

The Waldenses and the Bible

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History of the Bible
by Elder Robert L. Webb

The written word of God is revered for its vital importance to the welfare of the Church of Jesus Christ, but it was never intended as a means of eternal salvation. Jesus said, "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." - John 5: 39. Jesus Christ is the Living Word, and our salvation is wholly and completely in Him.

Ancient Texts and Manuscripts (Original and Copies)

The earliest books of the Old Testament were written over 1,400 years before the time of Christ. None of the actual original manuscripts of the Old or New Testament books are known to exist. It pleased God to give His inspired oracles to men of three basic languages, Hebrew, Chaldean, and Greek.

The Old Testament Books

The Old Testament "oracles of God" were providentially committed to the Jewish, or Hebrew people (Romans 3: 1,2). The ancient Massorettes (students of Moses' law) devoted their lives to perfection in preserving and copying the Old Testament books. The story of their work is a marvelous testimony to God's preservation of His word to all generations. There is very little controversy regarding the Hebrew text.

The New Testament Books

About 5,000 copies of the Greek text of the New Testament exist in safekeeping around the world. The great majority of these are identical or almost identical to the "received text" (also called "majority text," "textus receptus," or "Byzantine text"). This text was used by the Waldenses, and was preserved by the true church through the ages. The King James Version in the English language was translated from this text. Currently published copies of the Greek "textus receptus" are readily available to be purchased by the inquiring student.

Translation Versus Private Interpretation

There is a vast difference between making more copies of original manuscripts in the same language and translating from an original text into a completely different language. Gausson likens the work of translation to "the same body putting on different clothing." (See *Theopneustia, or The Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures*, by L. Gausson). It is worthy of consideration that the Old Testament books were not translated into other languages until very near the time of the Christian age. In addition, Jesus and the Apostles evidently quoted the Greek translation (Septuagint), at least in part; but God expressly taught that no prophecy of the scripture is of any "private interpretation." The reader should make this clear distinction in his mind. The word "interpret" is sometimes used in the New Testament Scriptures to mean "translate" (See I Corinthians 14: 13, 27). The great question regarding a translation is whether the Lord has authorized it (not whether the Church has authorized it). Since I believe He purposed that the scriptures should be kept by His Church, I believe He has providentially directed their translation into the languages (tongues) where His Church has existed.

Early Greek Translations

The Apostle Paul, the preacher to the gentiles, could speak or write in both Hebrew and Greek (see Acts 21: 40; the New Testament epistles by Paul were written in Greek). The Apostles quoted from the Hebrew text of the Old Testament in many places in the New Testament. They undoubtedly had access to the original Hebrew text in the original language.

Early English Translations

The Scriptures were translated into Latin, French, Dutch, German, and other languages where the Church of Jesus Christ existed through the centuries. When persecution drove the church into English-speaking nations, the Lord providentially directed its translation there. Some of the early English translations include: John Wycliffe (1380); William Tyndale (1526); Cranmer's (1539); The Geneva Bible (1557); and The Anglo-Rhemish (1582). These five are shown with the King James Version in a book called the English Hexapla.

The King James Version

There can be little doubt that it is to the advantage of the Church of Jesus Christ that the same translation be generally used by the people in the nations where the church exists. The King James Version translators were primarily Puritan and Anglican scholars, whose personal biases were thereby balanced, resulting in a translation

which could be generally used by English-speaking people. These were men of remarkable talent and integrity. King James was not personally involved in the work of translation, so his character and name is of no special consequence. What IS IMPORTANT is the evidence of God's providential direction of this English translation, and His blessing upon it since.

Position of the Primitive Baptist Church

We believe in the plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. Plenary means "total" or "every word." The word "scripture" means "that which is written." When the Apostle Paul wrote that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God", he meant the written text. When the Apostle Peter wrote that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," he meant that which was spoken (even if penned by scribes). The word prophecy means "the sayings of God" and thus we may include both Old and New Testaments in the expression ". . . no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." - II Peter 1: 20. Elder Sylvester Hassell expressed the following belief (p. 508 of *History of the Church of God*): "The seventeenth century was the century of the publication of the King James or Authorized Version of the English Bible (in 1611), the best and noblest of all the translations of the Bible ever made in any language."

We believe the King James Version is the inspired Word of God, dressed in English clothing. As such it has divine authority, and should be accepted as such. We also believe God is able to direct its translation again if that is necessary for the welfare of His Church.

True Bible and True Church Inseparable

by Elder Robert L. Webb

A careful study of the history of the ancient Waldenses, and of Bible texts and translations, clearly reveals how inseparable the true Bible is from the true Church. Perhaps this should seem obvious, but we think it should encourage the Church in her loyalty to the Received Text, and its best English translation, the King James Version. We also sound a solemn warning to the uninformed: "Do not regard the nearly 100 modern translations and paraphrases made from corrupted texts as the inspired word of God!"

We have recently added several of the oldest English translations of the New Testament scriptures to our collection, including reprints of the original 1611 King

James Version, a 1607 edition of the "Geneva" New Testament, the 1526 Tindale New Testament, and a 1388 manuscript of the Wickliffe New Testament. We have also added books by Jean Leger (1669), George S. Faber (1838), and William S. Gilly (1824) to our collection of books on the ancient Waldenses and Albigenses. See the Appendix in this pamphlet for a complete listing of holdings of the Primitive Baptist Library on the subject of the history of the Waldenses.

We wish to quote from a book entitled *Our Authorized Version Vindicated*, copyright 1930, by Benjamin G. Wilkinson, who (being a Seventh-Day Adventist) cannot be accused of being partial to us. Mr. Wilkinson wrote:

. . . down through the centuries there were only two streams of manuscripts. The first stream which carried the Received Text in Hebrew and Greek, began with the Apostolic churches, and reappearing at intervals down the Christian Era among enlightened believers, was protected by the wisdom and scholarship of the pure church in her different phases; by such as the church at Pella in Palestine where the Christians fled, when in 70 A.D. the Romans destroyed Jerusalem; by the Syrian Church of Antioch which produced eminent scholarship; by the Italic Church in northern Italy; and also at the same time by the Gallic Church in southern France and by the Celtic Church in Great Britain; by the pre-Waldensian, the Waldensian, and the churches of the Reformation. This first stream appears, with very little change, in the Protestant Bibles of many languages, and in English, in that Bible known as the King James Version, the one which has been in use for three hundred years in the English speaking world.

The second stream is a small one of a very few MSS. These last manuscripts are represented: (a) In Greek:--The Vatican MS., or Codex B, in the library at Rome; and the Sinaitic, or Codex Aleph, its brother (in the Russian Museum in Moscow). (b) In Latin:--The Vulgate or Latin Bible of Jerome. (c) In English:-- The Jesuit Bible of 1582, which later with vast changes is seen in the Douay, or Catholic Bible. (d) In English again:--In many modern Bibles which introduce practically all the Catholic readings of the Latin Vulgate which were rejected by the Protestants of the Reformation; among these, prominently, are the Revised Versions.--pp. 12, 13.

But let us see what the Waldenses believed, according to their own historian, Jean Leger. Wilkinson, page 32, says:

This noble scholar of Waldensian blood was the apostle of his people in the terrible massacres of 1655, and labored intelligently to preserve their

ancient records. His book, the *General History of the Evangelical Churches of the Piedmontese Valleys*, published in French in 1669, and called "scarce" in 1825, is the prized object of scholarly searchers. It is my good fortune to have that very book before me. Leger, when he calls (Robert) Olivetan's French Bible of 1535 "entire and pure," says: "I say 'pure' because all the ancient exemplars, which formerly were found among the Papists, were full of falsifications, which caused Beza to say in his book on Illustrious Men, in the chapter on the Vaudois, that one must confess it was by means of the Vaudois of the Valleys that France today has the Bible in her own language. This godly man, Olivetan, in the preface of his Bible, recognizes with thanks to God, that since the time of the apostles, or their immediate successors, the torch of the gospel has been lit among the Vaudois (or the dwellers in the Valleys of the Alps, two terms which mean the same), and has never since been extinguished." --Leger, *General History of the Vaudois Churches*, p. 165.

Wilkinson also shows (pp. 42-43) that Erasmus recognized two parallel streams of Bibles:

THE TWO PARALLEL STREAMS OF BIBLES

Apostles (Original)	Apostates (Corrupted Originals)
Received Text (Greek)	Sinaiticus and Vaticanus Bible (Greek)
Waldensian Bible (Italic)	Vulgate (Latin). Church of Rome's Bible.
Erasmus (Received Text Restored)	Vaticanus (Greek).
Luther's Bible, Dutch, French, Italian, etc.,(from Received Text).	French, Spanish, and Italian (from Vulgate).
Tyndale (English) 1535 (from Received Text).	Rheims (English) from Vulgate (Jesuit Bible of 1582).
King James, 1611 (from Received Text)	Oxford Movement. Westcott & Hort (B and Aleph). American Revised 1901.

This should be sufficient to persuade the reader not to regard these two streams of Bibles as equally pure or good. We believe that translations arising from the corrupted texts have been largely responsible for departures from many of the most essential doctrines of the Christian faith, e. g., the creation, plenary inspiration and preservation of the scriptures, the divinity and virgin birth of Jesus Christ, and the resurrection from the dead.

The English and Welsh Baptists, having arisen from the Anabaptists, who were descendants of the Waldenses, were supporters of translations made from the *textus receptus*. The same may be said of the early Baptists in America. We find no evidence that Wickliffe's translation ever gained much favor or support from them. Wickliffe's English translation was made from the Latin Vulgate, he being ignorant of Greek and Hebrew.

The "Great Reformation" which followed over a century after Wickliffe's death did not make the Catholic Bible the "true Bible," any more than it made the Catholic Church the "true church." As shown above, the Protestant Reformers and the Waldenses all refused to use the Catholic manuscripts (either Vulgate or Vatican).

We do not claim that the King James Version is the only translation that can be called the inspired word of God, but rather that the Received Text is the only underlying basis for any past, present or future New Testament translation that should be so regarded by Christian people. Translations from the Received Text have been made in most of the major languages of world.

Preservation of the Bible by the Waldenses
(From *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, 1930, pp. 31-42)
by Benjamin G. Wilkinson, Ph. D.

The Bible of the Waldenses Brought from Judea

To show that the messengers of God who carried manuscripts from the churches of Judea to the churches of northern Italy and on, brought to the forerunners of the Waldenses a Bible different from the Bible of Roman Catholicism, I quote the following:

The method which Allix has pursued, in his History of the Churches of Piedmont, is to show that in the ecclesiastical history of every century, from the fourth century, which he considers a period early enough for the enquirer after apostolical purity of doctrine, there are clear proofs that doctrines, unlike those which the Romish Church holds, and conformable to the belief of the Waldensian and Reformed Churches, were maintained by theologians of the north of Italy down to the period, when the Waldenses first came into notice. Consequently the opinions of the Waldenses were not new to Europe in the eleventh or twelfth centuries, and there is nothing improbable in the tradition, that the Subalpine Church persevered in its integrity in an uninterrupted course from the first preaching of the gospel in the valleys. - Gilly, *Waldensian Researches*, pp. 118, 119.

There are many earlier historians who agree with this view. (Allix, Leger, Gilly, Comba, Nolan). It is held that the pre-Waldensian Christians of northern Italy could not have had doctrines purer than Rome unless their Bible was purer than Rome's; that is, was not of Rome's falsified manuscripts. (Comba, p. 188.)

The Waldenses of northern Italy were foremost among the primitive Christians of Europe in their resistance to the Papacy. They not only sustained the weight of Rome's oppression but they were successful in retaining the torch of truth until the Reformation took it from their hands and held it aloft to the world. Veritably they fulfilled the prophecy of Revelation concerning the church which fled into the wilderness where she hath a place prepared of God. Revelations 12: 6, 14. They rejected the mysterious doctrines, the hierarchal priesthood and the worldly titles of Rome, while they clung to the simplicity of the Bible.

The agents of the Papacy have done their utmost to calumniate their character, to destroy the records of their noble past, and to leave no trace of the cruel persecution they underwent. They went even farther - they made use of words written against ancient heresies to strike out the name of the heretics and fill the blank space by inserting the name of the Waldenses. Just as if, in a book written to record the lawless deeds of some bandit, like Jesse James, his name should be stricken out and the name of Abraham Lincoln substituted. The Jesuit Gretser in a book written against the heretics of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, put the name Waldenses at the point where he struck out the name of these heretics. (Gilly, p. 8.) Nevertheless, we greet with joy the history of their great scholars who were ever a match for Rome.

In the fourth century, Helvidius, a great scholar of northern Italy, accused Jerome, whom the Pope had empowered to form a Bible in Latin for Catholicism, with using corrupt Greek manuscripts. (*Post-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 6, p. 338.) How could Helvidius have accused Jerome of employing corrupt Greek MSS. if Helvidius had not had the pure Greek manuscripts? And so learned and so powerful in writing and teaching was Jovinian, the pupil of Helvidius, that it demanded three of Rome's most famous fathers - Augustine, Jerome, and Ambrose - to unite in opposing Jovinian's influence. Even then, it needed the condemnation of the Pope and the banishment of the Emperor to prevail. But Jovinian's followers lived on and made the way easier for Luther.

History does not afford a record of cruelty greater than that manifested by Rome toward the Waldenses. It is impossible to write fully the inspiring history of this persecuted people, whose origin goes back to apostolic days and whose history is ornamented with stories of gripping interest. Rome has obliterated the records. Dr. DeSanctis, many years a Catholic official at Rome, some time official Censor of the

Inquisition and later a convert to Protestantism, thus reports the conversation of a Waldensian scholar as he points out to others the ruins of Palatine Hill, Rome:

"See," said the Waldensian, "a beautiful monument of ecclesiastical antiquity. These rough materials are the ruins of the two great Palatine libraries, one Greek and the other Latin, where the precious manuscripts of our ancestors were collected, and which Pope Gregory I, called the Great, caused to be burned." (DeSanctis, Popery, Puseyism, Jesuitism, p. 53.)

The destruction of Waldensian records beginning about 600 A. D. by Gregory I, was carried through with thoroughness by the secret agents of the Papacy.

"It is a singular thing," says Gilly, "that the destruction or rapine, which has been so fatal to Waldensian documents, should have pursued them even to the place of security, to which all, that remained, were consigned by Morland, in 1658, the library of the University of Cambridge. The most ancient of these relics were ticketed in seven packets, distinguished by letters of the alphabet, from A to G. The whole of these were missing when I made inquiry for them in 1823." (Gilly, *Waldensian Researches*, p. 80.)

Ancient Documents of the Waldenses

There are modern writers who attempt to fix the beginning of the Waldenses from Peter Waldo, who began his work about 1175. This is a mistake. The historical name of this people, as properly derived from the valleys where they lived, is Vaudois. Their enemies, however, ever sought to date their origin from Waldo. Waldo was an agent, evidently raised up of God to combat the errors of Rome. Gilly, who made extensive research concerning the Waldenses, pictures Waldo in his study at Lyon, France, with associates, a committee, "like the translators of our own Authorized Version." (Comba, *Waldenses of Italy*, p. 169, note 596.) Nevertheless the history of the Waldenses, or Vaudois, begins centuries before the days of Waldo.

There remains to us in the ancient Waldensian language, "The Noble Lesson," (*La Nobla Leycon*), written about the year 1100 A. D., which assigns the first opposition of the Waldenses to the Church of Rome to the days of Constantine the Great, when Sylvester was Pope. This may be gathered from the following extract:

"All the Popes, which have been from Sylvester to the present time." (Que tuit li papa, que foron de Silvestre en tro en aquest.) (Gilly, *Excursions*, Appendix 2, p. 10.)

Thus when Christianity, emerging from the long persecutions of pagan Rome, was raised to imperial favor by the Emperor Constantine, the Italic Church in northern Italy - later the Waldenses - is seen standing in opposition to papal Rome. Their Bible

was of the family of the renowned Itala. It was that translation into Latin which represents the Received Text. Its very name "Itala" is derived from the Italic district, the regions of the Vaudois. Of the purity and reliability of this version, Augustine, speaking of different Latin Bibles (about 400 A.D.) says:

"Now among translations themselves the Italian (Itala) is to be preferred to the others, for it keeps closer to the words without prejudice to clearness of expression." (*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 2, p. 542.)

The old Waldensian liturgy which they used in their services down through the centuries contained "texts of Scripture of the ancient Version called the Italick." (Allix, *Churches of Piedmont*, 1690, p. 37.)

The Reformers held that the Waldensian Church was formed about 120 A. D., from which date on, they passed down from father to son the teachings they received from the apostles. The Latin Bible, the Italic, was translated from the Greek not later than 157 A. D. (*Scrivener's Introduction*, Vol. 2, p. 43.) We are indebted to Beza, the renowned associate of Calvin, for the statement that the Italic Church dates from 120 A. D. From the illustrious group of scholars which gathered around Beza, 1590 A. D., we may understand how the Received Text was the bond of union between great historic churches. As the sixteenth century is closing, we see in the beautiful Swiss city of Geneva, Beza, an outstanding champion of Protestantism, the scholar Cyril Lucar, later to become the head of the Greek Catholic Church, and Diodati, also a foremost scholar. As Beza astonishes and confounds the world by restoring manuscripts of that Greek New Testament from which the King James is translated, Diodati takes the same and translates into Italian a new and famous edition, adopted and circulated by the Waldenses. (*McClintock & Strong Encycl.*, Art. "Waldenses.") Leger, the Waldensian historian of his people, studied under Diodati at Geneva. He returned as pastor to the Waldenses and led them in their flight from the terrible massacre of 1655. (Gilly, *Researches*, pp. 79, 80.) He prized as his choicest treasure the Diodati Bible, the only worldly possession he was able to preserve. Cyril Lucar hastened to Alexandria where Codex A, the Alexandrian Manuscript, is lying, and laid down his life to introduce the Reformation and the Reformers' pure light regarding the books of the Bible.

At the same time another group of scholars, bitterly hostile to the first group, were gathered at Rheims, France. There the Jesuits, assisted by Rome and backed by all the power of Spain, brought forth an English translation of the Vulgate. In its preface they expressly declared that the Vulgate had been translated in 1300 into Italian and in 1400 into French, "the sooner to shake out of the deceived people's hands, the false heretical translations of a sect called Waldenses." This proves that Waldensian Versions existed in 1300 and 1400. It was the Vulgate, Rome's corrupt Scriptures

against the Received Text--the New Testament of the apostles, of the Waldenses, and of the Reformers.

That Rome in early days corrupted the manuscripts while the Italic Church handed them down in their apostolic purity, Allix, the renowned scholar, testifies. He reports the following as Italic articles of faith: "They receive only, saith he, what is written in the Old and New Testament. They say, that the Popes of Rome, and other priests, have depraved the Scriptures by their doctrines and glosses." (Allix, *Churches of Piedmont*, pp. 288, 11.)

It is recognized that the Itala was translated from the Received Text (Syrian, Hort calls it); that the Vulgate is the Itala with the readings of the Received Text removed. (Kenyon, *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, pp. 169, 170.)

Waldensian Bible Translations

Four Bibles produced under Waldensian influence touched the history of Calvin: namely, a Greek, a Waldensian vernacular, a French, and an Italian. Calvin himself was led to his great work by Olivetan, a Waldensian. Thus was the Reformation brought to Calvin, that brilliant student of the Paris University. Farel, also a Waldensian, besought him to come to Geneva and open up a work there. Calvin felt that he should labor in Paris. According to Leger, Calvin recognized a relationship to the Calvins of the valley of St. Martin, one of the Waldensian Valleys. (Leger, *History of the Vaudois*, p. 167.)

Finally, persecution at Paris and the solicitation of Farel caused Calvin to settle at Geneva, where, with Beza, he brought out an edition of the *Textus Receptus*, the one the author now uses in his college class rooms, as edited by Scrivener. Of Beza, Dr. Edgar says that he "astonished and confounded the world" with the Greek manuscripts he unearthed. This later edition of the Received Text is in reality a Greek New Testament brought out under Waldensian influence. Unquestionably, the leaders of the Reformation, German, French, and English, were convinced that the Received Text was the genuine New Testament, not only by its own irresistible history and internal evidence, but also because it matched with the Received Text which in Waldensian form came down from the days of the apostles.

The other three Bibles of Waldensian connection were due to three men who were at Geneva with Calvin, or when he died, with Beza, his successor, namely, Olivetan, Leger, and Diodati. How readily the two streams of descent of the Received Text, through the Greek East and the Waldensian West, ran together, is illustrated by the meeting of the Olivetan Bible and the Received Text. Olivetan, one of the most illustrious pastors of the Waldensian Valleys, a relative of Calvin, according to Leger,

(Leger, *History of the Vaudois*, p. 167) and a splendid student, translated the New Testament into French. Leger bore testimony that the Olivetan Bible, which accorded with the Textus Receptus, was unlike the manuscripts of the Papists, because they were full of falsification. Later, Calvin edited a second edition of the Olivetan Bible. The Olivetan in turn became the basis of the Geneva Bible in English, which was the leading version in England in 1611 when the King James appeared.

Diodati, who succeeded Beza in the chair of Theology at Geneva, translated the Received Text into Italian. This version was adopted by the Waldenses, although there was in use at that time a Waldensian Bible in their own peculiar language. This we know because Sir Samuel Morland, under the protection of Oliver Cromwell, received from Leger the Waldensian New Testament which now lies in the Cambridge University Library. After the devastating massacre of the Waldenses in 1655, Leger felt that he should collect and give into the hands of Sir Samuel Morland as many pieces of the ancient Waldensian literature as were available.

It is interesting to trace back the Waldensian Bible which Luther had before him when he translated the New Testament. Luther used the Tepl Bible, named from Tepl, Bohemia. This Tepl manuscript represented a translation of the Waldensian Bible into the German which was spoken before the days of the Reformation.

(Comba, *Waldenses of Italy*, p. 191.) Of this remarkable manuscript, Comba says:

When the manuscript of Tepl appeared, the attention of the learned was aroused by the fact that the text it presents corresponds word for word with that of the first three editions of the ancient German Bible. Then Louis Keller, an original writer, with the decided opinions of a layman and versed in the history of the sects of the Middle Ages, declared the Tepl manuscript to be Waldensian. Another writer, Hermann Haupt, who belongs to the old Catholic party, supported his opinion vigorously. (Comba, p. 190.)

From Comba we also learn that the Tepl manuscript has an origin different from the version adopted by the Church of Rome; that it seems to agree rather with the Latin versions anterior to Jerome, the author of the Vulgate; and that Luther followed it in his translation, which is probably the reason why the Catholic church reproved Luther for following the Waldenses. (Comba, p. 192.) Another peculiarity is its small size, which seems to single it out as one of those little books which the Waldensian evangelists carried with them hidden under their rough cloaks. (Comba, p. 191, Note 679.) We have, therefore, an indication of how much the Reformation under Luther as well as Luther's Bible owed to the Waldenses.

Waldensian influence, both from the Waldensian Bibles and from Waldensian relationships, entered into the King James translation of 1611. Referring to the King James translators, one author speaks thus of a Waldensian Bible they used:

It is known that among modern versions they consulted was an Italian, and though no name is mentioned, there cannot be room for doubt that it was the elegant translation made with great ability from the original Scriptures by Giovanni Diodati, which had only recently (1607) appeared at Geneva.

(Dr. Benjamin Warfield, Princeton Univ., Collection of Opinions and Reviews, Vol. 2, p. 99.)

It is therefore evident that the translators of 1611 had before them four Bibles which had come under Waldensian influences: the Diodati in Italian, the Olivetan in French, the Lutheran in German, and the Genevan in English. We have every reason to believe that they had access to at least six Waldensian Bibles written in the old Waldensian vernacular.

Dr. Nolan, who had already acquired fame for his Greek and Latin scholarship, and researches into Egyptian chronology, and was a lecturer of note, spent twenty-eight years to trace back the Received Text to its apostolic origin. He was powerfully impressed to examine the history of the Waldensian Bible. He felt certain that researches in this direction would demonstrate that the Italic New Testament, or the New Testament of those primitive Christians of northern Italy whose lineal descendants the Waldenses were, would turn out to be the Received Text. He says:

The author perceived, without any labor of inquiry, that it derived its name from that diocese, which has been termed the Italic, as contradistinguished from the Roman. This is a supposition, which receives a sufficient confirmation from the fact that the principal copies of that version have been preserved in that diocese, the metropolitan church of which was situated in Milan. The circumstance is at present mentioned, as the author thence formed a hope, that some remains of the primitive Italic version might be found in the early translations made by the Waldenses, who were the lineal descendants of the Italic Church; and who have asserted their independence against the usurpations of the Church of Rome, and have ever enjoyed the free use of the Scriptures. In the search to which these considerations have led the author, his fondest expectations have been fully realized. It has furnished him with abundant proof on that point to which his inquiry was chiefly directed; as it has supplied him with the unequivocal testimony of a truly apostolical branch of the primitive church, that the celebrated text of the heavenly witnesses was adopted in the version which prevailed in the Latin Church, previously to the introduction of the modern Vulgate. (Dr. Frederick Nolan, *Integrity of the Greek Vulgate*, pp. xvii, xviii.)

How the Bible Adopted by Constantine Was Set Aside

Where did this Vaudois Church amid the rugged peaks of the Alps secure these uncorrupted manuscripts? In the silent watches of the night, along the lonely paths of Asia Minor where robbers and wild beasts lurked, might have been seen the noble missionaries carrying manuscripts, and verifying documents from the churches in Judea to encourage their struggling brethren under the iron heel of the Papacy. The sacrificing labors of the apostle Paul were bearing fruit. His wise plan to anchor the Gentile churches of Europe to the churches of Judea, provided the channel of communication which defeated continually and finally the bewildering pressure of the Papacy. Or, as the learned Scrivener has beautifully put it:

Wide as is the region which separates Syria from Gaul, there must have been in very early times some remote communication by which the stream of Eastern testimony, or tradition, like another Alpheus, rose up again with fresh strength to irrigate the regions of the distant West. (*Scrivener's Introduction*, Vol. 2, pp. 299, 300.)

We have it now revealed how Constantine's Hexapla Bible was successfully met. A powerful chain of churches, few in number compared with the manifold congregations of an apostate Christianity, but enriched with the eternal conviction of truth and with able scholars, stretched from Palestine to Scotland. If Rome in her own land was unable to beat down the testimony of apostolic Scriptures, how could she hope, in the Greek speaking world of the distant and hostile East, to maintain the supremacy of her Greek Bible? The Scriptures of the apostle John and his associates, the traditional text, the Textus Receptus, if you please, arose from the place of humiliation forced on it by Origen's Bible in the hands of Constantine and became the Received Text of Greek Christianity. And when the Greek East for one thousand years was completely shut off from the Latin West, the noble Waldenses in northern Italy still possessed in Latin the Received Text.

To Christians preserving apostolic Christianity, the world owes the Bible. It is not true, as the Roman Church claims, that she gave the Bible to the world. What she gave was an impure text, a text with thousands of verses so changed as to make way for herunscriptural doctrines. While upon those who possessed the veritable Word of God, she poured out through long centuries her stream of cruel persecution. Or, in the words of another writer:

The Waldenses were among the first of the peoples of Europe to obtain a translation of the Holy Scriptures. Hundreds of years before the Reformation, they possessed the Bible in manuscript in their native tongue. They had the truth unadulterated, and this rendered them the special objects of hatred and persecution. . . . Here for a thousand years, witnesses for the truth maintained

the ancient faith. . . . In a most wonderful manner it (the word of truth) was preserved uncorrupted through all the ages of darkness.

A P P E N D I X
BOOKS IN THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST LIBRARY
REGARDING THE ANCIENT WALDENSES

1. *History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piemont*, by Sir Samuel Morland, 1658 (two copies);
2. *The Ecclesiastical History of the Ancient Churches of Piedmont, and of the Albigenses*, by Dr. Peter Allix, 1690-1692 (two volumes in one) (two copies).
3. *History and Theology of the Ancient Vallenses and Albigenses*, by Dr. George S. Faber (two copies);
4. *Excursion to the Mountains of Piemont*, by William S. Gilly.
5. *The Waldenses: Sketches of the Evangelical Christians of the Mountains of Piedmont*, by A. W. Mitchell;
6. *History of the Waldenses*, by J. A. Wylie (two copies).
7. *Pierre and His Family*, author not given, reprint by the Primitive Baptist Library of Elon College, NC;
8. *History of the Crusades Against the Albigenses*, by Simonde de Sismondi.
9. *History of the Vaudois Church*, by Antoine Monastier.
10. *Histoire generale des eglises evangeliques de Piemont ou vaudoises* (in French), by Jean Leger, 1669 (1980 Italian reprint, in the French language.) (two volumes in one).
11. *The Bibliografia Valdese*, containing 3,500 titles, available from Societa di Studi Valdesi, Via Roberto D'Azeglio 2, 10066 Torre Pellice, Italy.
12. Claudiana Editrice, Via Principe Tommaso 1, 10125 Torino, Italy, has published a catalog of 500 titles in different languages on the Waldensians. 1991 edition is to be sent to us.
13. *Histoire des persecutions et guerres faites depuis l'an 1555 jusques en l'an 1561 contre le peuple appele Vaudois*.
14. *Histoire memorable de la guerre faite par le Duc de Savoye Emanuel Philebert contre ses subjects des Vallees*, 1561.
15. *The Glorious Recovery by the Vaudois of Their Valleys*, by Henri Arnaud, 1690, with a compendious history of that people previous and subsequent to that event by Hugh Dyke Acland, 1827 (microfilm).
16. *The Waldenses, or Protestant Valleys of Piedmont and Dauphiny*, by William Beattie, 1836 (microfilm).

We also have a number of other pamphlets, magazines, and books which contain information on the Waldenses.

D E D I C A T I O N

This little work is lovingly dedicated to the memory of Brother Junior Dittmer, one of the founding trustees of The Primitive Baptist Library of Carthage, Illinois. He was deeply interested in the history of the Waldenses, and had expressed an interest in seeing their history republished so that our people might be better informed on this subject.