

# A REVIEW/REFUTATION OF

*Gail Riplinger's New Age Bible Versions*

by James Richard May, MA, MBA

In this classic tome of biblical knowledge, exhaustive research, and careful reasoning, Gail Riplinger brings the full weight of her scholarship and technical expertise in home economics<sup>1</sup> to bear upon the daunting question of Bible texts and translation. Her ignorance of Greek and Hebrew is no deterrent to thorough investigation as she navigates the murky waters surrounding satanic influence in modern Bible versions. In her own words,

*Much digging in libraries and manuscripts [all apparently in English] from around the world has uncovered an alliance between the new versions of the bible [sic](NIV, NASB, Living Bible and others) and the chief conspirators in the New Age movement's push for a One World Religion, (NABV<sup>2</sup>, p. 1).*

Well, there it is! The New Agers are responsible for all of the modern versions of the bible [sic]! Quite a surprise for many of us who thought that much of the work was done by great and godly scholars, men and women who love the Lord Jesus and have given their lives to his service. I have learned many such interesting things in reading this book, including the fact that the proper name "bible" should not begin with a capital letter, even when referring to the true King James bible. The author's careful attention to such matters of morphology is refreshing in this new age of sloppy composition. The reader may rest assured that similar precision is reflected in all matters, great and small, of *New Age Bible Versions*.

The journey from page 1 to page 650 of NABV is long and painful. A brother in Christ with considerable knowledge of the KJV only movement confessed to me that he "couldn't read it through; its every page is marred by multiple errors of fact, selective presentation (and concealment) of evidence, distortion, misquotation, bad logic and every other possible form of inaccuracy." Perhaps I should clarify the just-mentioned confession, lest Gail read this and accuse the brother and me of being Roman Catholics. I can assure the reader that we are both Bible-believing, born-again Baptists, that I do not hear confessions regularly, and that the brother did not regard his failure to finish NABV as sin. Yes, I am being ridiculous, but with no better factual basis Riplinger has produced a continuous stream of false accusations against a multitude of individuals. Considering the absurd errors that fill every page of Gail's exposé, it is a wonder that any thinking person can endure such rubbish to the end. To be altogether to the point, the book is a filthy rag, a piece of yellow journalism made all the worse by the claim of allegiance to the Word of God. It takes little research to discover that a large number of the people she libels, while often possessing faults, are not at all guilty of the wicked charges that she brings against them. She frequently slices up sentences from multiple contexts and

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<sup>1</sup> In an apparent oversight, Ms. Riplinger fails to relate her area of academic training and achievement prior to her foray into textual criticism.

<sup>2</sup> Throughout this review, NABV refers to Riplinger, Gail. *New Age Bible Versions*. Ararat, VA: A.V. Publications, 1993, eleventh printing 2000.

reconstructs them so as to make people appear to say things that they never said. The more time that I have spent investigating the book, especially the hideously flawed endnotes with their hopeless documentation, the more I have realized how pathetic it is. It is so egregious that there can be no excuse whatsoever for its writing and distribution.

All of the blame for the poor quality of the book, however, should not be placed upon Ms. Riplinger. As she herself says, "Satan, . . . in loving concern, . . . provided me access to documents," (NABV, pp. 53, 3, 4). I must admit that even I was shocked at this quotation, and I'm the one who fabricated it. Using the Riplinger method of citation, any number of similar quotations can be produced using her very own book. One must question how she can criticize modern versions while admitting that the devil helped her write the criticism. I'm beginning to think that she may be a New Ager herself, a wolf in sheep's clothing. Why else would she put a black cover on her book with a picture of a red dragon (Satan?) on the front? Why does the book have forty-two chapters?  $6 \times 7 =$  the number of man times the number of God? Man seeking to reach God by his own works? Obviously, I have spent too much time reading NABV.

Rather than deal with the theme of NABV in any systematic way, I have decided to document some of the innumerable errors in the order that they occur in the book. I simply wish to demonstrate clearly that Ms. Riplinger is a totally unreliable source of information and that nothing that she writes can be accepted as truth unless independently confirmed.

### *Copywritten?*

NABV contains a multitude of miscellaneous errors, many of which have little to do with basic argumentation, but the sheer number of which surely demonstrates the overall poor quality of research, knowledge, attention to detail, and accuracy of presentation. The inside front cover presents the following note:

*Note to the reader: 1) All editions and printings of the NIV and NASB et al. are not the same. 2) The NIV and NASB do not have identical wording because each is copywritten [sic].*

Note 1) perhaps is meant to suggest that new Bible versions are an unstable, tentative lot and not forever settled in heaven, as is the King James Version. The note could have stated just as truthfully that all editions and printings of the KJV are not the same. The KJV in common use today is the edition of 1769 and is different than either of the two non-identical 1611 printings.

In Note 2) it is my assumption that when Ms. Riplinger writes that "The NIV and NASB do not have identical wording because each is copywritten," she actually means that each is "copyrighted." Not that it matters -- the sentence is nonsense no matter which way it is read. "Copywriting" refers to the preparation of documents by a copywriter for printing (usually for advertising). This process has nothing to do with editions failing to have identical wording. KJO people frequently criticize modern versions for being copyrighted while assuming that the King James is not. The popularity of this oft-repeated error leads me to believe that "copywritten"

should be “copyrighted.” But of course neither does such legal protection against unauthorized use result in the various editions failing to have identical wording. One can only puzzle over what Ms. Riplinger is trying to say here. Perhaps she actually means that the wording of the NIV is not identical to the wording of the NASB because each is copyrighted. One must hope that her knowledge of Bible versions is ever so much greater than such a comment would indicate. Unfortunately NABV is replete with such absurd statements, often making it almost impossible to analyze rationally what is being said. As to the criticism of modern translations for being copyrighted, so is the King James Version, the rights being vested in the Crown of England.<sup>3</sup>

### *Is Your Bible Holy?*

Ms. Riplinger displays a fondness for tables. In the introduction, opposite page 1, is the first of many:

#### **DO YOU HAVE A HOLY BIBLE?**

NIV, NASB, et al.		KJV
men	<i>2 Peter 1:21</i>	holy men
angels	<i>Matthew 25:31</i>	holy angels
brethren	<i>1 Thessalonians 5:27</i>	holy brethren
prophets	<i>Revelation 22:6</i>	holy prophets
apostles and prophets	<i>Revelation 18:20</i>	holy apostles and prophets
Spirit	<i>John 7:39</i>	Holy Ghost
Spirit	<i>1 Corinthians 2:13</i>	Holy Ghost
Spirit	<i>Matthew 12:31</i>	Holy Ghost
Spirit	<i>Acts 6:3</i>	Holy Ghost
Spirit	<i>Acts 8:18</i>	Holy Ghost

The implications of this are so far reaching that one must wonder why Gail wrote the rest of the book. Seems like a one page handout could have done the job. If my Bible fails this test, I should most assuredly get rid of it. On the other hand, any Bible that passes this test is holy, and a Bible that is holy must be revered and honored by all who genuinely believe the Word of God. Before applying the test, however, we must make one correction to the table, and in so doing confront the first of many, many misquotations in NABV. Gail quotes *Matthew 12:31* as “Holy Ghost.” Upon examining the KJV one discovers that the true reading is “*Holy Ghost.*” Notice that “*Holy*” is in italics. This device was used by the King James translators, at least some of the time, to indicate words that they added that were not present in the Greek and Hebrew. I am sure that a scholar like Ms. Riplinger is well aware of this, yet she still uses *Matthew 12:31* as part of the test and fails to place “*Holy*” in italics. Applying the test, minus *Matthew 12:31*, we make a wonderful discovery: the New King James Bible is a Holy Bible! It passes the test with flying colors! And yet this very Bible is attacked as being a Bible of the antichrist (pp. 101-102)! Something is clearly wrong here. If this test is valid, the NKJV is a Holy Bible and should

<sup>3</sup> Doug Kutilek, The KJV is a Copyrighted Translation (at [www.KJVOnly.org](http://www.KJVOnly.org))

not be maligned. If the test is not valid, why is it included in the introduction of New Age Bible Versions?

An important point can be made about words that the King James translators placed in italics. These are words that they themselves indicate were not part of the Hebrew or Greek text. Did they not realize that God promised to judge any who either add to or take away from his Holy Word (*Revelation 22:18-19*)? Notice that God does not say that he will judge people for adding to his word *unless they indicate with italics what they have done*. Of course I do not believe the argument that I am making here, but it is one that Gail and other KJV only people use often against the new versions. Yes, the King James does add words to the Bible in order to make the message clearer, even as scribes did for hundreds of years to the Greek manuscripts that underlie the King James Version. Adding words like “holy” falls under a practice scholars call the expansion of piety. Even John Burgon recognized that the orthodox sought to clarify the sacred text:

*Another cause why, in very early times, the Text of the Gospels underwent serious deprivation, was mistaken solicitude on the part of the ancient orthodox for the purity of the Catholic faith.<sup>4</sup>*

If I were a New American Standard only advocate stooping to the same level as NABV, I would offer the following table:

#### **DO YOU HAVE A SPOOKY BIBLE?**

KJV		NASB, NIV, et al.
Ghost	<i>Matthew 28:19</i>	Spirit
Ghost	<i>Luke 1:35</i>	Spirit
Ghost	<i>John 7:39</i>	Spirit
Ghost	<i>Acts 4:8</i>	Spirit
Ghost	<i>Romans 5:5</i>	Spirit
Ghost	<i>I Corinthians 6:19</i>	Spirit
Ghost	<i>II Timothy 1:14</i>	Spirit
Ghost	<i>Titus 3:5</i>	Spirit
Ghost	<i>II Peter 1:21</i>	Spirit

For the benefit of those who read no Greek, the word translated “Ghost” in the KJV is always the same word that is elsewhere translated “Spirit” by the same version. It is an error for the King James to call the Holy Spirit a “Ghost” just as surely as it is to call him an “it,” (*Romans 8:16, 26*)

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<sup>4</sup>John Burgon, *The Causes of Corruption of the Traditional Text* (1896; rpt. Collingswood, NJ: The Dean Burgon Society Press, 1998), p. 211.

## *Westcott in the New Age?*

According to NABV,

*The Greek text used to translate the NIV, NASB and others was an edition drastically altered by a Spiritualist (one who seeks contact with the dead through séances), who believed he was in the “new age,” (p. 2).*

The endnote for this refers the reader to “Arthur Westcott, *The Life and Letters of Brook [sic] Foss Westcott*, Vol II (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1903), p. 252,” where we read: “. . . the Son of Man will vindicate His sovereignty by showing that He satisfies every need and every capacity which the struggles of a new age have disclosed.” I doubt that Ms. Riplinger wanted her readers to see Westcott’s “new age” in context.

## *Twisting Scripture*

NABV quotes [Luke 4:8](#) as: *It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only . . . ,* (p. 9)

The correct reading is: *it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*

Here Gail wants a verse to say something that it does not say, so she corrupts the Word of God by leaving out a crucial comma and by cutting a sentence short so as to separate a direct object (him) from its subject and verb (shalt thou serve). It is wrong to twist another’s words even if the resulting statement is true. Throughout New Age Bible Versions, Riplinger shows a determination to make people say what she wants to have them say, in spite of their actual words in proper context. It is interesting and most illustrative that she is willing to do so with the Son of God himself.

## *Many gratuitous statements*

NABV is filled with statements that have no historical support whatsoever and simply reflect what Ms. Riplinger wants to believe happened. “These manuscript types (*Aleph*, B, D, papyrus 75, 45 et al.) were rejected by a growing and discerning Christian body – almost immediately after their creation by the ‘friends of Philo,’” (pp. 30-31). She offers no historical documentation for this assertion for there is none to offer. Another example: “While pursuing phantoms in France, Westcott was also pouring over documents to find support for the esoteric changes he wanted to make in this ‘New’ Greek New Testament,” (p. 106). Again this has nothing to do with anything that can be documented.

## *An Example of Careful Research*

Lest we be tempted to question the quality of her research, Riplinger informs us:

*True researchers know that the popular press serves poorly as a research tool; primary sources must be examined. The popular reference work Words About the Word, published by Zondervan, will serve as an example. It asserts that 1) The “doctrinal problems” in the KJV are discussed in The English Bible from KJV to NIV. . . . Upon checking the books and verses given, which few do, it is discovered that no “doctrinal problems” are listed, . . . , (p. 34).*

No doctrinal problems are listed? As I write I have a copy before me of *The English Bible: From KJV to NIV* by Jack Lewis (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1982). Chapter three (pp. 35-68) is entitled *Doctrinal Problems in the King James Version*. A multitude of doctrinal problems in the KJV are listed. Lewis comments,

*“Doctrine” means “teaching,” and any failure to present the Word of God accurately, completely, and clearly in a translation is a doctrinal problem. The matters that we have surveyed in this chapter all affect the teaching the reader is to receive from his Bible, (pp. 61-62).*

Lewis discusses numerous issues that are clearly doctrinal by any definition. For example, in *NABV* Gail devotes five pages to lambasting modern Bibles for translating the Greek *doulos* as “slave,” rather than as “servant” as does the KJV, (pp. 221-25). “The images of cruel bondage, generated by the word ‘slave’, are alien to our ‘sonship’ motivation expressed in *Ephesians 6:6*,” (p. 221). This is clearly doctrinal. Lewis comments,

*The word *doulos*, always softened to “servant,” should be rendered “slave,” for there is great difference in the social position of a servant and a slave; furthermore, there are other Greek words which mean “servant,” (p. 47).*

Lewis also discusses problems in the KJV relating to hell, the second blessing of the Holy Spirit, Calvinism, and many other doctrines. Ms. Riplinger has provided a fine example of her primary research. Did she even read what she claims to have researched?

## *Help from Wilber Pickering?*

King James only advocates frequently seek support for their position from those who argue for the superiority of the majority (Byzantine) text. Such people believe that God has preserved his Word in the readings supported by the largest number of Greek manuscripts. The problem for the KJO position here is that there are many (1800+) readings in the Textus Receptus/KJV that are not supported by most manuscripts. Interestingly, the KJO crowd is willing to go with minority readings when found in the KJV. This is clearly the Achilles’ heel of the KJO position.

While they refuse to admit it, it just cuts the heart out of all that they advocate. Hence on page 34, Riplinger presents Dr. Wilber Pickering, Dallas Seminary alumnus and majority text advocate, as a supporter of her position:

*This book [NABV] and others, like linguistic expert Dr. Wilber Pickering’s recent The Identity of the New Testament Text, break through this maze of multiplied misinformation. His documentation proves the highly misleading nature of the Greek text and critical apparatus underlying new versions. He set the stage for this, the final page, closing ‘the cover’ on new versions.*

Gail has a rather lofty view of her own book, claiming that it provides the final page on the issue of Bible versions. Dr. Pickering, however, is not the ally she presents him to be. He says, “The real potential which exists for improving upon the King James Version, and the *Textus Receptus*, has not been realized.”<sup>5</sup> And again, “In terms of closeness to the original, the King James Version and the *Textus Receptus* have been the best available up to now.”<sup>6</sup> So how would Dr. Pickering improve upon the KJV? Fortunately he has told us by serving as one of the consulting editors to a new majority text version of the Greek New Testament.<sup>7</sup> Dr. Pickering “breaks through this maze of multiplied misinformation” by “omitting” many of the same words and verses that the new age versions do. New age versions omit [Luke 17:36](#) because it describes the severity of God’s judgment, (Gail’s description, pp. 286-87). Why does Dr. Pickering omit it? [Acts 8:37](#) is a test for Antichrist, (according to Gail, pp. 334-36). Dr. Pickering fails the test. “New Versions join the Jehovah Witnesses in replacing ‘fellowship with the groom’ with the coming ‘new age administration,’” (p. 456). And so does Dr. Pickering. New versions remove “through his blood” in [Colossians 1:14](#) to support the beast instead of the blood, (p. 270). Dr. Pickering also removes the blood. Those who remove [1 John 5:7](#) “clear Satan’s path to the throne,” (p. 378). Dr. Pickering, the “linguistic expert,” is guilty of the same. Removing “which thing I hate” from [Revelation 2:15](#) is an example of Roman Catholic theology in the new versions, (p. 143). And yes, Dr. Pickering supports the removal. As Riplinger would express the situation:

	New Age Version	Dr. Pickering
<a href="#">Luke 17:36</a> : entire verse	OMIT	OMIT
<a href="#">Acts 8:37</a> : entire verse	OMIT	OMIT
<a href="#">Acts 9:5</a> : <i>it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks</i>	OMIT	OMIT
<a href="#">Acts 9:6</a> : And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord <i>said</i> unto him,	OMIT	OMIT
<a href="#">Acts 15:34</a> : entire verse	OMIT	OMIT

<sup>5</sup> Wilbur N. Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text* (Nashville and New York: Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers, 1977), p. 139.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 140.

<sup>7</sup> Zane C. Hodges and Arthur L. Farstad, *The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982), p. iii.

<i>Acts 19:20</i> : God	OMIT	OMIT
<i>Ephesians 1:18</i> : understanding	OMIT	OMIT
<i>Ephesians 3:9</i> : fellowship	OMIT	OMIT
<i>Colossians 1:14</i> : through his blood	OMIT	OMIT
<i>I Timothy 1:4</i> : godly edifying	OMIT	OMIT
<i>II Timothy 2:19</i> : Christ	OMIT	OMIT
<i>I John 5:7</i> : entire verse	OMIT	OMIT
<i>Revelation 1:11</i> : I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and	OMIT	OMIT
<i>Revelation 2:15</i> : which thing I hate	OMIT	OMIT

I do not wish to disparage Dr. Pickering. I respect (but disagree with) his position and scholarship, but he is no supporter of the radical King James only position that Riplinger takes. A large portion of the “multiplied misinformation” that Pickering breaks through is that which is contained in New Age Bible Versions.

### *Westcott and the devil*

Gail specializes in libeling Brooke Westcott. She states that both he and “Hort assert that the devil is not a person but a general ‘power of evil,’” (p. 46). Her documentation for this very serious charge is contained in endnote #12 for chapter 2. This note refers the reader to Westcott’s commentary on the Epistles of St. John, p. 106. There is absolutely nothing on this page that would indicate that Westcott did not believe in the personality of the devil. Westcott refers his readers to a note by saying, “For St. John’s teaching on the powers of evil see Additional Note on ii. 13.” On the same page he has, “From the very beginning we see a power in action against God.” If I were to say that in the controversy over the traditional text, Dean Burgon was a power to be reckoned with, would anyone thereby believe that I do not believe that Burgon was a person? The Apostle Paul informs us that we wrestle against “powers,” (*Ephesians 6:12*). Does he thereby “assert that the devil is not a person but a general power of evil?” Westcott on the same page also says that the one who is of the devil “draws from **HIM** the ruling principles of his life, as **HIS** child” [emphasis added]. It is evident that Riplinger copied this bit of foolishness from D.A. Waite,<sup>8</sup> as clearly evidenced by her following his improper format for the reference (*1-3 John* rather than Westcott, *The Epistles of St. John*). Elsewhere Westcott says:

*Hunger is salutary in itself, but Satan may use it for temptation. We may give admission to **HIS** influence. Then **HE** can use for evil under the conditions of this life that which is from God [emphasis added], (Arthur Westcott, *Life and Letters of B.F. Westcott, Vol. I, p. 241*).*

<sup>8</sup> D.A. Waite, *The Theological Heresies of Westcott and Hort* (Collingswood, NJ: The Bible for Today Press, 1979), p. 13.

*HE is spoken of as 'the Devil' . . . Of HIS origin nothing is said. . . . HE was originally good, but 'HE stood not in the truth.' . . . Thus HE stands in opposition to the Word . . . HE is directly at variance with Christ . . . the devil exercises a wide influence over men . . . They may become HIS 'sons,' HIS 'children' . . . they may be 'of HIM' . . . HE is already defeated, [emphasis added], (Westcott, The Epistles of St. John, pp. 89-90).*

Accurate information appears to be unimportant when relating the theology of "an enemy of the KJV."

### *How many Greek manuscripts?*

The "omission" of "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." from [Matthew 6:13](#) by modern versions merits a table and the comment, "This is a sin since it's in 99 out of 100 Greek N.T. documents, . . .," (p. 67). Does this mean that it is a sin for the King James Version to have "book of life" in [Revelation 22:19](#) since every Greek manuscript, not just 99 out of 100, has "tree of life"? Is it a sin to "add" [Acts 8:37](#) and [1 John 5:7](#) since they have only slim manuscript support? On the other hand, since when is truth determined by majority vote, especially when the electorate is composed of Roman Catholic/Eastern Orthodox monks? Why is majority vote superior to a careful weighing of evidence by godly scholars? Even granting that the majority text theory is a reasonable approach to determining the text of the NT, why does Gail only use it when it supports her preconceived conclusions? If the majority text argument is good, it should be used consistently; if it carries no weight, it should not be used at all. All of this indicates one overriding fact: all of the information Riplinger gives about which manuscripts support which readings is simply a red herring. She can never apply the data consistently because her only real consideration is, "what does the King James have?" Even where no Greek manuscripts support the KJV, she will still follow its readings.

### *No prayer in Jesus' name?*

*God's formula of praying to the Father, in the Son's name, through the Holy Spirit is totally circumvented in new versions. They call for prayer directly to the Son or to the Father, but not in Jesus' name, (NABV, p. 70).*

Oh, really?

*"In that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything **in My name**, He will give it to you. Until now you have asked for nothing **in My name**; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full. These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; an hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but will tell you plainly of the Father, In that day you will ask **in My name**, and I do not say to you*

*that I will request of the Father on your behalf; (John 16:23-26, New American Standard Bible, emphasis added).*

### *Riplinger is uncertain, not Palmer*

NABV (p. 74) says that “. . . scribes like the NIV’s Edwin Palmer admit their ‘uncertain’ position.” The endnote directs the reader to The NIV: The Making of a Contemporary Translation, p. 162. Looking up the reference, we discover that what Palmer really said was that “The Hebrew is uncertain here, as reflected in the NIV footnote.”<sup>9</sup> Once again Ms. Riplinger fails to accurately relate what was actually said.

### *The Holy One of God*

NABV (p. 81): “*Luke 4:34* reveals that only the devils call Jesus the ‘Holy One of God.’” Must be a code phrase that they have developed. I have passed over a multitude of statements in NABV that reflect similar logic. This one is given as an illustration for the many. As a born-again believer who has been cleansed by the precious blood of Christ, I am delighted to call my Savior the Holy One of God. I also confess Jesus as Lord, and I believe in my heart, and with all of my heart, that God raised him from the dead (*Romans 10:9*). Does Ms. Riplinger have the audacity to say that I am a devil?

### *Gnosticism or Pantheism?*

Gail seems quite confused as to whether the new age Bible editors are Gnostics or pantheists: “This New Age god of pantheism is not a personal God but a number,” (NABV, p. 86) contrasted with “Like the Gnostics of old, New Agers refer to this force or ultimate reality as ‘one’ because the number denies any duality or distance between ‘god’ and man,” (NABV, p. 87). Any student of the ancient heresy knows that it is completely dualistic, and not pantheistic. “Like Valentinus and the other gnostic teachers, Marcion was strongly dualist; . . . .”<sup>10</sup>

*In Gnosticism, a Hellenistic religious movement that entered original Christianity from earlier pagan sources, and which viewed matter as evil and spirit as good, dualism manifested itself in a more dramatic way.<sup>11</sup>*

### *Esoteric Changes from the Muratorian Fragment?*

*While pursuing phantoms in France, Westcott was also pouring over documents to find support for the esoteric changes he wanted to make in his ‘New’ Greek New Testament. From La Salette, he slipped to Milan to mull over the Muratorian*

<sup>9</sup> Kenneth Barker, ed., The NIV: The Making of a Contemporary Translation (Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Corporation, 1986), p. 162.

<sup>10</sup> Harold O.J. Brown, Heresies (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988), p. 60.

<sup>11</sup> [“Dualism: Greece and the Hellenistic World,” Encyclopedia Britannica (Electronic edition, 2001).

*Fragment of the N.T.. His view of 'visions' now appears on the pages of all new versions, (NABV, p. 106).*

If Dr. Westcott was mulling over the Muratorian Fragment seeking new readings to insert into his Greek NT, he must have been sorely disappointed; the fragment does not contain the New Testament nor any portion thereof. It rather is a listing, with descriptions, of the books that belong in the NT. I have a copy of the fragment before me as I write. In a 10 point font, single spaced, in English, it fills one full page, 8.5 x 11. It all makes me wonder what manuscripts Ms. Riplinger was reading as she scoured the great libraries of the world doing research for New Age Bible Versions.

### *English word found in Greek manuscripts?*

*"All new versions adopt this Catholic 'holy mother the Church' concept (THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, Revelation 17:5?), even though all Greek manuscripts identify the church as 'it' here," (NABV, p. 108).*

NIV, NASB, it al.		KJV
her	<a href="#">Ephesians 5:25</a>	it
her	<a href="#">Ephesians 5:26</a>	it
her	<a href="#">Ephesians 5:27</a>	it

It may come as a shock to Gail to learn that there is no Greek word "it." There are some Greek words that may be properly translated "it" in a given context. The Greek word in [Ephesians 5:25 and 26](#) that Gail mistakes for "it" is the feminine form of the Greek *auto*. In light of the New Testament teaching that the Church is the bride of Christ, and especially in this passage where Christ's care for the Church serves as an example for a husband's care for his wife, "her" is an excellent translation of the Greek feminine pronoun. Words cannot express how foolish Riplinger's argument looks here to anyone who knows Greek, and all of this has nothing whatsoever to do with a Catholic "holy mother of the Church."

### *Observation: On Westcott and Greek Philosophers*

Riplinger repeatedly makes Westcott out to be a blind follower of false teachers, largely on the basis of his study of, admiration for, and use of material from Plato, Philo, and Origen. An analysis of these men is far beyond the scope of this review, but a few observations are in order. They represent three of the greatest minds in the history of Western thought, and made very significant contributions in areas related to Greek language, literature, philosophy, and the development of early Christian theology. All three were brilliant thinkers, and all three held to various false doctrines.<sup>12</sup> Westcott did not blindly follow their thinking; Plato was not his "master," (NABV, p. 120). Westcott recognized their errors as indicated by the following:

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<sup>12</sup> For brief treatments see Norman Geisler, Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999).

*So it was that the treasures of Greece were made contributory to the full unfolding of the Gospel. But the essence of their doctrine has no affinity with his [John's], (Westcott, The Gospel According to St. John, p. xviii).*

*[The Myths of Plato] offer a philosophy of nature, a philosophy of history, and a philosophy of life, deformed, it may be by crude speculations in physics, and cramped by imperfect knowledge . . . (Westcott, Essays in the History of Religious Thought in the West, p. 46).*

*Whatever may be the prevailing fashion of an age, the Myths of Plato remain an unfailling testimony to the religious wants of man. They shew not only that reason by its logical processes is unable to satisfy them, but also in what directions its weakness is most apparent and least supportable, (Essays in the History of Religious Thought in the West, pp. 48-49).*

*However far this view [Philo's] may be from the truth, the works of Philo furnish at least a starting-point for our inquiry, (The Gospel According to St. John, p. xvi).*

*When Philo speaks of "the divine Logos" his thought is predominantly of the divine Reason and not of the divine Word. This fact is of decisive importance. The conception of a divine Word, that is, of a divine Will sensibly manifested in personal action, is not naturally derived from that of a divine Reason, but is rather complementary to it, and characteristic of a different school of thought, (The Gospel According to St. John, p. xvi).*

*The development of the action of the Logos, the Word, in the prologue to the fourth Gospel places the contrast between Philo and the Evangelist in the broadest light. However wavering and complex Philo's description of the Logos may be, it is impossible not to feel that he has in every case moved far away from the idea of an Incarnation. No one, it is not too much to say, who had accepted his teaching could without a complete revolution of thought accept the statement "the Logos became flesh," (The Gospel According to St. John, p. xvii).*

*Origen may have erred, I think he did err, on many points; . . . , (Essays in the History of Religious Thought in the West, p. 252).*

*His [Origen's] view of life was imperfect, . . . ,(Essays in the History of Religious Thought in the West, p. 252).*

In the first instance, to understand and translate the NT, one must understand the Greek language, and to understand the Greek language, one must understand Greek history, literature, and philosophy. Westcott's knowledge of these areas was a great asset in his interpretation of the New Testament. As F.F. Bruce observed:

*His knowledge of the whole Greek Bible was related to his knowledge of the whole range of ancient Greek literature, from the beginning of the classical age to the end of the patristic age. It is much rarer for commentators to come to the study of the Greek New Testament today with such a rich linguist equipment as his—an equipment which was accompanied by a rare feeling for the sense of the Greek.<sup>13</sup>*

*Nothing, indeed, can be added to the facts of the Gospel, but all history and all nature is the commentary upon them, (Westcott, *Essays in the History of Religious Thought in the West*, p. 360).*

### *Faults or sins?*

Under the heading, “The Sacrament of Penance,” is the following table (p. 145):

NEW VERSIONS		KJV
confess your sins	<i>James 5:16</i>	Confess your faults (Almost all Greek texts have the word for faults here, -- not sins.)

So Gail believes that the Greek word translated “faults” by the KJV is only for faults and not for sins? Then why does the KJV translate it as “sins” in *Ephesians 1:7*, *Ephesians 2:5*, and *Colossians 2:13*? Maybe the King James translators were also involved with the New Age movement.

### *False and wicked accusations against Herbert Wolf*

On page 165 Riplinger has this bit of libel: “Herbert M. Wolf, NIV Committee member, admits that the NIV’s switch from ‘righteousness’ to ‘prosperity’ is ‘non-literal.’ He writes:

*[N]on-literal translations enhance accuracy . . . The word tsedeqah—normally rendered ‘righteousness’ is translated ‘prosperity’, perhaps understood as the reward of righteous living . . . The abstract quality of ‘righteousness’ does not fit . . .*

No doubt we are all somewhat shocked to learn of the NIV’s wholesale abandonment of the important theological term “righteousness” in favor of “prosperity.” Before we throw our NIV’s in the trash, however, perhaps we should examine Gail’s information more closely. We can start by looking up Dr. Wolf’s actual words:

<sup>13</sup> F.F. Bruce, *Westcott’s Significance* in Brooke Foss Westcott, *The Epistles of St. John* (3rd ed., 1892; rpt. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971), pp. x-xi.

*The Book of Proverbs also contains several verses where nonliteral translations enhance accuracy. In both [Proverbs 8:18](#) and [21:21](#) the word *sedaqah*—normally rendered “righteousness”—is translated “prosperity,” perhaps understood as the reward of righteous living (cf. [15:6](#)). In [Proverbs 8:18](#) *sedaqah* is linked with riches and enduring wealth, and in [21:21](#) with finding life and honor. The abstract quality of “righteousness” does not seem to fit either verse.<sup>14</sup>*

It is no surprise, sadly, to find out once again that Riplinger has perverted what someone actually said. Note how carefully she clipped out any words that would alert the reader that Dr. Wolf is discussing only two verses in the Book of Proverbs, not all occurrences of “righteousness” in the NIV. But the worst is yet to come: Having twisted Wolf’s words, she proceeds to condemn him based upon the false statement that she produced out of his actual comments:

*Perhaps the armour and breastplate of “righteousness does not fit” Mr. Wolf and his pack because they are puffed up and paunchy, because they have devoured souls ([Ezekiel 22:25](#)). . . . Paul said that those, like Wolf, who teach that “gain is godliness” are “destitute of the truth,” (NABV, p. 165).*

No, it is clearly Ms. Riplinger who is destitute of the truth, and perhaps she does not know of the righteousness of which the NIV speaks:

*But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe, ([Romans 3:21-22](#)).*

### *A new chronology of the Bible?*

As Riplinger comments upon “a peculiar people” in [Titus 2:14](#) and [1 Peter 2:9](#), we are treated to this interesting morsel, “It meant odd when Peter and Paul wrote it and when Moses wrote it 4000 years earlier,” (NABV, p. 171). Apparently Gail’s next book is to be entitled, *New Perspectives in Biblical Chronology*.

### *No personal Gospel for Westcott?*

According to Gail, Westcott “subscribes to ‘only a social interpretation of the Gospel,’” (NABV, p. 234), but of course, this is just another perversion. When we examine the reference that she gives (Life and Letters, Vol. II, p. 101), we discover that Westcott’s son is quoting a sermon by F.J.A. Hort and that the words ‘only a social interpretation of the Gospel’ are Hort’s words, not Westcott’s. We further discover that he is not denying a personal interpretation of the Gospel, but is asserting that there is a social one as well, and that there is “help which only a social

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<sup>14</sup> Kenneth Barker, ed., *The NIV: The Making of a Contemporary Translation* (Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Corporation, 1986), p. 129.

interpretation of the Gospel can give . . . .” So what about Westcott? Did he believe in a personal Gospel?

*In the case of the unbeliever, the judgment is completed; he is separated from Christ, because he hath not believed on the revelation made in the person of Him who alone can save, (Westcott, The Gospel According to St. John, p. 56).*

*Life, in other words, life eternal, is in Christ Jesus, and is realized in all its extent in union with Him: it is death to be apart from Him, (Westcott, The Epistles of St. John, p. xxxix).*

*By believing on the light we become sons of light, (Westcott, The Epistles of St. John, p. 21).*

*The efficacy of Christ’s work extends both to sin and sins. As ‘the Lamb of God’ ‘He taketh away the sin of the world’ . . . . The sinner incurs a debt; he falls into bondage; and he is estranged from God. . . . Thus it is that man needs forgiveness, redemption, reconciliation, (Westcott, The Epistles of St. John, p. 39).*

*For Christ’s sake the Father (v. 14) forgives those who are united with Him, (Westcott, The Epistles of St. John, p. 59).*

*. . . those who believe in the name of the Son of God (v. 13), who cast themselves wholly upon the revelation, are assured of the possession of life eternal, (Westcott, The Epistles of St. John, p. 59).*

*The universal gift of life offered by Christ has to be personally appropriated, (Westcott, The Epistles of St. John, p. 217).*

*So much for another pathetic and wicked accusation.*

### ***Eternal life: Not as great as we thought***

On pages 297-98 Ms. Riplinger uncovers a sinister plot in the use of the word “eternal” by the new Bibles in many places where the KJV has “everlasting.” This is especially devious where everlasting punishment is in view. Silly me – I thought that eternal and everlasting were just about the same thing. No, Gail says that eternal is “the non-descriptive word.” I imagine that those who suffer “eternal damnation” ([Mark 3:29](#), KJV) will find it to be no less severe than those who suffer “everlasting punishment” ([Matthew 25:46](#), KJV).

Perhaps a few more verses from the King James could clarify the vast difference between “eternal” and “everlasting”:

*And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. ~ Matthew 25:46*

*That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. ~ John 3:15-16*

*But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. ~ Romans 6:22-23*

### *Westcott rejected the Deity of Christ?*

Under the heading "False Christs," Gail states, "Satan assaults the throne from two vantage points. First, he denies Jesus' claim to Godhood." She then launches another attack upon Bishop Westcott, producing yet another table, (p. 313):

NEW VERSION EDITOR	LUCIFERIAN
"The Son of man was not necessarily identified with the Christ." "It is not said that Jesus glorified not himself, but the Christ. He never speaks directly of himself as God." <sup>21</sup> Westcott	"In the idea of Christians Christ [sic] is but another name for Jesus . . . The Christ with the Gnostics mean the Impersonal Principle . . . not Jesus . . . Jesus, the-Christ-God is a myth." <sup>22</sup> Blavatsky

Endnote 21 refers the reader to one reference in Westcott's Epistle to the Hebrews (p. 122) and to two references in his commentary on the Gospel of St. John, (pp. 184, 297). The passage for the first reference in *John is 12:34*, which reads:

*The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?*

Notice that the people were confused. They thought that perhaps "the son of man" was someone different from "the Christ." This observation prompted Westcott's comment, quoted by me as it was actually written:

*The question clearly shews that **the title** "the Son of man" was not necessarily identified with "the Christ." [emphasis added] (The Gospel According to St. John, p. 184.)*

The Son of man was not necessarily identified with the Christ. (Gail's version). The shameful rewriting of Westcott's quote speaks for itself. For the next quotation Gail's perversion comes first, then the actual words of Westcott.

*It is not said that Jesus glorified not himself, but the Christ. (Gail).*

*It is not said that 'Jesus' glorified not Himself, but 'the Christ,' the appointed Redeemer, glorified not Himself, (Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 122).*

*So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest . . . [Hebrews 5:5a](#)*

Once again Ms. Riplinger has told us nothing about Westcott, but a great deal about herself. In the final quotation from this table, it is once more Riplinger, then Westcott:

He never speaks directly of himself as God. (Gail)

*. . . the words which follow shew that the Lord accepted the declaration of **His Divinity** as the true expression of faith. He never speaks of Himself directly as God (comp. v.18), but the aim of His revelation was to lead men to see God in Him. [emphasis added](The Gospel According to St. John, p. 297).*

*. . . God was in Christ . . . [II Corinthians 5:19, KJV.](#)*

There are many things said by Westcott that Gail has not shared, such as:

*The imperfect tense of the original suggests in this relation [of the Word before time], as far as human language can do so, the notion of absolute, supra-temporal, existence, (The Gospel According to St. John, p. 2).*

*The mode of the Lord's existence on earth was truly human, and subject to all the conditions of human existence; but **He never ceased to be God** [emphasis added], (The Gospel According to St. John, p. 10).*

*Christ the Incarnate Word is the perfect revelation of the Father: **as God**, He reveals God (i. 18) [emphasis added], (The Gospel According to St. John, p. xliv).*

*No idea of inferiority of nature is suggested by the form of expression, which simply affirms **the true deity of the Word** [emphasis added], (The Gospel According to St. John, p. 3).*

*The simultaneous injunction of faith in God and in Christ under the same conditions implies **the divinity of Christ** [emphasis added], (The Gospel According to St. John, p. 200).*

*[Commenting on [John 17:3](#)] . . . to regard the juxtaposition of thee, the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, as in any way impairing **the true divinity of Christ**, by contrast with the Father, is totally to misunderstand the passage [emphasis added], (The Gospel According to St. John, p. 239).*

## *Logical Fallacies*

Riplinger's primary means of assault upon both modern Bible versions and those who have any part in producing them is a method that I have titled guilt by verbal association. It runs something like this: New Age so-and-so uses the word or phrase abc; new Bible versions use the word or phrase abc; therefore, new Bible versions are part and parcel with the New Age movement. The argument is a clear *non sequitur*. It simply does not follow that the use of a given word or phrase by a modern Bible identifies that Bible with some false group that uses the same word or phrase. Does anyone not realize how many biblical terms have been redefined and misused by any number of cults and false religions? Would we avoid such terms as God, spirit, sin, salvation, justification, sanctification, redemption, meditation, worship, love, grace and death, all because they have been misused in a multitude of ways? The absurdity of it all comes to a head when we observe that the offending words and phrases are almost without exception present in the King James Version itself. So it's not that new Bibles use such words and phrases; it's that they use them too much.

Ms. Riplinger's verbal subterfuge is compounded by her recognition that false religions use biblical terminology. "The New Age scheme to use Christian words to veil their 'venom' has not gone unnoticed by cult watchers," (p. 13). I guess I am a little confused here. The fact that a word (or phrase) is used by the New Age does not mean that the word is not a "Christian word," unless modern Bibles also use the word or phrase, but then only if the KJV does not use it as often. To quote a more reliable source than Riplinger,

*It constantly happens in the history of thought that the same terms and phrases are used by schools which have no direct affinity, in senses which are essentially distinct, while they have a superficial likeness, (Brooke Foss Westcott, The Gospel of St. John, p. xv).*

One example among many that could be given is the more frequent use of "the Christ" in modern versions where the KJV has "Christ." As Gail puts it, "Real references to Jesus as 'the Christ' are rare; however the NKJV and new versions literally paint their pages with this pawn," (p. 318). Using "the Christ" is tantamount to following the Antichrist, (p. 318). That is, if you use it too much; a few times is O.K. Well, "real references to Jesus as 'the Christ'" are not that rare: there are nineteen of them in the KJV (compared with fifty-five in the NKJV). The real shock comes with the New Revised Standard Version: it only has three!<sup>15</sup> It must be much less New Age than the KJV. I am just a little miffed, however, that the National Council of Churches had to come to our rescue.

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<sup>15</sup> This actually occurs because the NRSV uses "Messiah" instead of "Christ," but then again, I am not aware of the New Age using the term "the Messiah."

## *History versus opinion*

Riplinger boldly states,

*Consequently, history records Valentinus' attempt to deaden John's blow by changing "begotten Son" to "begotten God" (see Theodotus' Excerpts from Theodotus), (p. 338).*

So where did she garner this bit of "historical" information? The same place all the other KJV only crowd ultimately did -- from John Burgon's discussion of John 1:18 in his *The Causes of Corruption of the Traditional Text*.<sup>16</sup> To deal with last matters first, note that Gail wants us to see some excerpts from Theodotus. It is interesting that she gives no page number, publisher, or any other information. It is also interesting that an ancient writer would be presented as the author of a book of his own excerpts. What is actually going on here is a false presentation of scholarship by Ms. Riplinger. She got this from Burgon's footnote #2 at the bottom of page 215, "Excerpt. Theod. 968.—Heracleon's name is also connected by Origen with this text." She shows no knowledge of what this means, but apparently stuck it in with her material to make us think that she has solid research behind her blather.

A reading of Burgon reveals that the idea that the Valentinians substituted "God" for "Son" in *John 1:18* is the Dean's opinion based primarily upon the theory that these gnostic heretics would have a motive for such a substitution. There is absolutely no ancient record that says that they actually made the substitution. Burgon is most certainly entitled to his learned opinion, but Riplinger should present it as what it is, and not as historical fact. It could be argued that John wrote "God," and that the orthodox changed it to "Son" to rob the heretics of one of their proof texts, and that the change was popular because it appeared better suited to John's usage.

## *The sinless Son of God*

"Westcott, however, omitted the clause because he believed Christ had sinned," (NABV, p. 368).

In a continued display of absurdity, Riplinger charges Westcott with believing that Christ had sinned. It is hardly possible to heap enough scorn upon the convoluted reasoning that leads to her outlandish assertion. In Gail's twisted logic, new versions lay the foundation for the charge by first omitting the phrase "without a cause" from the prohibition against anger toward a brother in *Matthew 5:22*. With this condition removed, accusers of Christ can then point to his anger with the money changers and the Pharisees (*John 2:15* & *Mark 3:5*) and accuse him of sin.

An endnote refers the reader to a comment by Westcott:

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<sup>16</sup> John Burgon, *The Causes of Corruption of the Traditional Text* (1896; rpt. Collingswood, NJ: The Dean Burgon Society Press, 1998), pp. 215-18.

*All that truly belongs to humanity, all therefore that truly belongs to every individual in the whole race, belongs also to Him, (The Gospel According to St. John, p. 35).*

Riplinger (and Waite<sup>17</sup> before her) thinks that this proves her point. Never mind that Westcott was simply asserting that Christ is fully and genuinely man. He elsewhere writes that sin is an aberration, and is not part of man in his essence as man.<sup>18</sup> Westcott is very clear as to his belief in the sinlessness of Christ:

*His [Christ's] work was to take away sins: He Himself was sinless. . . . He came to remove all sins even as He was Himself sinless, (Westcott, The Epistles of St. John, p. 103).*

*True fellowship with Christ, Who is absolutely sinless, is necessarily inconsistent with sin; and, yet further, the practice of sin excludes the reality of a professed knowledge of Christ, (The Epistles of St. John, p. 104).*

### *The Ghostly Guild*

Riplinger makes much (too much) of a society at Cambridge that Westcott joined known as the Ghostly Guild. Its purpose was *"the investigation of all supernatural appearances and effects,"* (Arthur Westcott, The Life and Letters of B.F. Westcott, p. 117). The purpose is defined as investigation, not participation. One of Gail's numerous comments upon the society is as follows:

*Westcott's son writes of his father's lifelong "faith in what for lack of a better name, one must call Spiritualism . . ." The subject was, he notes, "unintelligible or alarming to the general." In response to public disfavor regarding his esotericism and liberalism and in light of his position in the 'religious' community, Westcott determined that public involvement in the Ghostly Guild "led to no good," (NABV, p. 407).*

The genuine discussion of the Guild by Westcott's son Arthur which Riplinger twists for her own purposes is:

*What happened to this Guild in the end I have not discovered. My father ceased to interest himself in these matters, not altogether, I believe, from want of faith in what, for lack of a better name, one must call Spiritualism, but because he was seriously convinced that such investigations led to no good, (Arthur Westcott, The Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott, Vol. II, p. 119).*

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<sup>17</sup>D.A. Waite, The Theological Heresies of Westcott and Hort (Collingswood, NJ: The Bible for Today Press, 1979), p. 27.

<sup>18</sup> I read some clear material in Westcott to this effect recently, but unfortunately am now unable to locate the reference.

So here is the truth: Westcott did not leave the Ghostly Guild because of his public reputation, as Gail falsely states it, but rather because 1) to some extent he had become skeptical of what his son titled “Spiritualism,” and 2) because “he was seriously convinced that such investigations led to no good.” While we know little about the Guild, it certainly does not appear to be something that a Christian should have joined.<sup>19</sup> Our condemnation, however, should be tempered by our limited knowledge and by the recognition that Westcott himself turned away from the activities of the guild.

### *Is the KJV inspired?*

Riplinger informs her readers that “It appears the case for the inspiration of the KJV is mounting,” (p. 510). She approvingly quotes Frank Logsdon’s claim that “the Authorized Version is absolutely correct. How correct? 100% correct!” (NABV, inside cover). If the KJV is perfect, why has it been changed numerous times through the years and why doesn’t Gail use the original version of 1611? Was the 1611 version the perfect one, or is one of the others? This can be illustrated with a selection from the first table in her book:

KJV 1611		Gail’s KJV
holy Ghost	John 7:39	Holy Ghost
holy Ghost	I Corinthians 2:13	Holy Ghost
<i>holy</i> Ghost	Matthew 12:31	Holy Ghost
holy Ghost	Acts 6:3	Holy Ghost
holy Ghost	Acts 8:18	Holy Ghost

It might be argued that this is only a matter a capitalization, but are we to suppose that such details are not of paramount importance in the inspired Word of God? Would *John 1:1* be acceptable as “the Word was god?” Did not Christ teach that even jots and tittles are significant in the sacred text? (*Matthew 5:18*). Riplinger even argues that the italicized words in the KJV are inspired, (NABV, p. 510). There are literally scores of places in NABV where it can be shown that Riplinger is not using the “perfect” KJV of 1611.<sup>20</sup> On this issue she talks the talk, but she does not walk the walk.

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<sup>19</sup> I have in my possession and have been examining two of Riplinger’s primary sources for the Ghostly Guild, namely *The Occult Underground* by James Webb and *The Founders of Psychical Research* by Alan Gauld. Scant reference is made to the Guild. It may have been devoted purely to academic research. Many people had been investigating Spiritualism since the strange occurrences at the Fox home in upper New York beginning in 1848, and many were simply concerned with proving it all to be nothing but chicanery.

<sup>20</sup> Actually there is not, nor ever has been, a “perfect” KJV of 1611. The early printings had large numbers of printing errors, and subsequent editions, as they corrected errors, made other changes relative to the editions of 1611. It is ironic that the KJO organization, The Dean Burgon Society, has thoroughly documented this by reprinting F.H.A. Scrivener, *The Authorized Edition of the English Bible* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1884).

## *Goblin stories and the Patch the Pirate connection*

In her continuing effort to link Westcott to the occult, Ms. Riplinger informs us that, “Arthur Westcott recalls his father’s tradition of reading Goblin stories at Christmas,” (p. 424). The truth of the matter is as follows:

*[In what was apparently a diary] On Christmas Day he enters: “Evening reading: Anderson: Goblin Market.” The meaning of this is that after we had, in family conclave assembled, exchanged Christmas gifts, receiving them with appropriate words from my father’s hands, he read to us, according to ancient custom, a fairy tale, (Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott, Vol. II, p. 185).*

*Goblin Market* is a poem written by Christina Rossetti. Westcott did not have a “tradition of reading Goblin stories.” He had a tradition of reading fairy tales, one of which was the single poem, *Goblin Market*, which he read for Christmas in 1894, just a few days before Miss Rossetti’s death from cancer. I have the poem, but will not reproduce it here as it is thirteen pages long. It has nothing to do with the occult. Christina Rossetti not only wrote poems, but hymns as well, one of which is included in Frank Garlock’s hymn book *Majesty Hymns* (p. 222).<sup>21</sup> Many readers are perhaps more familiar with Dr. Garlock’s son-in-law, Ron Hamilton, a.k.a. Patch the Pirate.

## *Editorial activity away from the Egyptian text*

*“Gordon Fee asserts that P66, ‘offers us first-hand evidence of a kind of official editorial activity going on in the church in Alexandria at the time of Clement,’” (NABV, p. 532).*

From this quotation, Gail wants us to conclude that the nasty people in Alexandria were busy corrupting the true Byzantine manuscripts and were thereby creating the false Egyptian Bible. Somehow she forgot to include the very next sentence from Fee: “And almost everything the scribe does points away from recensional activity of a kind that would produce the Egyptian text-type.”<sup>22</sup>

## *Vaticanus is NOT a recension*

On page 547, Gail maligns the Greek uncial manuscript Vaticanus (also designated “B”). She wants us to know that NT scholars regard the manuscript as an Egyptian recension, that is, a critical edition based upon other sources. She leads into a quote from Gordon Fee by informing us that Fee “brings us up to date” when he says, “[T]he recensional nature of B has become a

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<sup>21</sup>Frank Garlock, ed., *Majesty Hymns* (Greenville, SC: Majesty Music, 1997).

<sup>22</sup>Gordon D. Fee, “P75, P66, and Origen: The Myth of Early Textual Recension in Alexandria” in *Studies in the Theory and Method of New Testament Textual Criticism*, by Eldon J. Epp and Gordon D. Fee (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993), p. 258.

byword in NT textual criticism.” What she fails to tell is that the statement from Fee occurs in an article by him entitled, *P75, P66, and Origen: The Myth of Early Textual Recension in Alexandria*.<sup>23</sup> Obvious from the title, Riplinger has made Fee appear to say the opposite of what he actually argues. In his own words without corruption,

*The studies by C.L. Porter of its text of John (1961, 1962) and by C.M. Martini (1966) of its text of Luke, where Martini was especially pursuing the question of the recensional character of B, have demonstrated such a close relationship between this papyrus [P75] and B that there is no longer any possibility that B reflects a late-third/early-fourth-century recension in any sense of that term, (Fee, p. 251).*

Or as Epp states the matter:

*As a matter of fact, the discovery of P75 nullifies an older view of standardization, for the close affinity of P75 with Codex Vaticanus swept away the cobwebs of a long-standing and commonly held notion that Codex Vaticanus reflects only a third/fourth-century recension. On the contrary, it can be demonstrated that the P75-B textual tradition represents a relatively pure form of preservation of the text of a common ancestor, and that P75, therefore, is not itself an editorial adaptation or recension.*<sup>24</sup>

Once again Riplinger has given us false information: She said that her quotation from Fee would “bring us up to date,” but then she presents what Fee said about an old position as if it were current, while leaving out his new information. The discovery and analysis of P75 and P66 has provided much earlier support for the Alexandrian text as found in Vaticanus. Of course Gail does not want us to know this.

### *Vaticanus not as different as she says*

Riplinger could not be any more wrong when she writes, “B agrees with the *Textus Receptus* only about 50% of the time,” (NABV, p. 551). I have not read Vaticanus (B) itself, but I have spent much time reading the United Bible Societies Greek New Testament, 3<sup>rd</sup>. ed. (UBS3), which of course, contains a textual apparatus that shows the readings of Vaticanus at significant variants. According to Gail herself, Vaticanus = Westcott & Hort = UBS3, which is not altogether correct, but it is not too far off either. For clarification, there is not one *Textus Receptus*, but a whole string of them that differ in many points from each other. I have the 1550 edition of Stephanus both in book form and on my computer, and have therefore used it primarily as “my” *Textus Receptus*. I have just finished collating the first seven chapters of Romans in UBS3 and TR 1550. It is pure nonsense to assert that they only agree 50% of the

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., pp. 247-73.

<sup>24</sup>Eldon Jay Epp, “The Significance of the Papyri for Determining the Nature of the New Testament Text in the Second Century: A Dynamic View of Textual Transmission” in *Studies in the Theory and Method of New Testament Textual Criticism*, by Eldon J. Epp and Gordon D. Fee (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993), p. 290.

time.<sup>25</sup> For the great majority of the text in these chapters, they agree word for word and even letter for letter.<sup>26</sup> There are four translatable differences in Romans 1. In *Romans 1:1*, UBS3 has “Christ Jesus” vs. “Jesus Christ” in TR 1550. In *Romans 1:16*, UBS3 lacks “of Christ” vs. TR 1550. In *Romans 1:29*, UBS3 lacks “fornication” vs. TR 1550. In *Romans 1:31*, UBS3 lacks “implacable” vs. TR 1550. Two important points can be made here. First, the total variants in chapter one are more substantial than the total variants for any of the next six chapters in Romans. Second, an analysis of the variants does not suggest the deliberate corruption that Gail postulates. I cannot develop this point at length, but as an example, the variants regarding “fornication” and “implacable” are easily accounted for in Greek by each word being beside another word that it is similar to in both appearance and pronunciation. Many godly scholars have examined the variants in the text of the New Testament, and unlike Gail, have concluded that they are very limited both in scope and impact.

### *More nonsense about Vaticanus*

*“Protestant theologians question its lack of use by anyone for 1300 years—then its sudden ‘discovery’ in the Vatican in 1481. Its immediate use to suppress the Reformation and its subsequent release in 1582, as the Jesuit-Rheims Bible, . . . ,” (NABV, p. 552).*

Wrong again. The Rheims Bible was translated from Latin, not Greek:

*During the years that the college [the English College at Douai, founded by William Allen] had its headquarters in Rheims one of its most distinguished professors, Gregory Martin (formerly Scholar of St John’s College, Oxford), translated the Bible **from the Latin Vulgate into English** for the benefit of English-speaking adherents of the old religion. He translated the Old Testament first and then the New; his New Testament translation, however, was published first, in 1582, . . . . [emphasis added].<sup>27</sup>*

### *Gail or Gordon?*

Displaying a surprising knowledge of Greek manuscripts, Gail informs us: “Although the papyri show that KJV readings existed and dominated in the early church, they also contain some minority text readings,” (NABV, p. 581). We would be much wiser to listen to Gordon Fee, one of the world’s leading conservative New Testament textual scholars, for a correct view of the early papyri:

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<sup>25</sup> I suspect that Gail got this information from some material that says that Vaticanus agrees with the TR about 50% of the time for a particular set of variants in a limited portion of text, but that is not how she presents it.

<sup>26</sup>Of course, this observation only applies to the printed text as in the UBS3 and TR 1550, which have undergone some “polishing” in regard to minor blemishes.

<sup>27</sup>F.F. Bruce, *History of the Bible in English* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 114.

*From AD 150-225 we have firm data from all over the ancient world that a variety of text forms were in use, but in all these materials there is not a single illustration of the later Majority(=Byzantine) text as a text form. The evidence from Egypt is indeed basically singular. The earliest Greek MSS (P<sup>66</sup> P<sup>75</sup> P<sup>46</sup> P<sup>72</sup>; ca. 175-250), the citations of Clement (ca. 190-215) and Origen (ca. 215-245), and the earliest translations (Sahidic and Bohairic Coptic) all bear witness to a single text-type. There are indeed some scattered readings in Clement and P<sup>66</sup> from the so-called Western tradition and a few readings in P<sup>66</sup> where it now has the earliest evidence for Byzantine readings, but these are so few as to alter the basic text of these witnesses only slightly.<sup>28</sup>*

### *And finally*

One last assault from Riplinger:

*NABV, p. 588: Plato wrote much about the third Root-race, the Atlantians. Westcott picked up on it, writing in his books of scientific proof for the existence of Atlantis. He said the 'Lost Continent of Atlantis' was destroyed because, "the divine element within was overpowered by human passion."*

No, Gail, Westcott is not discussing his view of Atlantis, but rather the contents of a poem by Plato about Atlantis:

*But at last the Divine element within them was overpowered by human passion. Unjust aggrandizement and power seemed the greatest blessings, and they were blind to their own shame; whereupon Zeus devised their chastisement, and called the gods together to hear his purpose . . . And so the poem ends; for in the "Critias" the myth has grown into a poem, (Westcott, *Essays in the History of Religious Thought in the West*, p. 25).*

No doubt we also are expected to think that Westcott believed in Zeus and the other gods of the pantheon. Westcott did not write of "scientific proof" for Atlantis, but rather of scientific evidence, and the reference cited by Riplinger for page 211 in her endnote for this quotation has nothing whatsoever to do with Plato or Atlantis, but rather discusses the location of Origen's tomb. Another shining example of careful research.

### *Conclusion*

The sad thing about Riplinger's book is that many good Christian people who have no knowledge of Greek, Greek manuscripts, Bible translations, or other areas discussed, will read

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<sup>28</sup>Gordon D. Fee, "The Majority Text and the Original Text of the NT" in *Studies in the Theory and Method of New Testament Textual Criticism*, by Eldon J. Epp and Gordon D. Fee (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993), p. 186.

her nonsense and will imagine that New Age Bible Versions has told them the truth. They will be led to vilify other godly Christian people and to cut themselves off from excellent translations of the Bible which could be powerful tools to help them gain a greater knowledge of the precious Word of God. New Age Bible Versions is not just a book. It is a wicked attack upon the body of Christ and upon the Holy Scriptures. I have touched upon only a small sample of the faults in Riplinger's book. My reading and examination of NABV for several months has led me to believe that there is not a single numbered page that does not have multiple errors. All who in any way contribute to its promotion and distribution are bringing great harm to the cause of Christ.

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