

# “The Strange Fire of VPP”

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(Read in conjunction with ‘The Verbal Inspiration and Providential Preservation of the Bible’.)

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There is a strange fire today advocating that the preservation of God’s Word is ‘*supernatural and miraculous, extraordinary providence*’ rather than simply Providential. This teaching recently took on the name ‘Verbal Plenary Preservation’ and holds that the KJV Translators in 1611 were miraculously inspired to ‘restore a perfect Textus Receptus’ underlying the KJV Bible – which contradicts God’s promise that His Word shall not depart out of the mouth of His people from generation to generation and forever (Isa 59:21), for in order for the KJV Translators to restore a perfect text in 1611, the text must first earlier have been corrupted.

As in the days when 2 priestly sons of Aaron offered strange fire at God’s altar (Lev 10:1, Num 3:4, 26:61), some pastors today play with strange fire resulting in wreckage and confusion in many previously fraternal churches. We shall briefly examine why VPP is a strange fire that must be put away in the Church of Jesus Christ the Lord, the Living God.

## Is Preservation of God’s Word Miraculous or Providential?

*“Jesus said, ‘Take away the stone...’ Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come forth’” (Jn 11:39a, 43)*

Let us first observe the difference between ‘miraculous’, ‘supernatural’ and ‘providential’.

A **miracle** is a perceptible interruption of the laws of nature. When Almighty God created the Universe ex-nihilo, it was entirely miraculous. God spoke the words, “Let us make...” and it was so. On its own, the processes of nature could not result in the creation of the Universe.

The term **supernatural** (Latin: *super*, ‘above’ + *natura* ‘nature’) pertains to an order of existence beyond the scientifically visible universe. The term supernatural beings may mean aside from God, beings such as angels or demons that are not deity. (The term ‘Divine Intervention’, by contrast would refer specifically to the direct involvement of God.) The out-of-the-ordinary acts of supernatural beings are supernatural acts, which may include ‘miracles’.

After the Universe was formed, the interaction of nature between the sun and the earth created the rain clouds that rain upon the earth, which in turn yields forth vegetation in regular cycles. This manner in which God through the laws of nature replenishes the earth and provides for the sustenance of His creatures is **Providential**. God miraculously created the Universe only once! Thereafter, the universal laws of nature that God in His Immense Wisdom put in place at Creation, operates and continues to operate providentially in sustaining His creatures.

One of the truths taught in the account of Jesus’ raising Lazarus from the dead is that God expects man do that which man can do, while God alone does the miraculous. Thus the Son of God commanded the people to roll away the stone from Lazarus’ grave, which the men could do, after which He commanded Lazarus to come forth, which only He as God could do.

When God gave His Word, He acted divinely in breathing out His Word and superintending over the holy writers. The scribes thereafter had the ability to make careful and exact hand-crafted copies of the Originals for distribution and posterity. Once the Word of God was given, God only had to preserve His people from generation to generation, who in turn would read, apply and preserve His Word. (Deut 33:3, 1Sam 2:9, Ps 37:28, 145:20, 1Pet 1:5, Jude 1:1)

## **Do Matt 5:18 and 24:35 teach Verbal Plenary Preservation?**

*“For assuredly, I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law, till all is fulfilled.” (Mt 5:18)*

*“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” (Mt24:35)*

When the earth passes away, all it contains including all apographs shall also pass away! The reference therefore cannot be to material apographs but to the absolute authority and inviolable claims of God’s Word upon us, as Mt 7:28-29 at the end of the Sermon on the Mount shows.

The Lord Jesus ministered in Hebrew-Aramaic throughout His earthly ministry. Thus the KJV Translators rendered the Greek *iota* (iota, ‘the smallest Gk letter’) as jot (a transliteration of the Hebrew yodh י), and *κεραία* (keraia, ‘dot’) as tittle (the smallest Hebrew stroke) in Matt 5:18 (Sermon on the Mount). Yet no Hebrew jot or tittle is found in the NT! Clearly Jesus meant the power and effect of every iota and stroke of God’s Law shall not pass away till all is fulfilled.

In Mt 5:18, Jesus was referring to the Law (Torah) and specifically the 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> Commandments summed as, ‘Thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself’ (Lev 19:18, Gal 5:14), which He illuminated in Mt 5:19-48. No iota of the Law shall pass away till all is fulfilled. In Mt 5:17, Jesus said that He had come to fulfil all the requirements of the Law and the prophecies of the Prophets concerning Himself. This He did by living a perfect, sinless life and offering Himself as God’s sacrificial Lamb for our sins. Heaven and earth not yet having passed away, Jesus already has once and for all fulfilled the Law! (Jn 19:30) Hallelujah, praise the Lord!

In Mt 24:35 (Mk 13:31, Lk 21:33), Jesus was referring to His words that He had just told His Disciples, i.e., His prophecies in Mt 24:4-34 in answer to their questions in Mt 24:3 of when the Temple would be destroyed and the sign of His coming and of the end of the world. These prophetic words of our Lord Jesus are so assuredly certain that heaven and earth shall pass away but His words shall not. In 70AD a good part of these were fulfilled absolutely and accurately.

Very clearly, Mt 5:18 and 24:35 do not teach ‘Verbal Plenary Preservation’.

## **Does Ps 12:6-7 teach Verbal Plenary Preservation?**

*“Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men. (Ps 12:1)*

*“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 forever.” (Ps 12:6-7)*

Please refer to our 3-page exegesis “Ps 12:6-7 God’s Promise to Preserve His People”, which shows irrefutably that Ps 12:6-7 refers to the preservation of the saints, i.e. including the godly man of verse 1, and not the words. If the verses did refer to the words, which they do not, this would still contradict VPP, which postulates that the words were not kept pure until 1611.

## **Does the Bible Contain Any Mistakes?**

*“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.” (1Pet 1:23)*

Absolutely not, for the Word of God is incorruptible and liveth and abideth forever!

Sadly, VPP proponents falsely depict those who do not subscribe to their extreme views as saying that ‘the Bible has mistakes’. They are the true guilty parties who say that all modern

(i.e. non KJV) versions are corrupt and satanic, thus causing many to doubt their Bibles.

## **Do Translations of the Bible (KJV, NIV and CUV, etc) have Mistakes?**

All the available translated versions exhibit variances in their translated forms (English, Chinese, etc). If by perfect, we mean that the translations are 100% free from errors in grammar, diction, meaning and senses, and from human frailty; no translation is perfect, i.e. as to jot and tittle of each letter and meaning reflected. All major translations have also undergone revisions to correct clear and obvious errors. The KJV after its publication in 1611 was revised in 1613, 1616, 1629, 1631, 1638, 1717, 1745, 1762 and 1769 with numerous changes.

The translations are also based on different underlying reconstructed or edited Hebrew-Aramaic-Greek texts that exhibit variances from each other. However, despite the variances, we have today very reliable edited texts with all the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith intact, as reflected in all the better modern translations. (See 'Textual Criticism' in Reference Article).

## **Does this mean that the Perfect Bible is Lost Forever?**

*"Forever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." (Ps 119:89)*

*"And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail." (Rev 11:19)*

Forever, no! For the **Original** is kept in the Ark of His Testament in God's Temple in heaven!

On earth, we have the extant MSS, edited texts and Critical Apparatuses reflecting the Autographs to the highest degree of reliability, in the manner in which God in His Sovereign Wisdom chose to communicate all His Word, Providentially Preserved through the ages, to us.