord. From then on a stream of KJV-only literature began to appear: Jasper James Ray, God Wrote

Only One Bible (1955); Edward F. Hills, The King James Version Defended (1956); David Otis Fuller, Which Bible? (1970); Peter S. Ruckman, The Christian's Handbook of Manuscript Evidence (1970); etc. Though the RSV was popular in mainline churches, it was not widely accepted in evangelicalism, and not at all in fundamentalism.

The KJV-only movement really exploded in the 1970s and 80s. Again, it was the appearance of new English Bibles threatening the privileged position of the KJV that explains the growth of the movement. It began with the publication of the solidly conservative New American Standard Bible (NASB) in 1963 (OT, 1971), which was a revision of the ASV. More influential was the New King James Version (NKJV) in 1979 (OT, 1982). While the NASB used the eclectic Greek NT, the NKJV is based on the TR, the same Greek text as the KJV. But no matter, KJVonly proponents criticize the NKJV just as venomously as they do the NASB. Why? Because the NKJV, though translated from the same Hebrew and Greek texts as the KJV, nevertheless, departs from the sacrosanct words of the KJV But dwarfing the impact of those versions was the 1973 publication of the New International Version (OT, 1978). While there have been many English versions of the Bible published since 1611, no English translation ever came close to challenging the dominance of the KJV-until the New International Version (NIV). In 1986 the NIV did what no other version had been able to do in almost 400 years-outsell the KJV. The NIV now accounts for 40% of English Bibles sold. Though not quite as popular, even newer translations like the English Standard Version and the Holman Christian Standard Bible are also selling well, providing further fuel for KJV-only advocates.

Twenty years ago I thought that the KJV-only movement would begin to die out as these new English versions started to take hold among conservative Christians, and more churches made the switch from the KJV. But now I think I was wrong, or at least much too early in my prediction. The KJV still sells very well (second behind the NIV), and KJV-only advocates seem just as vocal and numerous as ever. Googling "KJV-only" produces more than 10 million hits. It appears they will always be with us—or least for a very long time.

THE KJV-ONLY MOVEMENT COMES TO AMERICA

Further Posted By Bill Combs...

In previous posts (here, here, and here), I have argued that the beginning of the KJVonly movement can be traced to the publication of the 1881 revision of the KJV, the *Revised Version* (RV), and the opposition to it by Dean Burgon, which was set forth in his 1883 volume, *The Revision Revised*.

Even with the criticism of Burgon and others, the RV was initially well received in England and America. Two Chicago papers, the *Tribune* and *Times*, published the entire NT on May 22, 1881. Three million copies of the RV were sold the first year. But as time went on, it became clear that it would not displace the favored place of the KJV in the hearts of most English-speaking people. As Charles Spurgeon perceptively observed, the RV was "strong in Greek, weak in English."

Though the RV was initiated by the Church of England, a group of 34 American scholars assisted in the project. They disagreed with some of the translation decisions, and these were placed in an appendix to the RV. In 1901 the Americans produced their

own edition of the RV incorporating the American preferences, which eventually became known as the *American Standard Version* (ASV).

The KJV-only movement in America is unfortunately associated with fundamentalism, though early fundamentalism was clearly not KJV-only. The name *fundamentalism* was not coined until 1920 by Curtis Lee Laws, but the founding documents of the movement can be traced to a series of 12 volumes produced between 1910 and 1915 titled *The Fundamentals:* A *Testimony To The Truth*. The 90 essays quote from the KJV but also from the RV (or its American edition). The essay on "The Inspiration of the Bible" by James M. Gray affirms: "Let it be stated further in this definitional connection, that *the record for whose inspiration we contend is the original record*—the autographs or parchments of Moses, David, Daniel, Matthew, Paul or Peter, as the case may be, and not any particular translation or translations of them whatever.

Mauro correctly observes that by 1924 it had become clear that neither the RV nor the American edition, the ASV, were going to offer any real competition to the popularity of the KJV. So although Mauro's book demonstrates the presence of KJV-only sympathies in the USA in the early part of the 20th century, the dominance of the KJV meant there was not much for the KJV-only advocates to be concerned about. As we will see in a future post, it is the appearance of new English versions of the Bible that provided new energy for the KJV-only movement.

There is absolutely no translation without error, nor could there be" One of the contributors to the *Fundamentals* was a converted lawyer named Philip Mauro. He wrote three essays, one of which is titled *Life in the Word* (vol. 5). Like other contributors, Mauro occasionally quotes the RV approvingly. However, by 1924 Mauro had a dramatic shift in his thinking as seen in the publication of his book *Which Version? Authorized or Revised?* The material in Mauro's book is not particularly original, but simply a rehashing of Dean Burgon's arguments. Whereas Mauro previously quoted the RV approvingly, now he strongly condemns it for making "36,000 changes" in the KJV and asks the question, "On what authority" (p. 5). Here we see the common assumption of all KJV-only proponents: the KJV possesses some sacrosanct authority whose text is immutable.

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Last Serious Question For The Eternal Damnationists Who Say God Is Going To Burn Lost Souls In Hellfire/Lake of Fire For Eternity

Say our Lord Jesus were hired by you to be warden over Rikers Island (saying that He ;was still here in bodily form)...the penitentiary for the worst of the worst, the death row cell block. I ask you just what do you as an eternal damnationist say would be the living conditions there in as allowed by Jesus under His watch? Hmmmm?

*No or little food and water for days and days at a time??

*Unmerciful whippings and beatings for hours and weeks upon weeks??

*Cell temperatures in to the hundreds of degrees constantly??

*Deprivation of sleep and medical treatment??

*Coals of fire spread over prisoners floors him barefoot with fiery liquid brimstone splashed on him at times??

*Never visitation by loved ones but only surrounded by his kind day and night?? Endless suffering??

The Damnationists paint that kind of Jesus over Hell and the Lake of fire for eternity, what a blasphemous insult to our Lord Jesus Christ who in love lay down His life a ransom for all!

BTW high time for the eternal endless damnationists need to wake up and realize ..."Eternity cannot be 'Spent."

Simple to understand...that eternity is only a mental concept of time without end. Something that has no ending in itself cannot be spent! To 'spend' something is to totally end its existence such as' spending 50 dollars, or spending a night or a year say on an island...Thus a factual contradiction of terms in the English language where the term 'spend' cancels/contradicts the term eternity! Thus to warn someone they might 'spend' eternity in Hell or the Lake of Fire, is a contradictory lie to say the least! It's always best to speak the truth! This truth irrefutably proves no one can "spend eternity in Hell/Lake of fire!

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness but is longsuffering to us ward, *not willing that ANY should perish* but that ALL should come to repentance...2 Peter 3:9.

Here the damnationists contradict God's word saying that God "…IS WILLING THAT BILLIONS PERISH AND BURN IN THE LAKE OF FIRE FOR ETERNITY…"

BLIND LEADERS OF THE BLIND

I ask the damnationists a very simple question. "Can anyone force Jesus as God to do that which he plainly is not willing to do? No doubt a theological impossibility, but the eternal

damnationist arrogantly violates sacred scripture and ignores 2 Peter 3:9 and other verses thus ignorantly painting Jehovah as a God of lies."

We who know the truth, need to break fellowship with, and demand that all Calvinists/ be put out of our churches pulpits and classrooms, unless they repent

BLATANT CALVINIST LIES COURTESY JOHN CALVIN AND AUGUSTINE

AS FOLLOWS

Not all men can be recipients of salvation since God/Christ did not choosing them to believe and be saved.

- 1. God/Christ did not intend for all men to be saved.
- 2. God did not want all men to be saved.
- 3. Our Lord Jesus did not shed His blood that all could be saved.
- 4. The Holy Spirit does not draw all men to be saved.
- 5. Men go to hell for eternity because God did not choose to make them believe unto salvation.
- 6. Non elect lost souls cannot be saved or come to Christ for the new birth.
- 7. Lost souls in Hell/Lake of Fire (for eternity) are forced to go there because they were not elected by our Lord due to some supposed secret and unknown decree from the triune God head.

The damnationists plainly reject many many scriptures showing that God will succeed in the end to bring all men to repentance and the new birth into the family of God...

LASTLY…

1 Cor. 15:22 tells us that..."Even as in Adam *all* die, even so also in Christ shall *all* be made alive~" All means *to the exclusion of none*, and our Lord plainly said that in Himself all would be made alive (at the end after the Lake of fire every knee shall bow), and the Bible is clear on ALL that All would be brought to repentance, salvation and the new birth into the family of God. Truly Jesus gives the victory to the will and plan of God to save every man.!

THE END