

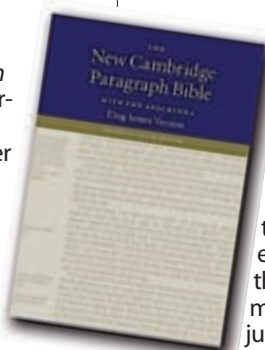
The New Cambridge Paragraph Bible

by the Rev. B. G. Felce

Vice-Chairman of the Society's General Committee

On the back of its dust jacket *The New Cambridge Paragraph Bible* describes its purpose:—'The New Cambridge Paragraph Bible gives the reader as closely as possible the exact text that the King James translators themselves decided on'. This text therefore does not have all the improvements made in the translation since 1611. In fact, David Norton, the editor of this Bible, says that there are 1,550 significant variations from today's King James Bible.¹ These variations are in wording or the spelling of names—about one per chapter of the Bible.

David Norton tells us on page 131 of the companion volume, *A Textual History of the King James Bible*,² that he has two main principles in his revision of the KJB (hereinafter to be called the Authorised Version [AV], as is common practice although the KJB was never officially authorised). 'The first principle is that the text should be that of the translators, not that of subsequent revisers.' 'The second principle is that the text should be modernized', by which he means its spelling and punctuation. However, 'thou' is not to be changed to 'you'. There are no italics, to the great loss of accuracy, because the English reader can no longer discover so much about the words used in the



original Greek and Hebrew.

What was it, then, that later editors were trying to do? Usually, says Norton, they were 'making the KJB a still more literal representation of the originals: the editors test the text against the original languages and make changes where they judge that the translators were loose in their treatment

of the originals' (p. 86). This is surely exactly what believers want. We want to know exactly what God has said. A rough approximation of God's holy Word will not satisfy us. This is where modern translations fail—they are not accurate enough. They also fail to copy the AV in giving us, not the English of 1611, which the AV never was, but English influenced by the original Hebrew and Greek languages. For proof of this note how English was used in 1611 as seen in *The Epistle Dedicatory* found in the front of most editions of the AV.

There is some value in discovering what the translators of 1611 decided was the correct translation. But since 1611 editors of the AV have made what they believed were corrections and improvements. These changes have been made under the providence of Almighty God. The church and modern believers do

not want or need to go back to the 1611 translation. What we have today in the AV is the best available translation of the original Hebrew and Greek of the Holy Bible. None of the modern translations of the Bible is as accurate as the

of editors have done their best to translate as exactly as possible the original Hebrew and Greek of the Old and New Testaments to give us the most accurate Bible available today. There is no point, except perhaps to aid scholars, in going

Following are ten examples of places where the AV of today is more accurate than the AV of 1611:

| | <i>Passage</i> | <i>Hebrew/Greek & AV</i> | <i>Norton AV</i> |
|----|-----------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | <i>Deuteronomy 26.1:</i> | 'the LORD thy God.' | 'the LORD.' |
| 2 | <i>2 Chronicles 6.27:</i> | 'send rain upon thy land.' | 'send rain upon the land.' |
| 3 | <i>Ezekiel 48.8:</i> | 'ye shall offer.' | 'they shall offer' |
| 4 | <i>Hosea 4.4:</i> | 'thy people.' | 'this people.' |
| 5 | <i>Hosea 6.5:</i> | 'Therefore have I hewed <i>them</i> by the prophets.' | 'Therefore have I shown them by the prophets.' |
| 6 | <i>Mark 5.6:</i> | 'he ran.' | 'he came.' |
| 7 | <i>John 11.3:</i> | 'his sisters.' | 'his sister.' |
| 8 | <i>1 Corinthians 4.9:</i> | 'appointed to death.' | 'approved to death.' |
| 9 | <i>1 Corinthians 12.28:</i> | 'helps, governments.' | 'helps in governments.' <i>Norton admits that this is a mistranslation of the Greek (p. 34). We do not want a mistranslation of 1611 restored to the AV.</i> |
| 10 | <i>1 Peter 2.1:</i> | 'all evil speakings.' | 'evil speakings.' |

AV. Nor is this new edition of the AV as accurate as the ordinary version of the AV which you can buy in the shops today or from the Trinitarian Bible Society.

The advertising on the dust jacket of *A Textual History* claims that this two-volume set 'will be indispensable to scholars of the English Bible'. That is exactly what this new edition of the AV is: it is a Bible for scholars only. It is not for the general Christian public.

The AV is not perfect. But a succession

back to the 1611 AV, which is less perfect than the AV which we already have. In God's good providence we have the AV as the best and most accurate Bible for the church and the individual Christian.

Endnotes

1. Norton terms it 'King James Bible'—KJB—rather than 'King James Version', as it is more commonly known today.
2. David Norton, *A Textual History of the King James Bible*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005.