

Sunday, May 12, 2019— Grace Life School of Theology—*From This Generation For Ever*  
 Lesson 87 The Two Streams of Bibles Model of Transmission: Its Origins & Accuracy (Gothic Bible)

### Introduction

- In [Lesson 85](#) we studied Dr. Wilbur Pickering’s argument for one stream of transmission existing within the 95% Byzantine majority with “eddies” of aberrant/abnormal transmission existing along the banks of the main stream of transmission. These “eddies” are comprised of MSS that are not only cut off from the mainstream of transmission (N & B) in terms of their readings but they are also cut off from each other. The MSS swirling in the “eddies” of history are so dissimilar from each other in terms of their readings that it is impossible to utilize them in forming a single monolithic archetype to compete with the Byzantine majority. Therefore, the 95% agreement found in the MSS of the Byzantine stream is only mathematically possible if the autographs themselves formed the archetype for the main stream of transmission.
- At the end of Lesson 85, I presented my illustration of the Transmission Turnpike for the first time.
  - Based upon the historical and textual evidence we have considered, if one were to diagram the stream of transmission it would resemble a highway, Transmission Turnpike if you will, stretching from the 1<sup>st</sup> century to the 21<sup>st</sup> and beyond into the “ages to come” (Ephesians 2:7). Remaining squarely on the highway, and thereby safely traversing time and history, are the Greek MSS of the Byzantine majority as well as translations, patristic quotations, and lectionaries that are in substantive doctrinal agreement with each other despite not possessing *verbatim* wording. This mass of textual witnesses preserved and transmitted the *pure text* of scripture.
  - In addition, we should expect to find some textual witnesses driving with wheels on both the highway and the shoulder. These witnesses are best viewed as *mixed texts* in that they contain *pure* readings as well as corrupted ones to varying degrees. While they may have begun squarely on the highway, they have drifted to the shoulder over time. Therefore, we would expect to find MSS in this category traveling with varying degrees of recklessness i.e., differing amounts of purity and corruption.
  - Lastly, Bible Believers should expect to encounter “FORDs” or Found On Road Dead MSS littering the ditches of history. These MSS not only disagree with the readings of the majority but they also disagree with each other. These are the left for dead MSS of history that have no evidence of ever having been copied or used by the body of Christ. Their existence in the present is due to their intentional abandonment by the believing church in the past. It is these discarded vehicles (MSS) along the ditches of the Transmission Turnpike that have been revitalized by modern textual critics and foisted upon to the body of Christ as the original text of scripture.
- Since teaching Lesson 85 on Sunday, April 28, 2019 I have received feedback on the Transmission Turnpike illustration. In a future Lesson I will present the contents of this feedback in an attempt to fine tune the illustration.
- Like Pickering, I now see one main stream of preservation/transmission as having occurred during the dispensation of grace. Along the banks (in Pickering’s “eddies”) or in the ditches (FORDs along my Turnpike) are the remnants of Satan’s attempt to corrupt the word of God

during the church age. I have not, however, always seen/understood transmission to have occurred in this manner.

- Historically, the King James Only movement has maintained and propagated a very different view of transmission than the one advanced by Pickering. Likewise, I have not always held to a view of transmission like the one put forth in my Transmission Turnpike illustration. Recent studies have caused me to change my mind and search for a more accurate way of explaining how preservation/transmission occurred. I would like to take the next couple Lessons to explain how and why I changed my mind and how it relates to my Transmission Turnpike illustration.
- In order to accomplish this task, we must first understand the standard view of transmission that has dominated pro-King James argumentation since the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This Lesson is devoted to that purpose and will cover the following points:
  - The “Two Streams of Bibles” View of Transmission
  - Historical Origins of the “Two Streams of Bibles” Paradigm
  - Private Questioning of the “Two Streams of Bibles” Paradigm

### **The “Two Streams of Bibles” View of Transmission**

- In the past, as recently as the Summer of 2018, I believed that there had been two streams or lines of transmission—one pure and the other corrupt. This fact is evidenced by the following charts I created in 2011 in preparation for preaching on the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the King James Bible.
  - The Critical Text
  - The Preserved Text
- The notion of “two streams of Bibles” or “two Bible lines” or “two text lines” is very prevalent in pro-King James argumentation and literature. My thinking on this matter had been greatly influenced by arguments found in literature of the King James Only movement.
- Please consider the transmissional picture painted by the following charts and diagrams.
  - Please see Appendix A beginning on page 11 for images of the charts shown on the PowerPoint.
- Many of the showcased examples are very complex in terms of their structure and details. All of them agree, however, on the following general points:
  - There are two streams/lines of Bibles. One emanating from Antioch and the other from Alexandria, Egypt.
  - One stream/line is pure (the Antiochian) and the other stream/line is corrupt (the Alexandrian).
  - The MSS of the Byzantine Text-Type are always placed in the pure stream/line. Whereas, the principle witnesses of the so-called Alexandrian Text such as Codex

Sinaiticus (Ⲭ), Codex Vaticanus (B), and Codex Alexandrinus (A) are always placed in the corrupt stream/line.

- The Italia (Old Latin), Peshitta, and Gothic translations, among others, are always placed in the pure stream/line, thereby giving the impression that these early translations are in complete agreement with the Textus Receptus (*TR*) the text of the Reformation and the King James Bible because they are in the same stream/line.
- In contrast, Jerome’s Latin Vulgate is always placed in the corrupt stream/line emanating from Alexandria, Egypt and culminating in the various editions of the Critical Text and Modern Versions.
- Therefore, these charts depict the Old Latin (Italia), Peshitta, and Gothic translations as “good” Bibles and the Vulgate as “bad.” More specifically, the Old Latin and Vulgate are pitted against each other as rivals in opposing streams/lines.
- Lastly, these charts leave their readers with the impression that there is an unbroken line of systematic and sequential corruption stretching back to the earliest centuries of church history in the following reverse order:
  - Modern Versions—NASV, NIV, NKJV, ESV (20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries)
  - UBS/Nestle Aland Greek New Testaments (20<sup>th</sup> Century)
  - Revised Version (1881)
  - W&H Greek New Testament (1881)
  - Douay Rheims Translation (1582)
  - Codex Alexandrinus (A)—(5<sup>th</sup> Century)
  - Latin Vulgate (382)
  - Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲭ) & Codex Vaticanus (B) (330-350 supposedly)
  - Origen
  - Papyri
  - Alexandria, Egypt

### **Historical Origin of the “Two Streams of Bibles” Paradigm**

- Historically, the notion that transmission occurred in “two streams of Bibles” first appeared in Benjamin G. Wilkinson’s 1930 book *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*. As the title suggests, Wilkinson’s book was aimed at defending the Authorized Version and the traditional Greek text (*TR*) against the incursions being made into the body of Christ by the Critical Text and Modern Versions during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Chapter 1 of Wilkinson’s book titled, “Fundamentally, Only Two Different Bibles” contains a subsection labeled “Fundamentally, There are Only Two Streams of Bibles.” It is here that we find the enunciation of the “two streams of Bibles” paradigm of transmission for the first time.
  - “The first stream which carried the Received Text in Hebrew and Greek, began with the apostolic churches, and reappearing at intervals down the Christian Era among enlightened believers, was protected by the wisdom and scholarship of the pure church in her different phases; by such as the church at Pella in Palestine where Christians fled, when in 70 A. D. the Romans destroyed Jerusalem; by the Syrian Church of Antioch which produced eminent scholarship; by the Italic Church in northern Italy [Italia/Old Latin]; and also at the same time by the Gallic Church in southern France and by the

Celtic Church in Great Britain; by the pre-Waldensian, the Waldensian, and the churches of the Reformation.

This first stream appears, with very little change, in the Protestant Bibles of many languages, and in English, in that Bible known as the King James Version, the one which has been in use for three hundred years in the English-speaking world. These MSS. have in agreement with them, by far the vast majority of numbers. So vast is this majority that the enemies of the received Text admit that nineteen-twentieths [19/20] and some ninety-nine one-hundredths [99/100] of all Greek MSS. are of this class; while one hundred per cent of the Hebrew MSS. are for the Received Text.

The second stream is a small one of a very few manuscripts. These last MSS. are represented:

(a) In Greek: —The Vatican MS., or Codex B, in the library at Rome; and the Sinaitic, or Codex Aleph (Ⲁ), its brother. We will fully explain about these two MSS. later.

(b) In Latin: — The Vulgate or Latin Bible of Jerome.

(c) In English: — The Jesuit Bible of 1582, which later with vast changes is seen in the Douay, or Catholic Bible.

(d) In English again: — In many modern Bibles which introduce practically all the Catholic readings of the Latin Vulgate which were rejected by the Protestants of the Reformation; among these, prominently, are the Revised Versions.

So the present controversy between the King James Bible in English and the modern versions is the same old contest fought out between the early church and rival sects; later between the Waldenses and the Papists from the fourth to the thirteenth centuries; and later still, between the Reformers and the Jesuits in the sixteenth century.”  
(Wilkinson, 13-14)

- Later at the end of Chapter 2, Wilkinson stated the following and presented the following chart of “Two Parallel Streams of Bibles:”
  - “NOTE: The two great families of Greek Bibles are well illustrated in the work of that outstanding scholar, Erasmus [Wilkinson attributes this notion to Erasmus second hand via Fredrick Nolan’s 1815 book *An Inquiry into the Integrity of the Greek Vulgate, or Received Text of the New Testament*. See page 413 in Nolan.]. Before he gave to the Reformation the New Testament in Greek, he divided all Greek MSS. into two classes: those which agreed with the Received Text and those which agreed with the Vaticanus MS.

Apostles (Original).	Apostates (Corrupted Originals).
Received Text (Greek).	Sinaiticus and Vaticanus Bible (Greek).
Waldensian Bible (Italic).	Vulgate (Latin). Church of Rome’s Bible.
Erasmus (Received Text Restored).	Vaticanus (Greek).

Luther's Bible, Dutch, French, Spanish, Italian, French, Italian, etc., Tyndale, (English) 1535 Rheims (English) from (from Received Text). King James, 1611 Oxford Movement. (from Received Text).	Westcott and Hort (B and Aleph). English Revised 1881. Dr. Philip Schaff (B and Aleph). American Revised 1901.
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[Note how Wilkinson attributes knowledge to Erasmus that Erasmus knew nothing of during his own lifetime i.e., the KJB, Codex Sinaiticus, the W&H Greek Text, Revised Version (1881), and American Standard Version (1901).] (Wilkinson, 30)

- Careful readers of these citations from Wilkinson will notice how much they have in common with our summary of the two Bible streams/lines charts above. Once this notion was deposited into the thought stream by Wilkinson it was picked up by later defenders of the Traditional Text and the Authorized Version and advanced in an uncritical manner.
  - 1955—Jasper James Ray wrote *God Wrote Only One Bible* which contains a chapter titled “Historically Only Two Streams of Bibles Have Come to Us” (Cp. 2).
  - 1964—Peter S. Ruckman wrote *The Bible “Babel”* which contained diagrams of the “good” and “corrupt” trees found on pages 18 and 19 of Appendix A.
  - 1970—David Otis Fuller edited *Which Bible?* Fuller’s book contained an edited reprint of Wilkinson’s 1930 work *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated* including the entirety of Chapter 1 “Fundamentally, Only Two Different Bibles.”
- Through the twin influences of Ruckman and Fuller the “two Bible streams/lines” paradigm of transmission cemented itself into the argumentation of the King James Only movement. Later pro-King James authors repeated this talking point in some manner to varying degrees. The following list is not intended to be exhaustive.
  - C. 1981—*Perfected or Perverted: A Shocking Expose of the Modern Versions of the Bible* by Norman Ward.
    - Dedicated to David Otis Fuller. Quotes the works of Fuller and Ruckman.
  - 1987—*An Understandable History of the Bible* by Dr. Samuel C. Gipp
  - 1989—*The Answers Book: A Helpbook for Christians* by Dr. Samuel C. Gipp
  - 1994—*Which Bible is God’s Word?* by Gail Riplinger
  - 1999—*Forever Settled: A Survey of the Documents and History of the Bible* by Dr. Jack Moorman
    - On pages 127 and 128 Moorman reproduced the quotation from Wilkinson above without clearly citing it or giving Wilkinson credit.
  - 2001—*Touch Not the Unclean Thing: The Text Issue and Separation* by Dr. David H. Sorenson

- Chapter Four is titled “The Double Stream of Biblical Texts”
  - 2003—*In Awe of Thy Word: Understanding the King James Bible, Its Mystery & History, Letter by Letter* by Gail Riplinger

### **Private Questioning of the “Two Streams of Bibles” Paradigm**

- Cutting my doctrinal teeth regarding the translation debate on the literature of the King James Only movement, I had taken for granted the truthfulness of the “two streams of Bibles” paradigm. Since the notion is so prevalent in the literature of the movement, I assumed that it had been factually vetted for accuracy and therefore I accepted it as true.
- In August 2018, Nathan Kooienga and I, were discussing what topics I should cover in the 3<sup>rd</sup> segment of this class (September 2018—May 2019). When the topic of transmission came up, we discussed the “two streams of Bibles” model and how it might be worked into the curriculum. Knowing that I had never studied the truthfulness of the model for myself, I started researching to see what I could find on the Peshitta and Gothic translations. Therefore, it was not until the Summer of 2018 when preparing to teach the current segment of this class that I encountered some information that disturbed me and made me question the paradigm’s veracity for the first time.
- Since the Peshitta and Gothic translations are always listed in the “good” or “pure” stream/line of Bibles, I decided to look first at specific readings in those translations fully expecting to find factual justification for their placement in the “preserved” stream of Bibles. Instead, what I found troubled me.

#### *Gothic Bible*

- First, I looked at the extant Gothic Bible by utilizing the [Wulfila Project](#) website. Sponsored by the University of Antwerp in Belgium, this site allows its user to compare the Gothic text against both Greek and English via the King James Bible ([Click here](#) to utilize this feature). Since there is not a complete extant copy of the Gothic Bible it was not possible to check every passage that I would have liked. In addition, I purchased a copy of *The Gospels: Gothic, Anglo-Saxon, Wycliffe, and Tyndale Versions Arranged in Parallel Columns with Preface and Notes* by Joseph Bosworth. This book is recommended by Gail Riplinger on page 74 of *Which Bible is God’s Word*.
- The first passage I checked was Mark 1:2 to see if the verse read “Isaiah the prophet” as in the Critical Text and Modern Versions or “prophets” as in the *TR* and KJB. Based upon what I had been led to believe, by reading King James Only literature, what I found troubled me.
  - Gothic—swe gameliþ ist in Esaïin **[Isaiah]** praufetau: sai, ik insandja aggilu meinana faura þus, saei gamanweiþ wig þeinana faura þus.
- The extant copies of the Gothic Bible contain a corrupt Critical Text reading in Mark 1:2, one of the hallmark passages utilized by King James advocates to quickly discern the textual basis of a given Modern Version. In the Gothic Bible, a supposedly “pure” textual witness, according to the “two streams of Bibles” paradigm I found a corrupt reading in Mark 1:2. This should not have

been the case according to the prevailing “two streams of Bibles” orthodoxy in the King James Only movement.

- Recalling I had read something previously about the Byzantine textual basis for the Gothic Bible, I went to my bookshelf to retrieve my copy of Gail Riplinger’s *The History of the Bible: Erasmus & The Received Text Vol. II A.D. 500-1500*, a book that I had purchased and read in 2001. In this work Riplinger reports that Ulfilas used Byzantine or “KJV type” MSS to translate the Gothic Bible in 350 AD:
  - “The Gothic Gospels, among the oldest of the vernacular versions, match the text of Erasmus and the King James Bible.”
- Riplinger then quotes the following from the *Cambridge History of the Bible Vol. II* in support:
  - “The original Greek manuscript or manuscripts, from which Ulfilas made his transition of the Gothic Gospels, belong to the Byzantine group [KJV type] . . . As in the Gospel, the original text of the epistles was of the Byzantine type . . . and differs little from the fully developed Textus Receptus of the later period.” (*Cambridge History of the Bible Vol. II*, pages 347, 355)
- So, in her book published in 2000, Gail Riplinger a leading King James Only advocate said that the Gothic Bible was a translation of the same textual tradition that produced the KJB. Yet, my own independent examination of just one verse in the Gothic Bible suggested something quite different.
- Perplexed, I decided to look at Colossians 1:14 to see if the “blood” of Christ had been taken out of the Gothic Bible. According to a Gothic-English Dictionary, the Gothic word for blood is blôþ. My examination revealed that the “blood” (blôþ in Gothic) of Christ in Colossians 1:14 was missing from the extant copies of the Gothic Bible. In its current textual state, the Gothic Bible agrees with Modern Versions in this verse, yet we are told in King James Only literature without any qualification or explanation that it is pure and uncorrupted even on par with the King James itself.
  - Gothic—in þammei habam faurbauht, fralet frawaurhte,
- Next, I checked the reading of I Timothy 3:16 in the Gothic Bible. I wanted to know if it read “God was manifest in the flesh” as does the *TR* and KJB or something else. First, I determined that the Gothic word(s) for God is “gub” or “gudis.” This word appears twice in one verse before in I Timothy 3:15 in the Gothic Bible.
  - Gothic—apþan jabai sainjau, ei witeis hvaiwa skuld ist in garda gudis [**God**] usmitan, saei ist aikklesjo gudis [**God**] libandins, sauls jah tulgiþa sunjos.
  - KJB—But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God [**gudis**], which is the church of the living God [**gudis**], the pillar and ground of the truth.
- Notice how the occurrences of “gudis” in the Gothic coincide with occurrences of “God” in the KJB in I Timothy 3:15. The Gothic text of I Timothy 3:16 reads as follows:

- Gothic—jah unsahtaba mikils ist gagudeins runa saei gabairhtiþs warþ in leika, garaihts gadomiþs warþ in ahmin, ataugids warþ þaim aggilum, merids warþ in þiudom, galaubiþs warþ in fairhvau, andnumans warþ in wulþau.
- The word(s) “gub” or “gudis” are conspicuously missing from the extant Gothic text of I Timothy 3:16. Here is yet another example of where a reading found in extant copies of the Gothic Bible is not as “pure” as I have been led to believe.
- Given that there are portions of the Gothic Bible that are not currently extant, I was not able to check all the readings I would have liked. The following is a summary of my findings on other key passages.
  - [Luke 2:33](#)—maintains the doctrine of the virgin birth of Christ by reading Joseph [Iosef] not “father” as do modern version in this verse.
  - John 7:53-8:11—the entire passage on the woman taken in adultery is removed from extant copies of the Gothic Bible. [Chapter 7](#) ends with verse 52 and [Chapter 8](#) begins with verse 12.
  - [Mark 16:9-20](#)—the Gothic Bible does contain this passage according to the [Wulfila Project](#) website. That being said, Bosworth’s *The Gospels: Gothic, Anglo-Saxon, Wycliffe, and Tyndale Versions Arranged in Parallel Columns* stops at Mark 16:12.
  - Acts 8:37—not available, not currently extant.
  - I John 5:7—not available, not currently extant.
- Even a cursory evaluation of the extant Gothic Bible reveals that it is far from the specimen of purity that Gail Riplinger and other King James advocates would have us believe. The situation when it comes to transmission is not as neat and tidy or clear cut as the “two streams of Bibles” narrative indicates. Rather than being an objective emblem of textual purity, the extant Gothic Bible is viewed more accurately as a *mixed text* driving down the shoulder of history on my Transmission Turnpike illustration.

### *Repudiating Riplinger*

- Recall from above Gail Riplinger’s citation from the *Cambridge History of the Bible Vol. II* regarding the Gothic Bible. Please consider the following table comparing Riplinger’s quotation and what *Cambridge* actually said about the Gothic Bible. The bolded text in the *Cambridge* column highlights the words that Riplinger left out of her citation.

Riplinger’s Citation	Original Statement for <i>Cambridge</i>
“The original Greek manuscript or manuscripts, from which Ulfilas made his translation of the Gothic Gospels, belong to the Byzantine group [KJV type] . . . As in the Gospel, the original text of the epistles was of the Byzantine type . . . and differs little from the fully developed Textus Receptus of the later period.” ( <i>Cambridge History of the Bible Vol. II</i> , pages 347, 355)	“The original Greek manuscript or manuscripts, from which Ulfilas made his translation of the Gothic Gospels, belong to the Byzantine group, <b>with a sprinkling of western readings</b> (347) . . . As in the Gospel, the original text of the epistles was of the Byzantine type, <b>with a number of western readings. This text represents the mid-fourth-century stage in the development of the</b>

	<b>Byzantine text</b> , and differs little from the fully developed Textus Receptus of the later period.” ( <i>Cambridge History of the Bible Vol. II</i> , pages 347, 355)
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- Notice how nicely the actual quote from *Cambridge* correlates with the textual facts we observed by looking at the extant Gothic Bible. The extant Gothic Bible is largely in agreement with the readings found in the Byzantine/TR/King James text platform, but it does contain instances of corruption that Riplinger would never tolerate from the Critical Text and/or a Modern Version.
- Rather than quoting the *Cambridge History of the Bible* honestly, Gail Riplinger has selectively engineered a quote that hides from her readers the fact that the extant Gothic Bible is not as pure as the “two streams of Bibles” paradigm has asserted. Not only does she leave out the inconvenient wording about “western readings” in the Gothic, she actively steers her readers away from the truth by inserting the phrase “KJB type” in brackets. Moreover, the exact same quote is reproduced in her 2003 publication *In Awe of thy Word* on pages 625 and 969. Lastly, on page 74 of *Which Bible is God’s Word?* Riplinger recommends Bosworth’s *Parallel Gospels* with the following statement:
  - “The antiquity of the KJV type-text is evidenced in Joseph Bosworth’s *Parallel Gospels*. It includes the Gothic version dated about 360, the Anglo-Saxaon version dated between 600 and 900, the Wycliffe translation dated 1381, and the Tyndale dated 1526. Comparing them with the King James Version and the new versions quickly shows that the King James is the text that has been used historically by the church as far back as the Gothic period, dated 360.” (Riplinger, 74)
- So, Riplinger is arguing that the Gothic, a Bible that contains readings in its extant copies, that she would never tolerate in a modern version is fundamentally the same text as the KJB. This is beyond my ability to comprehend and represents how far Riplinger is willing to go in order to salvage the “two streams of Bibles” paradigm.

### Conclusion

- In a future Lesson we will consider the rest of the story as it pertains to the Gothic Bible. For the time being, we need to acknowledge that the facts on the ground, as they pertain to the extant Gothic Bible, present a much different story than the “two streams of Bibles” paradigm has painted for us. The King James position is not aided by the advancement of arguments that are contradicted by the facts.
- In Lesson 88, I will present my findings on the Peshitta translation.

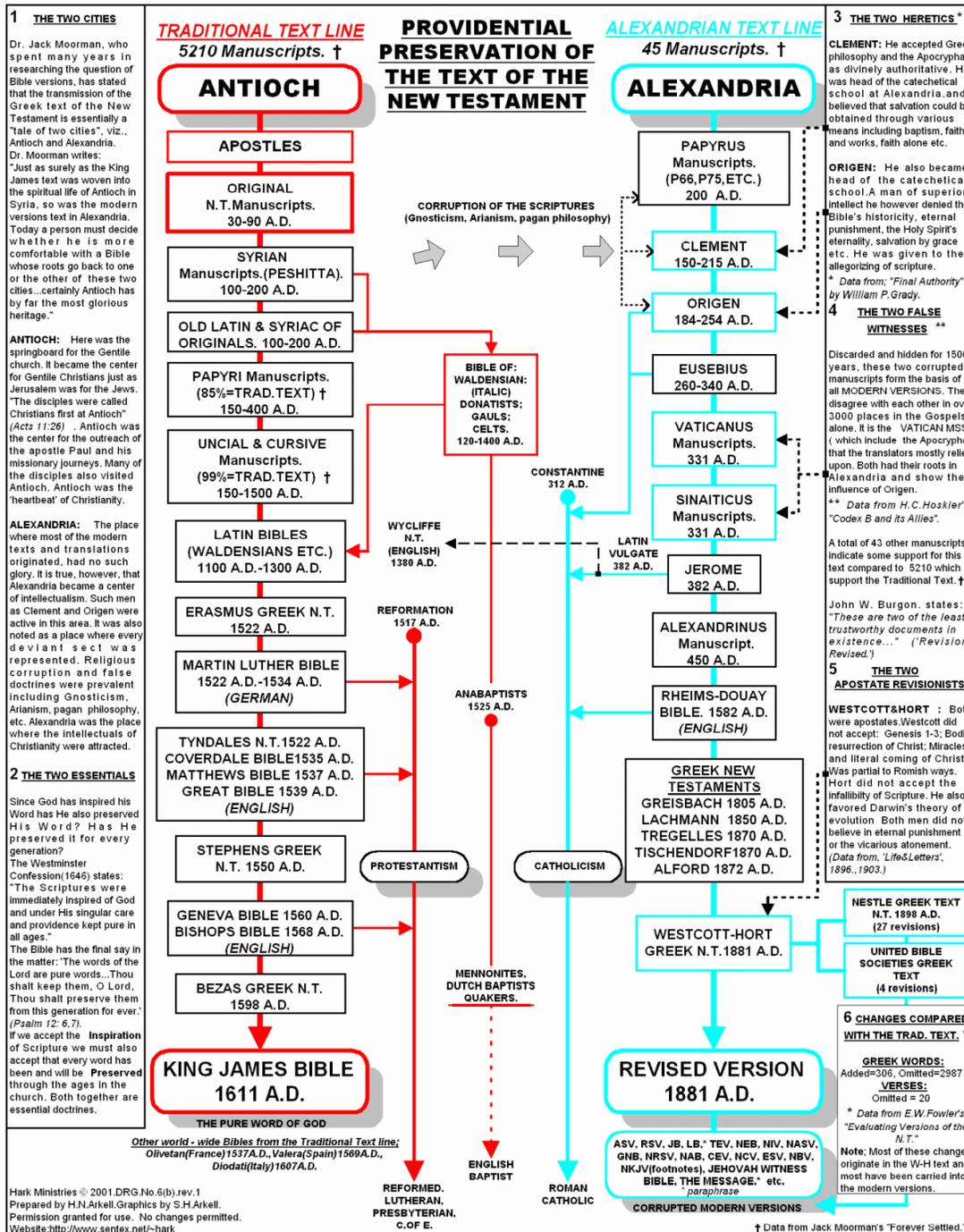
### Works Cited

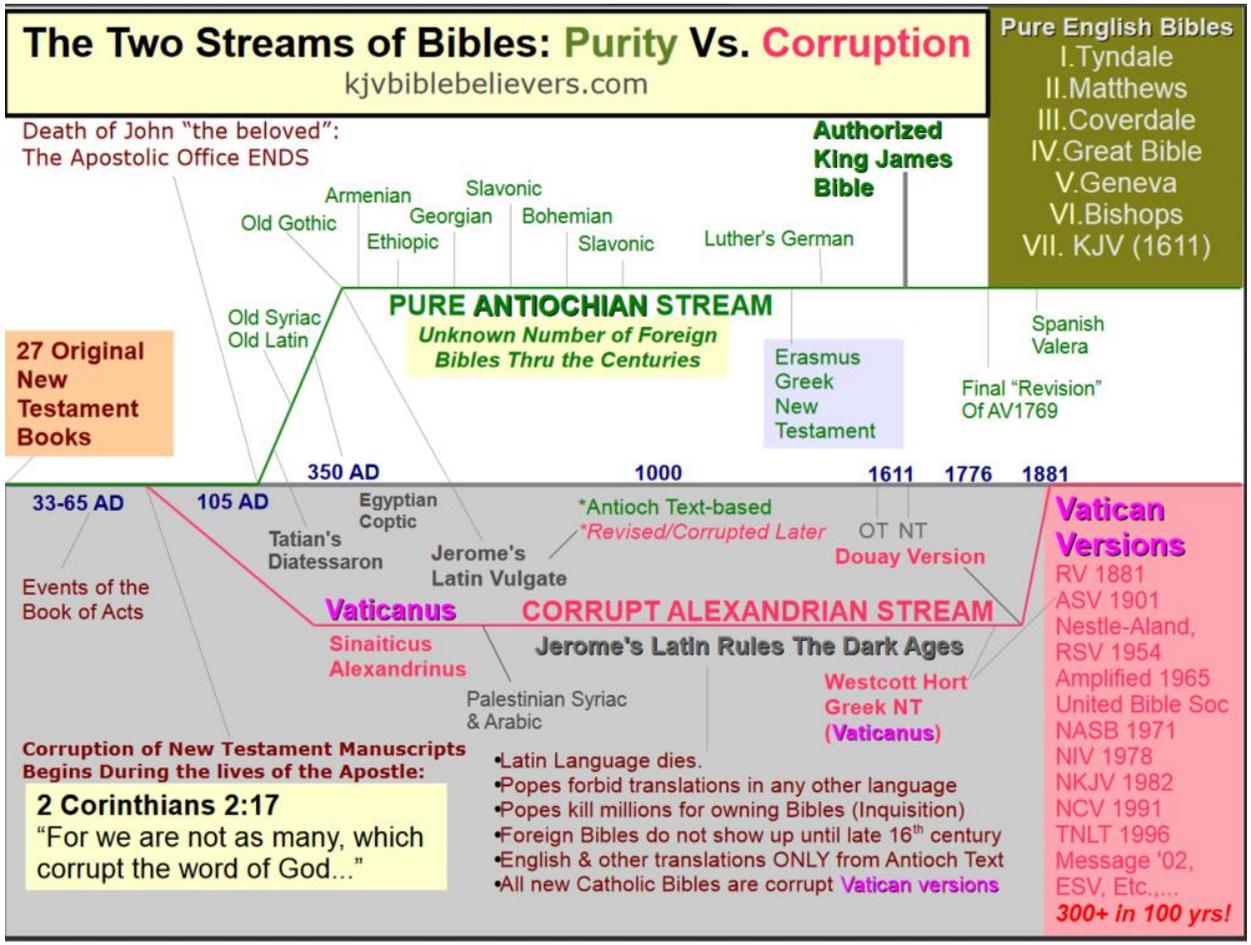
- Lampe, G.W.H. *The Cambridge History of the Bible Vol. II: The West from the Fathers to the Reformation*. Cambridge University Press, 1969.
- Riplinger, Gail. *Which Bible is God's Word?* Oklahoma City, OK: Hearthstone Publishing, Ltd., 1994.
- Riplinger, Gail. *The History of the Bible: Erasmus & the Received Text Vol. II, A.D. 500-1500*. Ararat, VA: A.V. Publications, 2000.
- Wilkinson, Benjamin G. *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*. 1930.

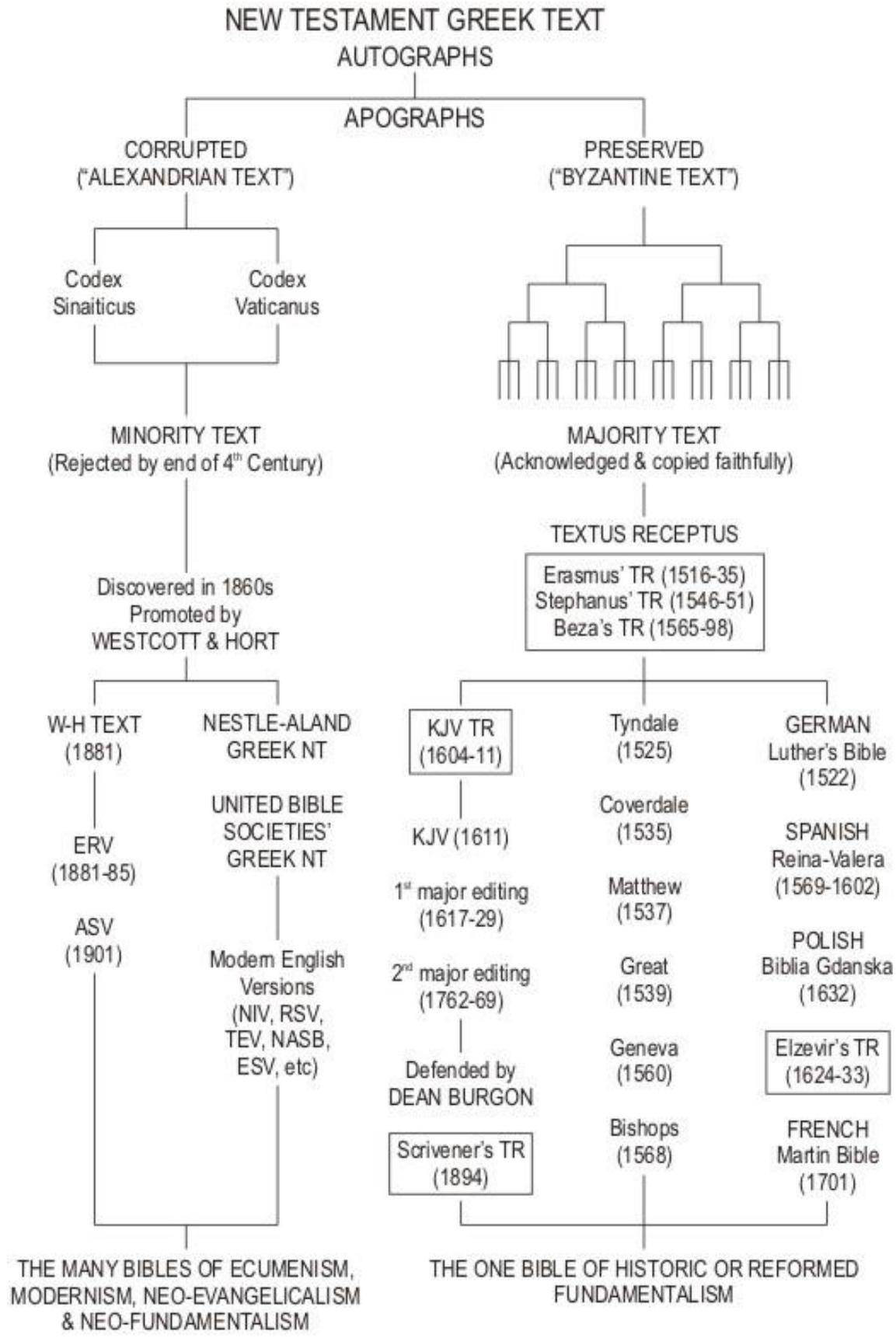
### Appendix A

#### Two streams/Lines of Bibles Chart Examples

The following resources were harvested from the internet over a period of years. Some of them provide documentation for what person and/or ministry created them. Unfortunately, sourcing information is not available for all of them. Please check the fine print on each example for potential sourcing information.

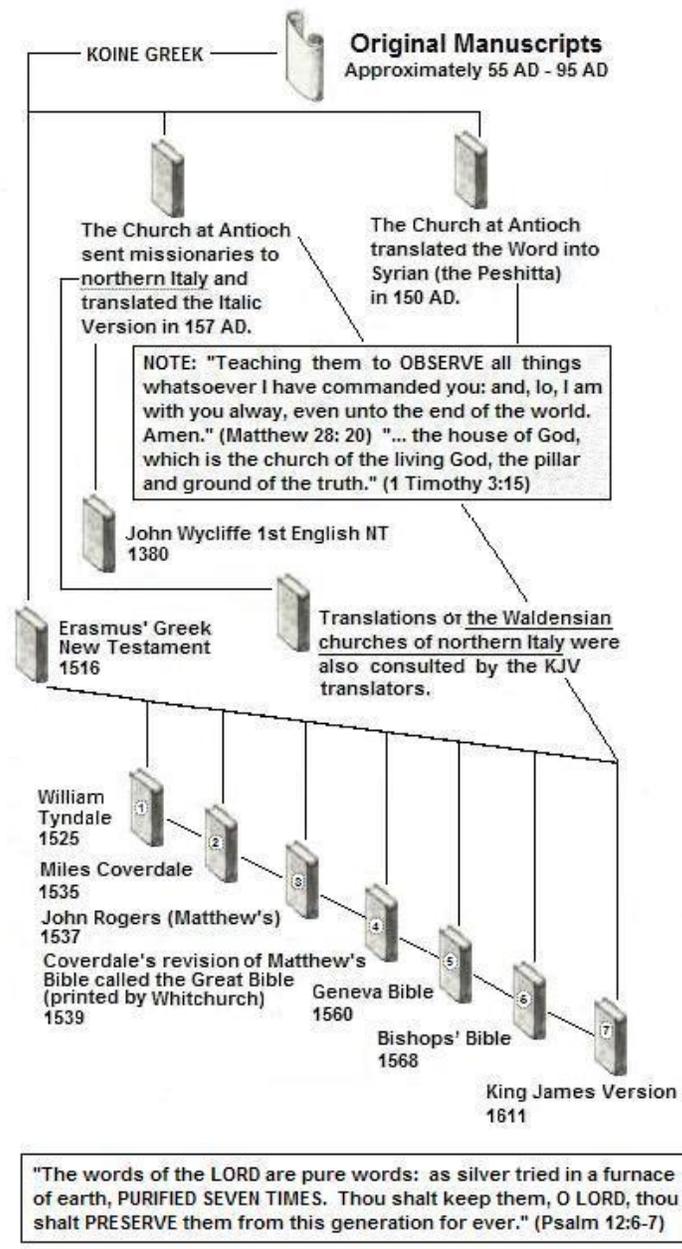




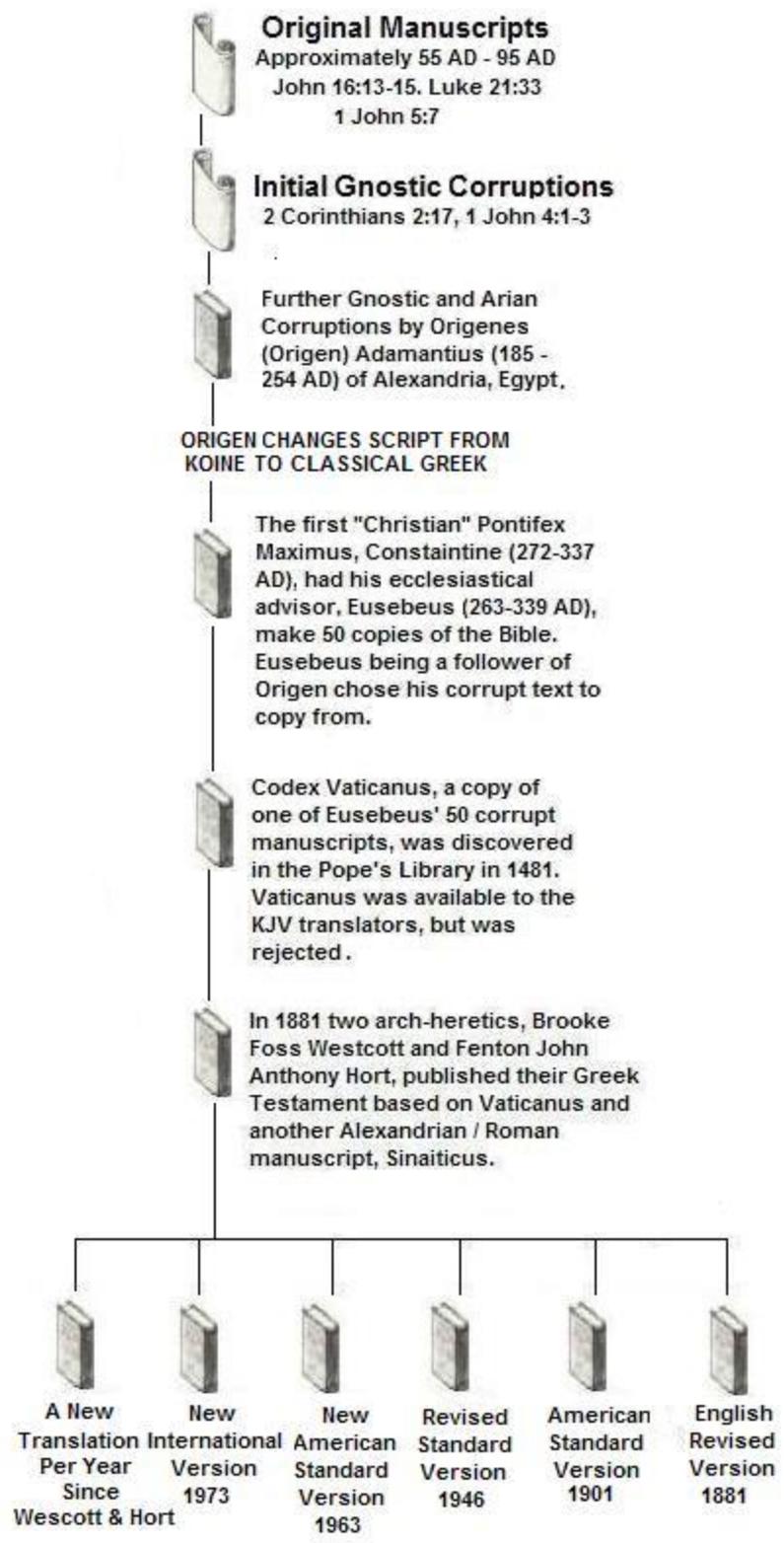


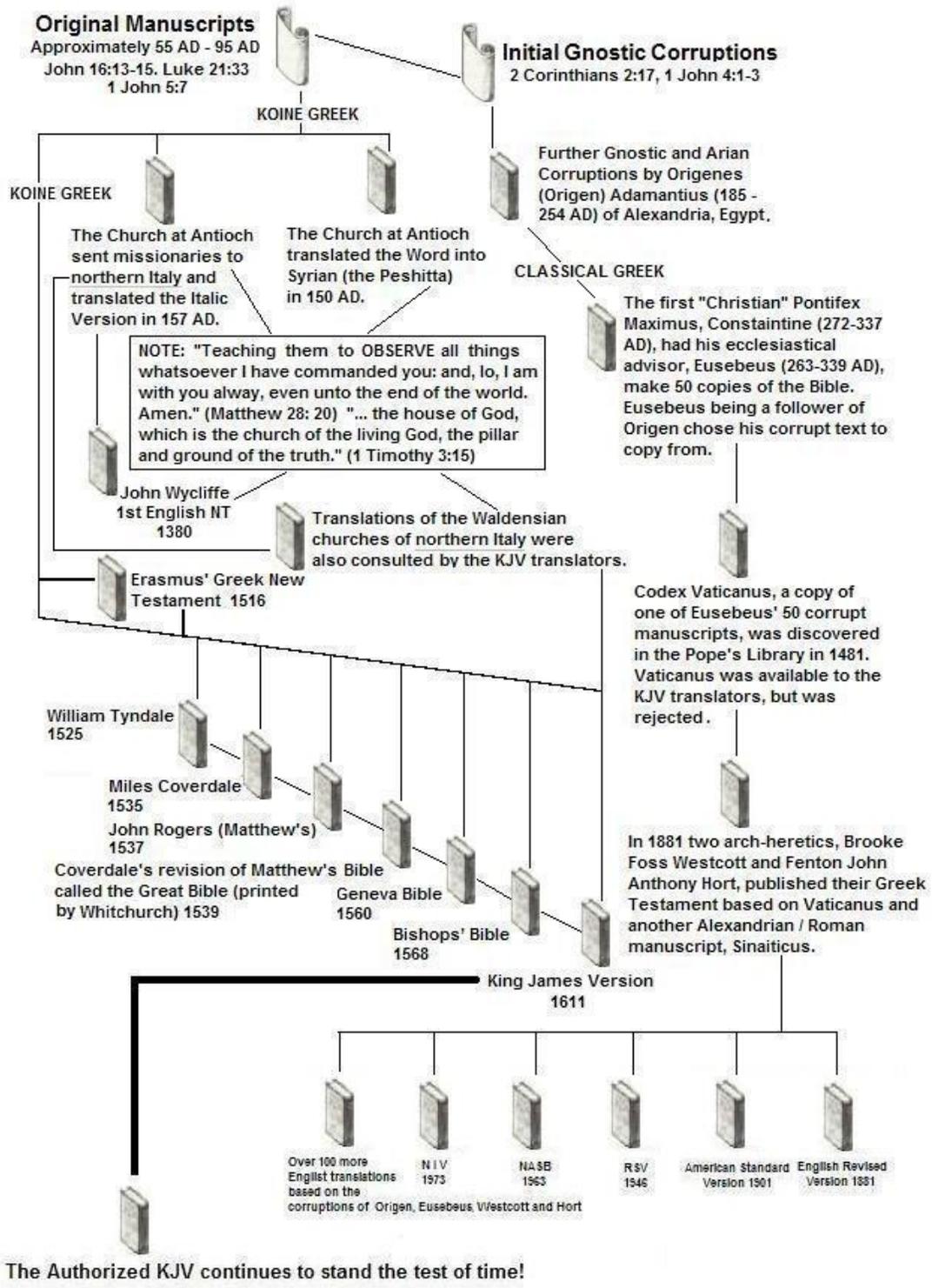
# ORIGINAL TEXT LINE PRESERVED

John 16:13-15, Luke 21:33, 1 John 5:7

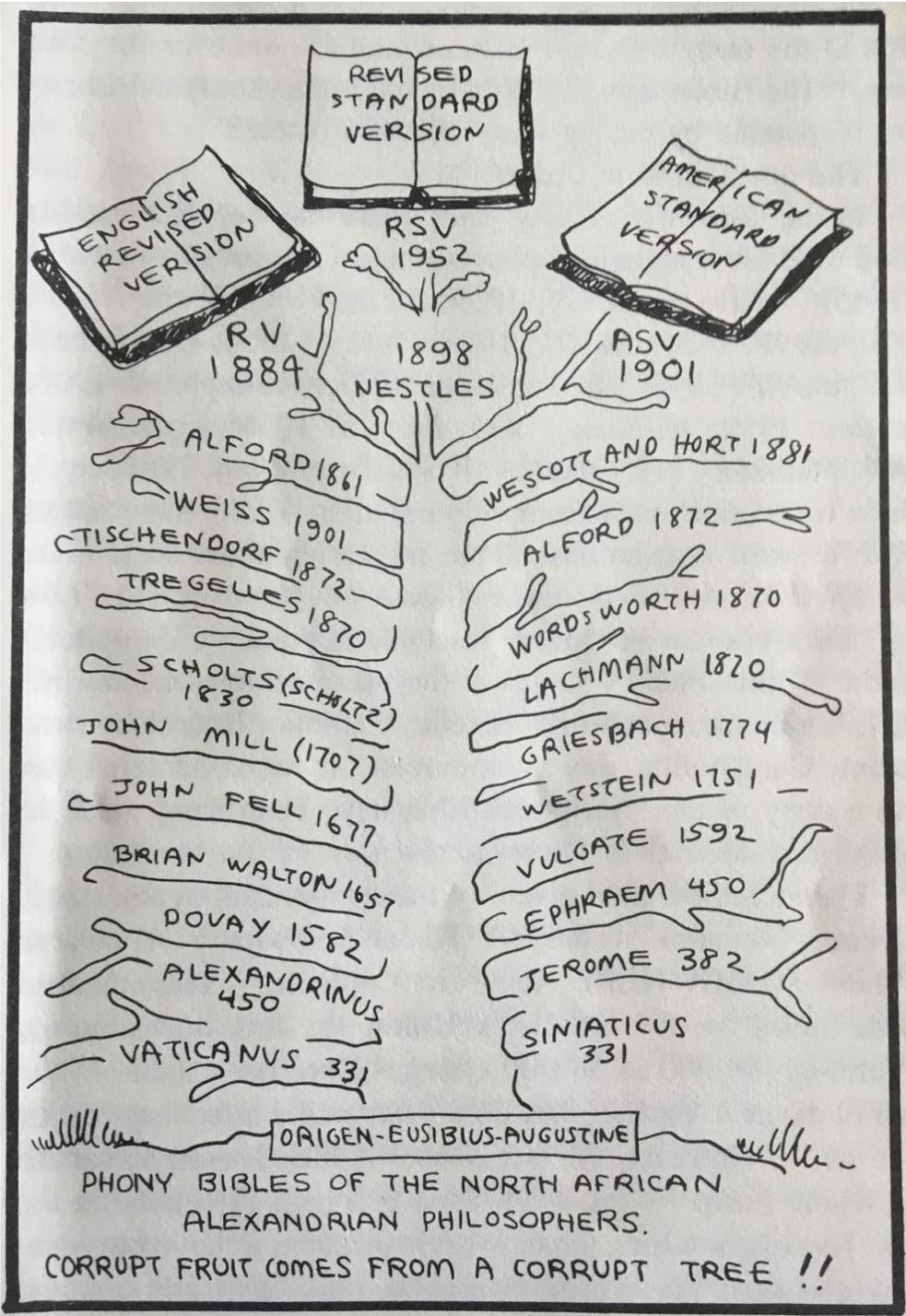


### ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS CORRUPTED

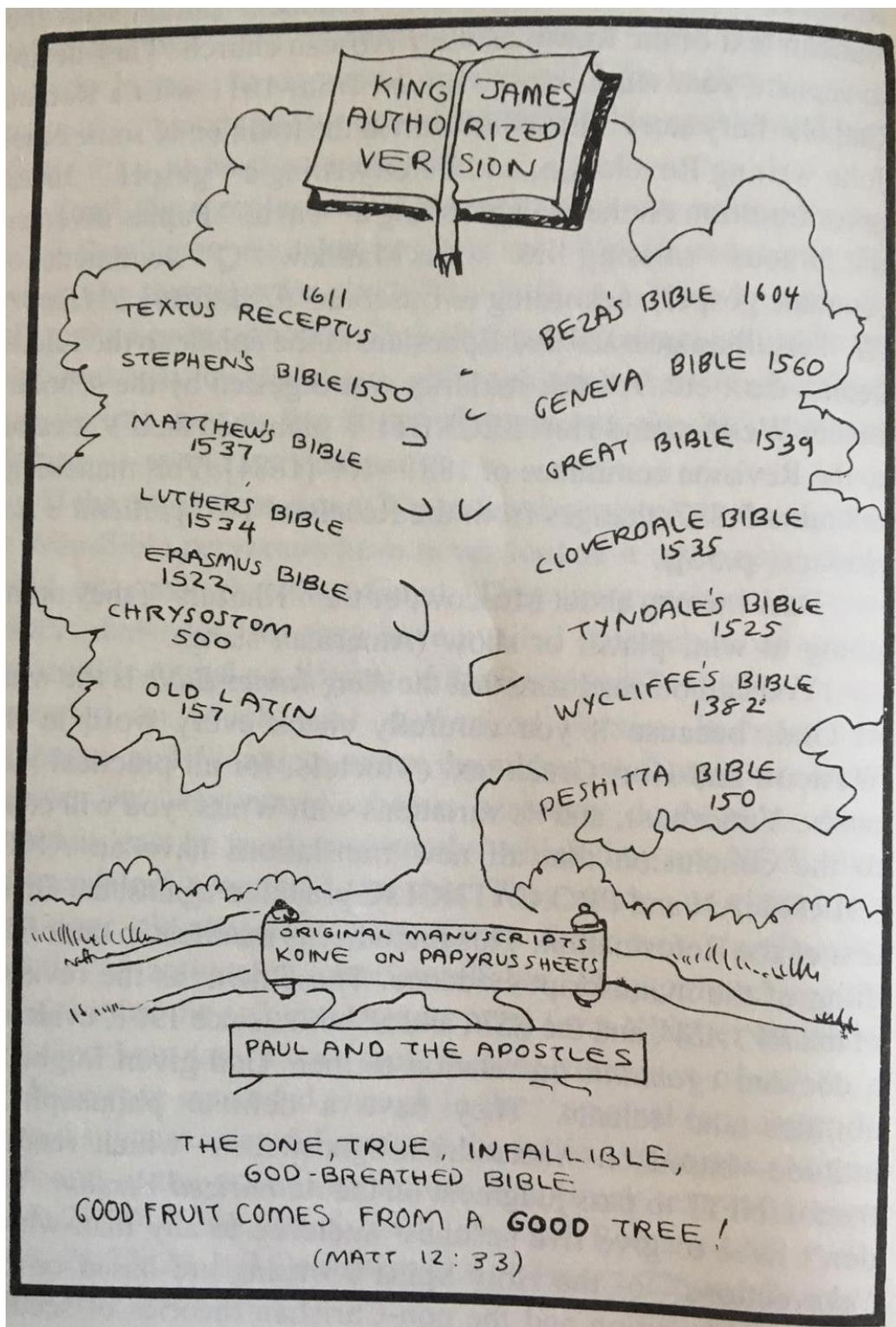








Taken from *The Bible "Babel"* by Peter S. Ruckman



Taken from *The Bible "Babel"* by Peter S. Ruckman

