



BBC UPDATE

PROMISES OR PARCHMENTS?



Dr. Thomas M. Strouse

Introduction

The Apostle Paul gave the simple but cogent prescription for the believer in this world of uncertainty, saying, “*For we walk by faith, not by sight*” (II Cor. 5:7). Elsewhere, he cited the prophet Habakkuk, who said, “*but the just shall live by his faith*” (Hab.2:4) three times, once in Rom. 1:17, once in Gal. 3:11, and once in Heb. 10:38. The theological watchword for the believer is “*fideism*,” not “*rationalism*” nor “*evidentialism*.” For instance, the Christian believes God’s testimony of creation, Who said, “*Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear*” (Heb. 11:3). The Scripture easily debunks the “theory of evolution,” the musings of Darwin and Einstein, and the attendant questions about the “big bang,” the “infinite universe,” and the queries and research about such drivel, etc. The child of God must trust the revelatory truth of the Bible about the promises of redemption and of all Bible truth.

The Evidentialism of Textual Criticism

Not so, it seems when the subject of translations and texts of the Bible arise! The editors of the modern English versions of the Bible assure Christians that “**the science of textual criticism**” produces the early but not original Greek text of the New Testament through their pre-disposed choice of “favored” manuscripts of the Greek parchments. Indeed, there are well over 5800 Greek manuscripts of some or all the New Testament books preserved on papyri or parchment material. The scholars of textual criticism, a non-biblical office, guarantee Christianity that through their expertise that they can recover, restore, and reconstruct the Greek New Testament text that the Lord purposefully did not preserve. Furthermore, Christians should applaud the textual critics for this nearly impossible service (*sic*). The parchments of the Greek New Testament save the day! And the gurus of textual criticism have the uncanny ability to scavenge over the parchments and decide which words are the original, or closest to the original, or might possibly be the original. Some of the papyri are P66 and P75, and the two favorite parchments are *Codex Sinaiticus* and *Codex Vaticanus*. The United Bible Societies Greek New Testament (5th Edition) is the latest effort on chasing the shrinking mirage of the original Greek New Testament. The English Standard Version (*ESV*) is one of the latest translations the UBSGNT available to Christians, and it differs from the Received Text behind the King James Version by the reduction of about 7% of the words. Not to worry though, Christian, just because key Christological verses (e.g., Jn. 1:18; I Tim. 3:16; I Jn. 5:7) and ecclesiological verses (Acts 2:47; 8:37; 9:31; Eph. 1:1; *et al*) are changed or removed, the lineage of parchments is ancient, and almost goes back to the original text, giving uncertain certainty about the Lord’s words! Brethren, put your faith in the inferior evidentialism of the Greek Parchments and the inscrutable scholarship of text critics!

PROMISES OR PARCHMENTS?

Continued from Page 1

The Fideism of Bible Believers

Nevertheless, Christians who take seriously the aforementioned inspired truth penned by the Apostle Paul recognize that *evidentialism* (and *rationalism*) is always inferior to *fideism*. Will the Christian finally be persuaded of truth of the universal Noah Flood only after a piece of “*gopher wood*” is found on Mount Ararat? Far superior to the lineage of the Parchments of the Greek New Testament, however interpreted, are the Promises of the Saviour to preserve His inspired words. The un-inspired and un-inspiring gurus of textual criticism say “trust in our Parchments”! The Lord Jesus Christ says “trust in My Promises.” The promises of Christ are the following:

1. “*The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever*” (Ps. 12:6-7).
2. “*Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever*” (Ps. 119:152).
3. “*Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever*” (Psalm 119:160).
4. “*But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*” (Matthew 4:4).
5. “*For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled*” (Matthew 5:18).
6. “*And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail*” (Luke 16:17).
7. “*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away*” (Matthew 24:35).
8. “*And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God*” (Luke 4:4)
9. “*That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour*” (2 Peter 3:2).
10. “*But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (Jude 1:17).
11. The expression “*It is written*” (*gegraptai*) first found in Mt. 2:5 and then following, occurs 67x in the Greek NT. The perfect aspect of the Greek verb *grapho* asserts that the activity of writing occurred in the past, and that the result of the writing was words which continue on unto the present! The very words of Scripture have been preserved!

The Biblical Challenge for Textual Critics

Contrariwise, where are the verses that say “**heaven and earth shall pass away, and so will my words**”?! Where are the verses that say that Christ gave to the church “some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, **some textual scholars**, some pastors, and

Continued on Page 3

PROMISES OR PARCHMENTS?

Continued from Page 2

teachers?! The Lord Jesus never gave His disciples the slightest hint that the “scholars” of Christianity were to **recover, restore, or reconstruct** the Greek text that He purposefully **did not promise to preserve, and did not in fact preserve!** Why would the child of God expect that the LORD would not preserve the very inspired words that He had commanded all men by which to live (Mt. 4:4; Lk. 4:4) in order to give an account to Him at the judgment (Jn. 12:48; Rom. 14:12)? Why would the born-again believer expect that the Lord Jesus would raise up a group of textual critics of all religious stripes and heresies using secular means and biased methods based on two questionable parchments to produce a Greek text “**close**” to the inspired originals? After all, the Christian has the Author of the Bible living within Who purposefully teaches and guides believers in all truth and thereby allows them “to know all things” (cf. I Jn. 2:20, 27)! Although there is limited and secondary value in studying the parchments of the words of Scripture, and certainly a strong case for the majority of Received Text parchments which have perpetuated the originals, so much controversy from opposing perspectives for manuscript evidence make this secondary argument almost null without the prior position of “promises” or “no promises.”

Conclusion

Without the biblical promises of Scripture for the preservation of the *autographa*, there is no certainty that Christians would ever have any or all of the words of God. The textual critics are still trying to come closer to “the retreating mirage” of the Greek originals through man-made schemes based on secular presuppositions. Is the believer going to walk by faith which leads to “the text received by all” or by sight which leads to a concocted restored text that reduces the words of the NT text, and that reduction in significant Christological passages? Promises or Parchments?



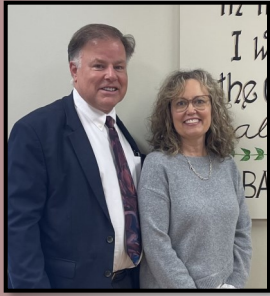
Mr. Bill Gagnon

HOW BIG IS YOUR GOD?

A Church Member’s Response to the Textual Critics

How big is your God? My God is so big that I EXPECT Him to preserve His Word! That is the God I placed my faith in. The Word of God substantiates my expectations. Very early in my born again life, I became familiar with the textual debate. It was not difficult for me to accept, by faith, the Received Text. I expected my God to preserve His Word. The spirit of truth was guiding me. Any theory that lessens the sovereignty of God’s ability to preserve His words, as He has promised, clearly from the scripture, crumbles under the weight of all other doctrines. Local churches from the beginning have been given the commission of preservation. They are now the stewards of the oracles of God. Those churches, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, produced the underlying received text of the KJV. It was understood that we had God’s Words and put them in an English translation, much to the chagrin of many. It was at that point that God’s Word in English was more widely available to man than ever before in the history of mankind. Ultimately, at the end of the day, we must come to God by faith.

PRAYER REQUEST UPDATE



*“Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned,
I whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content..”*

Philippians 4:11

On December 19th, 2023 Kirsten Gagnon was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. The tumor, located on the body of the pancreas, was inoperable at that time due to the complication of the tumor encasing two secondary blood vessels. The team of doctors immediately initiated an intense treatment plan of chemotherapy to shrink the tumor away from the blood vessels so it could be surgically removed. The treatment consists of eight rounds of chemotherapy with a CT scan after the fourth round to evaluate the effectiveness of the treatment. Each round lasts two weeks and involves three days of intense chemotherapy followed by eleven days of rest and recovery. Round one began on January 8th and Kirsten has just completed the fifth round, with round six starting Monday, March 18th. The CT scan was preformed which showed a 20% reduction of the tumor and one of the blood vessels has been freed. After the eighth round, another scan will be performed to determine if surgery is possible at that time.

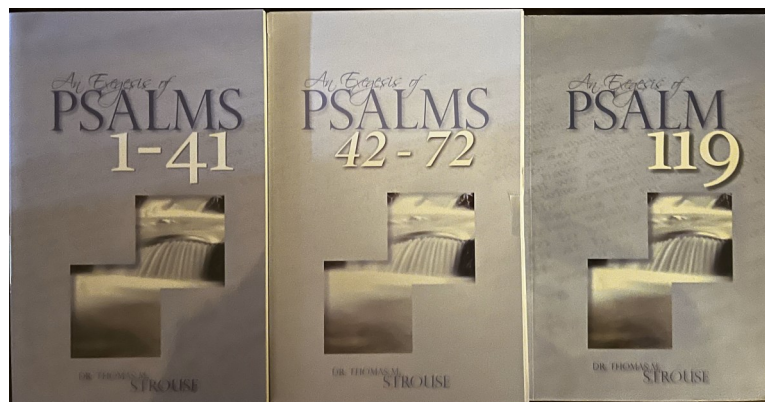
The Lord has been gracious as the side effects have been, for the most part, minimal. Fatigue and dehydration have been the biggest obstacles for her to overcome. The verse above has been, and still is Kirsten’s life verse. We have learned from Pastor’s teaching from Job that the trial is not the cancer, but rather how we respond to having the cancer.

Thank you so much for your prayers as we have seen many answers so far in her treatment. We kindly request that you continue come boldly unto the throne of grace on Kirsten’s behalf, that she may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Heb 4:16)

BBTS SPRING LECTURE SERIES

On Friday April 12, 2024, Dr. M. Ryan Strouse and Dr. Thomas M. Strouse will deal with the topic of *“Christian Suffering: Well Doing or Evil Doing?”* (I Pet. 3:17), covering subjects from suffering because of madness to suffering without cause. Pastor Stephen Hinebaugh and Galilean Baptist Church will host the Bible Baptist Theological Seminary Spring Lecture Series from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. A delicious luncheon and voluminous book table will be available for all attendees. Please give names and numbers for those planning on attending by April 1, 2024.

NEW COMMENTARY



The next commentary by Dr. Thomas Strouse on the Psalter is now available. It is entitled *An Exegesis of Psalms 42-72* (452 pages; 934 footnotes) and costs

\$25.00. It focuses on two significant issues, namely the use of imprecatory Psalms, and the interpretation that Absalom and Ahithophel are in the background audience of many of these psalms. .

His previous commentaries on *An Exegesis of Psalms 1-41* (2006) and *An Exegesis of Psalm 119* (2008) are still available.

BBC/BBTS 2024 SCHEDULE

April 12
BBTS Spring Lecture Series
*"Christian Suffering: Well
Doing or Evil Doing"*

May 18
Bible Baptist Church
Graduation Banquet

May 19
Bible Baptist Church
Commencement Service

May 27-31
Ireland Module
Greek and Acts III

June 3-7
Community Baptist Church
Coopersburg, PA
Bibliology

July 22-26
Plymouth, NH
TBA

August 12-17
**Indonesia Module and
Commencement**

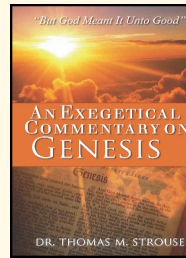
September 23-27
Bible Baptist Church
Nashua, NH
TBA

October 20-23
**Willow Grove Baptist
Church**
Waynesburg, PA
*Timeless Truths Bible
Conference*

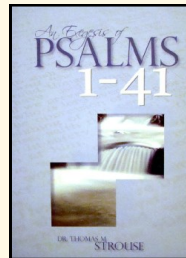
October 27
Calvary Baptist Church,
Mannington, WV
TBA

The Publication Page

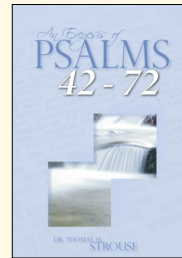
The books on this page may be purchased by contacting:
 Bible Baptist Church
 860-229-5387
 drtms_bbts@juno.com



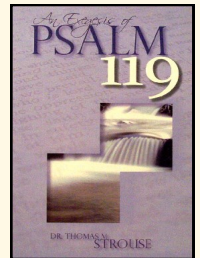
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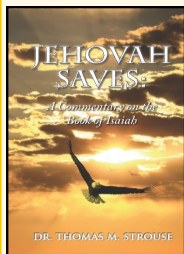
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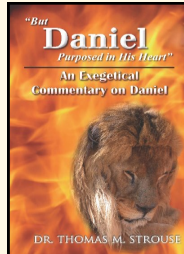
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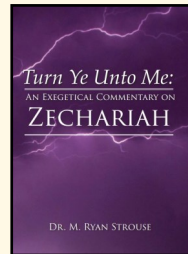
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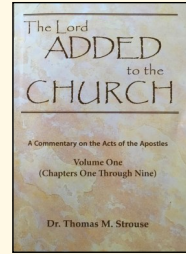
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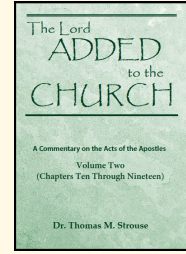
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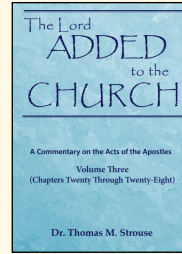
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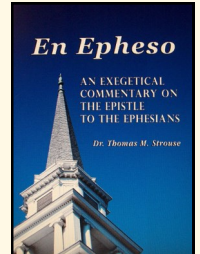
Acts 1-9
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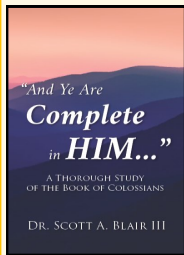
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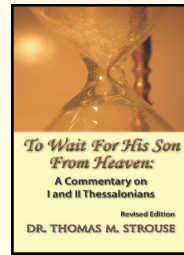
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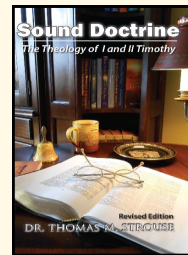
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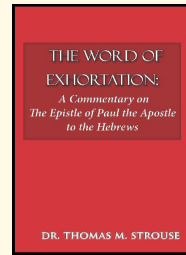
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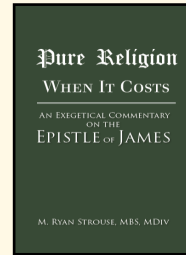
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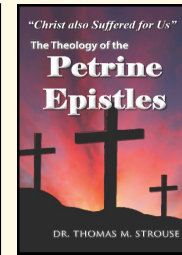
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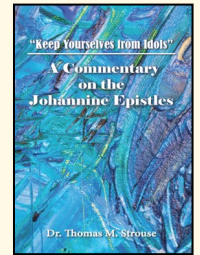
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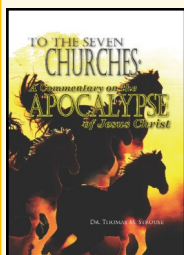
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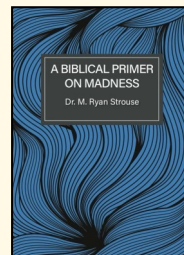
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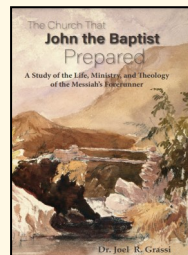
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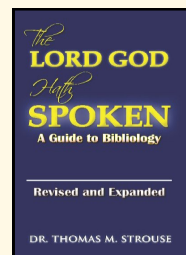
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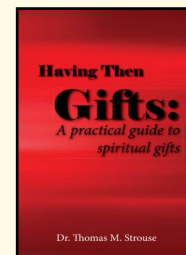
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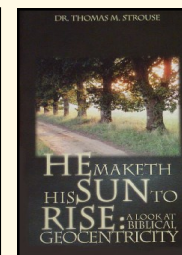
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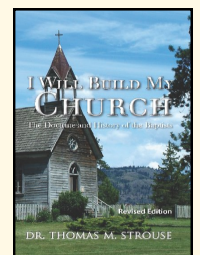
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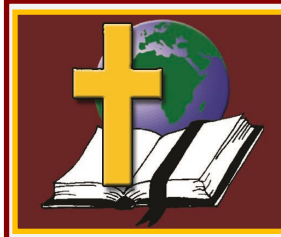
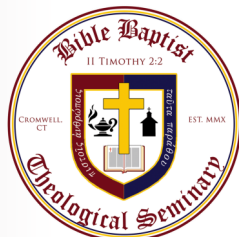


Baptist Doctrine & History
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6

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