

c  
o  
p  
y

HIGHWAY MISSION TABERNACLE

Rev. Wallace S. Bragg, Pastor.  
8111 Eastern Avenue,  
Wyndmoor, Mtg. Co. Pa.

Rev. Gayle F. Lewis,  
% Gospel Publishing House  
Springfield, Missouri.

Dear Brother Lewis:

Sincere greetings in the name of our Saviour !

It is not with any desire whatsoever to add to your already heavy schedule; nor is it a matter of finding it difficult to orient ourselves to a new version, that I write you this lengthy article. There is real alarm amongst us over the apparent endorsement of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible by our brethren at headquarters. Considerable comment was stirred amongst our people, most of it unfavorable when they observed the Evangel for September 21, 1952 carrying almost a full page ad, and still another in November 2 issue.

This letter is not the result of an over-night decision in the matter. In fact, several weeks ago, in a meeting of the Church Board, the members at that time voted, and I believe it was unanimous, that I draft an article expressing our feelings in the matter, and so the purpose of this letter is to convey the consensus of the members,

While I have not given thorough examination to the New Version, and so far as I know none of the Board members have either, we have discovered enough evidence of a type and character which causes us to wonder why our brethren at headquarters are so ready to endorse the Revised Standard Version. There are certain changes; I think it not too much to call them discrepancies, which appear to carry the stamp of flagrant error, and while it is but natural to expect a great furor over any effort to set aside the King James Version, we feel there is good and sufficient reason to raise strong protest, especially when we find endorsement for the Revised Standard Version a number of times in the pages of the Pentecostal Evangel.

For the purpose of simplifying the following material I am listing it numerically.

1. The Revised Standard Version has won the acclaim of Harry Emerson Fosdick of Union Theological Seminary, who according to Dr. Wilbur Smith, is responsible for undermining the faith of very many of the young people of this generation. According to a recent report he has said that it means nothing to him whether Jesus Christ was born or not. We feel that anything which carries the endorsement of Mr. Fosdick will bear very close and careful scrutiny before placing our endorsement upon it.
2. "The ten men who produced this new translation are well known liberals and not one of them is known as fundamental in his beliefs. Not one of them holds to the actual inspiration of the Bible as orthodox Christianity affirms it. Yale Divinity School, liberal to the core, is the centre of activity in producing the translation." The Methodist Challenge for November, 1952.



3. We notice that the last 12 verses of Mark 16 have been eliminated from that chapter; reduced to footnotes. Regardless of their reasons for so doing, it leaves this Gospel in sharp contrast, and may I say, conflict with the others which do not close in confusion as does this chapter in the Revised Standard Version. The defense for this correction which appears in the Pentecostal Evangel for November 16/52, page 18 is a very "pale" one. It states that, "-- clear reference to these truths appears in other passages of the Gospels and Epistles." The following evidences in that same article indicate that the writer of the article was not too sure of his stand. All of us in our preaching frequently quote passages from Scripture which warn against removing or taking away from the Word of God. This one instance is such an outstanding one in that our preachers and people use it and preach from it so frequently,
4. In eliminating the first eleven verses of the eighth chapter of John, they have taken away the context for the remaining portion of the chapter. The discourse which follows through the remaining verses of that chapter resulted from the incident related in verses 1-11

Here is the testimony of a convert in a Greek prison. "I was in my cell awaiting the day of my execution, one month away. One of your missionaries came to me with a New Testament, and asked me to read it. I agreed and started with the Gospel of Matthew. When I reached the eighth of John, I fell on my knees and accepted the Lord as Saviour." Why at the eighth chapter of John? He had been sentenced to death because he had killed his own sister who had gone astray morally. "But," said he, "when I saw that the Lord Jesus forgave that woman, taken in adultery, I saw how much more I should have forgiven my own sister." Sunday School Times, Sept. 27/52

5. The Revised Standard Version substitutes the words "young woman" for "virgin" in the translation of Isaiah 7:14. These substituted words do not in any degree convey the meaning of the original. We know that young women are plentiful in contrast or comparison to virgins. This is a dangerous and misleading correction of the King James Version.
6. More could be listed, but suffice it to say that we are wondering what the results may be amongst the weak Christians and the new converts. It is evident that in these days just prior to the return of our Saviour, when so many attacks are being made upon the Word of God it is our duty before God and man not to join the ranks of those who are removing the ancient landmarks which our fathers have set.

W.S.Bragg



c  
o  
p  
y

GENERAL COUNCIL-ASSEMBLIES OF GOD  
434 West Pacific Street  
Springfield 1, Missouri.

November 26, 1952.

Reverend W.S. Bragg  
8111 Eastern Avenue  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Dear Brother Bragg:

Warmest Christian greetings in the Name of Jesus our Lord.

Thank you so much for your kind letter of November 20 relative to the new Standard Revised Version of the Bible. I deeply appreciate the frank way in which you have written concerning this matter, Brother Bragg, and I will endeavor to answer you as fully as I can. May I say first of all that I fully concur in your feeling in this matter.

I do not want to appear to be shifting the responsibility to someone else, or to shirk any responsibility that belongs to me, but I have had a serious question in my own mind concerning this matter. When we were first confronted with the question of stocking this Bible long before it was off the press I recommended that we defer any action in putting this Bible on our shelves until we knew what it was going to be, but some of our Brethren felt that since we were receiving scores of requests for it, and orders were being placed to be filled as soon as the Bible was off the press, that we should make the Bible available as a service to our ministers who, as I have stated, wanted a copy as soon as it was off of the press.

Regarding the advertisement in the Evangel under date of September 21 and November 2, I deeply regret they ever appeared in our paper. The ad was a stock ad furnished by the published of the Bible and was sent to Brother Cunningham by the Advertising Division of our Book Department. Brother Cunningham questioned it but unfortunately most of us were out of the office for an extended period of time and so he conferred with one of the members of the Publication Committee, who is not an Executive, but who felt the ad was alright and should be published. That is the reason it got into the Evangel.

After the Bible was in circulation we were nearly swamped with inquiries from all over the Nation concerning the Bible and because of this Brother Cunningham ran a number of articles in the Evangel endeavoring to present both sides of the question. Some articles emphasized the good points, other articles pointed out its weakness in an effort to help our people in their thinking. Whether this served any good purpose or not of course, is debatable. At any rate in a recent meeting of our Executives the matter came up for discussion and we have instructed Brother Cunningham to withhold from the Evangel any further comment concerning this Bible or any advertisements. I think perhaps this next Sunday there may be one more article since the Evangel was already printed but there will be no more.

I realize, Brother Bragg, that these articles and advertisements in the Evangel could well convey the impression that our brethren here have endorsed this new Bible but I want to assure you we have not. There is some division of opinion among us as to whether the Bible is as dangerous as some think it is, but there has been no endorsement, and as far as I am concerned there will be no endorsement. My own personal opinion is this, and it is the opinion I have given to those who have contacted me personally. I look upon this new Revised Standard Version as one more version



among the many versions which we already have. There is the American Standard Version which caused quite a furor when it appears years ago; the Moffat and Weymouth translations and many more with which you are familiar. To me this is just another translation. I am fully persuaded that it will never take the place of the King James Version which we all use, love and appreciate. I think we should wipe out of our thinking any thought that this version will ever replace the King James Version. I think of it as a reference Bible to be used as we would use any other translation and as such it may have a place. There are some portions of the scripture which I think have been strengthened in this version; others are grave errors. It is my feeling that it should only be used as we would use any other version; simply as a reference work.

The Brethren have asked me to prepare an article for the Pentecostal Evangel which would set forth our position and attitude toward this book similar to what I have stated in the above paragraph and I intend to do so at the earliest possible moment. I am not offering the above as an excuse for any mistake we may have made in regard to this matter but we do offer it by way of explanation, and we trust that you will pray for us that God will help us in all these things.

We find that our brethren are quite divided on this issue on the field. Some would consign this new Bible to the pit as the work and product of communism and modernism. Others feel that while the version has definite weaknesses in some places it also contains very fine helps. Dr. Murch, editor of the U.E.A. has been writing some very strong articles against the Bible but his opinions are personal and not the opinion of the N.A.E. as a whole. I understand that an article is in preparation designed to counter Dr. Murch's claims. I do not say this in any defense of the Bible but simply to point out that there is a strong division of opinion in the evangelical world concerning the Bible. There are some strong fundamentalists on the Advisory Board which stood somewhat as a watchdog over the translators. Dr. Huffman of Winona Lake, who is the Chairman of the Advisory Board, is a Free Methodist and one of the strong fundamentalists of our day. He has challenged the translators on many points and in a score of places has obtained changes in the translation. Dr. Huffman has written to us here at Headquarters several times during the past two years asking for the support of our Organization in bringing pressure to bear upon the translators in obtaining changes where he felt there was a digression from the original Greek or Hebrew text. We complied with these requests and we personally know that Evangelical men have had a voice. They have not won every point by any means but they have effected many changes. However, as far as I am concerned I am content to stay with the King James Version and let this version find its place as I have stated above.

God bless you and your church, Brother Bragg. Will you please thank your Board for their interest in this matter and let me assure you all again that while we may err in judgment from time to time, it is our sincere purpose to remain true to God's Word and the fundamental Pentecostal doctrines which we all love.

Sincerely yours in Christ

Gayle F. Lewis

General Superintendent.