

Scriptural Model for Dealing with Textual Variants

Plenary Verbal Inspiration—Bible’s assertion for itself (II Tim. 3:16; II Pet. 1:21).



Promise of Preservation—Bible’s claim for itself (Ps. 12:6-7; 119:111, 152, 160; Is. 30:8, 40:8; Matt. 4:4; 24:35; I Pet. 1:23-25).



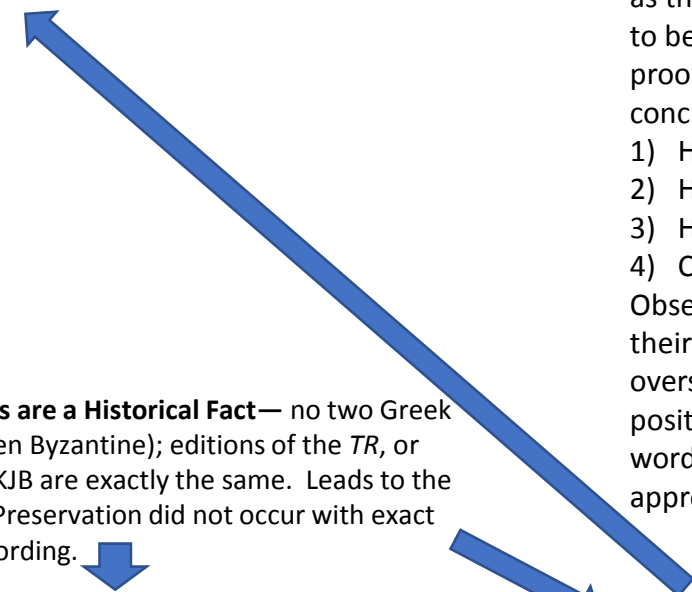
Preservation is the Corollary of Inspiration—it is reasonable to conclude that Preservation occurred with the same precision as Inspiration (i.e. Plenary Verbal), but many mistakenly assume that this requires verbatim identity. **This false assumption underlies the entire textual variant discussion and leads to unscriptural conclusions.**



Option 1: Originals Only Position—this position confines inspiration, infallibility, and inerrancy to the non-existent original autographs as means of dealing with the variant readings. Advocates argue that it is their job to reconstruct the Biblical text. Position is nonscientific and non-falsifiable, in the absence of the originals how does one know whether they have accurately reconstructed the text. Position is of no practical consequence and cannot be maintained by faith in God’s word.



Belief in the Scriptures leads one to maintain a belief in both Inspiration & Preservation



Variant Readings are a Historical Fact— no two Greek manuscripts (even Byzantine); editions of the TR, or printings of the KJB are exactly the same. Leads to the realization that Preservation did not occur with exact identity of wording.



Option 2: Faith for Faith’s Sake—pretends like the variant readings don’t exist and insists upon Plenary Verbal Preservation. Some incorrectly insist that God re-inspired his Word in English between 1604 and 1611 as a means of providing the verbatim identity of wording this view of Preservation demands. Has the correct starting point, is consistent with the fedeistic (believing) approach to Scripture; but carries the corollary between Preservation and Inspiration too far.



Result: A Biblically Amended Position on Preservation—drop verbatim identity as the standard for Preservation. If one allows the KJB to teach them about the *nature* of Preservation they will conclude that demanding verbatim identity as the standard for Preservation was overreaching to begin with. There are at least four Scriptural proofs found within the KJB that support this conclusion:

- 1) How the OT quotes OT
 - 2) How the NT quotes the OT
 - 3) How the NT quotes the NT
 - 4) Comparison between II Kings 19 & Isaiah 37
- Observing these realities allows one to maintain their belief in the Promise of Preservation without overstating the FACTS. This Biblically revised position can still be maintained by faith in God’s word without abandoning the fedeistic (believing) approach to Scripture.

Option 3: Biblically Amend One’s Position on Preservation—the FACTS need not overthrow one’s belief in the Promise of Preservation. Rather one should look back to the Scriptures which taught them to believe in Preservation in the first place to learn how to think about variant readings. When one does this they will conclude that the insistence upon the standard of “verbatim identity” was excessive and an overstatement of what the Scriptures teach about Preservation.