

The Duality of Some Scriptures

NOTE: By ‘duality’ I mean that some scripture verses vary with the version so that they produce two completely different meanings.

Due to the differences in the many ancient manuscripts that were used to produce our English Bibles, there are large numbers of verses that differ.¹ Many say that these variations are irrelevant and that the intent of the biblical record is kept in its entirety. That may be so, but when doctrines are developed on a single verse which has variants, there is cause for concern.

Take for example the **Mark 16:9-20**. This complete section is removed from NU² based translations, or if it is included, it is bracketed as not being in the original text written by Mark. The doctrine of the laying on of hands is based on verse 18 in this block, so if it wasn’t originally written by Mark we can’t use it as a basis for any doctrine. Of course, James 5:14 makes a similar statement and Jesus operated like that, so it’s a doctrine that comes from the whole of the NT, not just this one verse.

A single verse without variants and balanced by NT writings should be the basis for a doctrine (teaching). However, when there is only one verse that has variants, a doctrine cannot be logically based on it. For example: The doctrine of ‘essential baptism’ comes from verse 16 in this block: “He who believes and is baptized will be saved” – if you aren’t baptised, you’re not saved. This is a doctrine based on a single verse which is not strongly supported by the NT. Here’s another.

John 3:13

- *No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. (NKJV)³*
- *No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven—the Son of Man.⁴ (ISV)*

Was Jesus still in Heaven while he was on Earth????

It can be explained spiritually, but is that knowledge essential for Kingdom living and spiritual maturity?

Because there are 2 variants to this verse, it is not worth debating or being contentious about. It’s best left alone because there’s no back-up verses in the NT to help unravel it.

And another.

Mark 9:29

- *So He said to them, “This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting.” (NKJV)*

Interestingly, **NU-Text omits “and fasting”**. As my Sword Bible app states this, if you can understand it:

M TR (p45(vid) A C D E F G H K L M N S U V W X Y Gamma Theta Pi Sigma Phi Psi Omega 0211 f1 f13 33 892 1342 al. Byz Lect Lat(a.aur.b.c. d.f.ff2.i.l.q.r1) vg syr(s.p.h.pal) sa bo aeth arm geo2 goth slav; Diatess(arab), Tert, Cl(hom), Juv, Ast, Hil, Ath, Bas, Ambr, Chr, Hier, Aug). NU (Aleph* B Delta* 0274 lat(k) geo1; Cl) lacks “and fasting,” apparently from haplography1 by homoioarcton2: ka-ka

1 – 17 verses/blocks are missing from NU versions (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Bible_verses_not_included_in_modern_translations)

2 – Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament (N) and in the United Bible Societies’ fourth edition (U). Based on Alexandrian or Egyptian texts.

3 – Only 10 out of the 42 versions on biblegateway.com render the verse like this

4 – NU-Text omits “who is in heaven” (32 out of the 42 versions on biblegateway.com render the verse with this missing)

So, the question arises: Which one of these statement is correct? Which one did Jesus utter – “prayer” or “prayer and fasting”?

This actually matters.

Most evangelical Christians quote and implement “prayer and fasting” because they say that’s what ‘the word of God’ states. But which one of these two expressions is ‘the word of God’?

If we implement the wrong one, we are out of alignment with spiritual principles.

If we do “prayer and fasting” just to ‘cover all the bases’, we are not aligning with Heaven. Instead, we are operating at the second-rate level of “I don’t know”, and the enemy laughs at the lack of genuine spiritual authority.

We could check other Gospel texts to see what they’ve recorded. This is what we find:

Matthew 17:21 (NKJV) – *However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.*”

So, it looks like we’ve solved the problem – we are to fast.

Surprise, NU-Text omits this verse.⁵ As these are the only 2 references to this statement, we are still not able to resolve the problem. In fact, this knowledge makes it even more conclusive that fasting is OUT. But, we need to be careful, because fasting may have important value. However, it’s not enough to continue to ascend to the need for pray and fasting because the church system believes it and teaches it.

BTW: In context, this verse relates to dealing with demons. It’s not proof for use in any other situation.

~~~~~

☀ **Here’s another one from the NT. The variation this time is based on the translator’s interpretation, not discrepancies in ancient manuscripts.**

### **1 Timothy 3:15**

- *I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. (NKJV)*
- *you’ll know how you should behave in God’s household. It is the church of the living God and the backbone and support of the truth. (CEB – similarly AMP, CSB, RSV, NIV, TLV, NET, ISV)<sup>6</sup>*

Is a church building the House of God???? This is what the church system ascribes to.

There is no other teaching in the NT that supports the existence of a building that is known as ‘the house of God’. It was a foreign concept to the move of the spirit in the first church as **the *ekklesia* is the house of God, built with living stones**.<sup>7</sup> Along with that spiritual concept, each genuine born-again believer is the temple of God<sup>8</sup> because his presence (his Spirit) is in them. That’s the definition of God’s temple – God resides there.

These concepts are essential for us to understand so that religion doesn’t entrench us in its system.

~~~~~

5 – 14 out of the 42 versions on BibleGateway.com either leave this verse out or bracket it to indicate this fact

6 – 30 out of the 42 versions on biblegateway.com render the verse like this

7 – 1 Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:19-21

8 – 1 Corinthians 6:19

☀ **Here's one from the OT. The difference this time is also based on the translator's interpretation, not variants in the ancient manuscripts.**

Deuteronomy 32:8

- *“When the Most High divided their inheritance to the nations, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel.” (NKJV)*
- *“...according to the number of the sons of God” (ESV, RSV, VOICE, WYC)*

Here's what Michael Heiser says about this verse. His explanation identifies the correct rendering of the text so that it is harmonious with ancient history and the realities of the spirit realm:

“Deuteronomy 32:8-9 describes how Yahweh's dispersal of the nations at Babel resulted in his disinheriting those nations as his people. This is the Old Testament equivalent of Romans 1:18-25, a familiar passage wherein God “gave [humankind] over” to their persistent rebellion. The statement in Deuteronomy 32:9 that “the LORD's [i.e. Yahweh's] portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage” tips us off that a contrast in affection and ownership is intended. Yahweh in effect decided that the people of the world's nations were no longer going to be in relationship to him. He would begin anew. He would enter into covenant relationship with a new people that did not yet exist: Israel.

The implications of this decision and this passage are crucial to understanding much of what's in the Old Testament.

Most English Bibles do not read “according to the number of the sons of God” in Deuteronomy 32:8. Rather, they read “according to the number of the sons of Israel”. The difference derives from disagreements between manuscripts of the Old Testament. “Sons of God” is the correct reading, as is now known from the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Frankly, you don't need to know all the technical reasons for why the “sons of God” reading in Deuteronomy 32:8-9 is what the verse originally said. You just need to think a bit about the wrong reading, the “sons of Israel”. Deuteronomy 32:8-9 harks back to events at the Tower of Babel, an event that occurred before the call of Abraham, the father of the nation of Israel. This means that the nations of the earth were divided at Babel before Israel even existed as a people. It would make no sense for God to divide up the nations of the earth “according to the number of the sons of Israel” if there was no Israel. This point is also brought home in another way, namely by the fact that Israel is not listed in the Table of Nations.”⁹

This background gives us a very different picture and it helps bring out the reality of the things in the spirit realm that religion has covered up by keeping us ignorant.



So what do we do when we find a verse that has variants due to translation or manuscript differences? Here's what:

1. Don't make a doctrine out of it.
2. Find its harmony with the rest of scripture so that its meaning can be resolved.
3. Reject its importance if the true meaning can't be resolved.
4. If it's considered to be of spiritual importance (not religious importance) ask our King what he wants us to know about it. He'll tell us and we'll all know. This is how we learn in the Kingdom as we are meant to be a revelatory people.

9 – Michael S. Heiser (2015) “The Unseen Realm” In Chapter 14 “THE TOWER OF BABEL” [kindle] p:75

NOTE: Switching to a Jewish Bible won't help you with this conundrum-like problem with scripture.

This issue is one of the main reasons why receiving spiritual communication from Holy Spirit is so important – in fact, it's essential. How can we live in alignment of our understanding with heaven unless we are taught by Heaven what to know.

Laurence

16-9-2017

(www.CanberraForerunners.org)

COPYRIGHT

All quotes are copyrighted to authors cited.

This document is free to copy, republish and distribute, but only 'as is'.

All Canberra Forerunners' documents are licensed under

Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License