

Revelation 22:19 "book of life" or "tree of life"?

Revelation 22:19 "the BOOK of life or the TREE of life?"

"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the BOOK of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

There are some out there who criticize the reading of "the BOOK of life" as found in the King James Bible (and MANY others as we will soon see) and tell us that this is a minority reading and that it should really say "the TREE of life"

The modern Vatican supervised text versions like the ever changing ESV, NIV, NASB, NET, Jehovah Witness NWT and the modern Catholic versions all read "the TREE of life".

I want to consider three things in my defense of the reading of "the BOOK of life".

1. The sovereignty of God in history.
2. The numerical patterns of the number 7 in the book of Revelation. And
3. Minority readings that are found in all Bibles out there.

God's Sovereignty.

God himself is the governor among the nations. "For the kingdom is the LORD'S; and he is the governor among the nations." Psalms 22:28

"And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doeth thou?" Daniel 4:35

With the invention of the printing press around 1450 A.D., the widespread printing of the Greek New Testament and in particular with the Reformation and the spreading of the gospel to all the nations and multiple translations of God's word into many foreign languages, the reading found in these Bibles was "the BOOK of life".

Numerical Patterns of SEVEN.

The book of Revelation itself is full of the number SEVEN. It often signifies divine perfection or the completion of something. The phrase "the BOOK of life" itself occurs 7 times in the book of Revelation in the text of the King James Bible and an host of others in multiple languages; but only 6 times if we follow the reading of "the TREE of life" instead.

We have "the BOOK of life" mentioned in Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12; 20:15; 21:27 and in 22:19.

In the book of Revelation we also have 7 churches, 7 Spirits, 7 golden candlesticks, 7 stars, 7 lamps of fire, 7 seals, 7 horns, 7 eyes, 7 angels, 7 trumpets, 7 thunders, 7 heads, 7 crowns, 7 plagues, 7 vials, 7 mountains, 7 kings and 7 times "the BOOK of life"

Minority readings.

“The BOOK of life” is what is called a minority reading. It IS found in a few Greek manuscripts and ancient versions and even in ancient commentaries, but it is also found in a vast multitude of Bible translations all over the world, both old and new.

Even the well known scholars who promote the modern Vatican supervised text versions tell us that the true reading may be found in only a few manuscripts or even in just one. (See at the end of this article for examples.)

Do modern versions like the ever changing ESVs, NIVs, NASBs ever use “minority readings”? You bet they do; and not always in the same places. We can easily find “minority readings” in all these versions. There are even places where they do not follow any Greek or Hebrew text for what they have come up with.

For documented proof that these modern versions are Vatican Versions see the following -

Undeniable Documented Proof the ESV, NIV, NASB, Holman Standard, NET, Jehovah Witness NWT etc. are the new "Vatican Versions"

<https://brandplucked.webs.com/realcatholicbibles.htm>

Undeniable Textual Proof the ESV, NIV, Holman Standard, NET, NASBs, Jehovah Witness NWT are the new "Vatican Versions" Part TWO - Textual proof.

<https://brandplucked.webs.com/esvcatholicpart2.htm>

So to argue that “book of life” is a minority reading and therefore not authentic is more than a little hypocritical. And keep in mind the FACT that not one of these King James Bible critics will EVER actually SHOW US A COPY of any Bible in any language that they honestly believe is now or ever was the complete and inerrant words of the living God. Just ask them.

Now, let’s look at the evidence for the reading of “the BOOK of life” as found in Revelation 22:19

The Greek texts of Erasmus, Stephanus 1550, Beza 1598, Elziever 1624, Scrivener 1894 and the Modern Greek Bible read:

και εαν τις αφαιρη απο των λογων βιβλου της προφητειας ταυτης αφαιρησει **ο θεος το μερος αυτου απο βιβλου της ζωης** και εκ της πολεως της αγιας και των γεγραμμενων εν βιβλιω τουτω = **God shall take away his part from the BOOK of life**

As for the remaining Greek texts even this online site, [laparola.net](http://www.laparola.net) The Greek New Testament, shows that there are some Greek manuscripts that do read "the book of life" in Revelation 22:19.

<http://www.laparola.net/greco/index.php>

βιβλου 296 2049 2067^{mg} it vg cop^{bo} Ambrose Primasius Haymo Ps-Augustine ς ND

They show that is it found in the Greek manuscripts 296, 2049 and in the margin of 2067 and that it was so quoted by such early church writers as Ambrose, Primasius, who wrote an early commentary on the book of Revelation, and Haymo and that it is the reading of the Old Latin translation that Christians used in the second century, as well as the Latin Vulgate of 382-405 A.D. and of the ancient Coptic Boharic translation.

Jerome's copy of the Latin Vulgate (382-405 A.D.), which was translated from Greek manuscripts available at that time clearly reads "the book of life". You can see it here -

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/bib/vul/rev022.htm#019>

Et si quis diminuerit de verbis libri prophetiæ hujus, auferet Deus partem ejus DE LIBRO VITAE, et de civitate sancta, et de his quæ scripta sunt in libro isto:”

LIBRO in Latin as well as Spanish and Italian means BOOK.

Later on the Latin Clementine Bible of 1592 also reads "the book of life" and it can be seen here -

<http://www.drbo.org/lvb/chapter/73022.htm>

Et si quis diminuerit de verbis libri prophetiae hujus, auferet Deus partem ejus DE LIBRO VITAE, et de civitate sancta, et de his quae scripta sunt in libro isto

Greek Witnesses

Herman Hoskier listed 3 minuscules with "book of life": 57 (296) 16th century; 119 (1075) 14th century; and 141 (2049) 16th century (Concerning the Text of the Apocalypse. 2 vols. (London: Bernard Quaritch, Ltd., 1929)). Although 2 of the 4 known Greek witnesses could have been back translated from a printed Textus Receptus, at least 2 of them pre-date the Textus Receptus.

The sovereignty of God is seen in that all Reformation bibles in multiple languages read "the book of life" in Revelation 22:19 and many still do today.

Brother Steven Avery's research on this verse has shown that church writer references that support the reading "book of life" are:

Ambrose (c 390 AD)

Bachiarius (c 420)

Andreas of Cappadocia (c 500)

Primasius of Adrumentum (552 AD) - Commentary on Revelation

Speculum treatise (mss c. 8th century, many consider as Augustine 427 AD origin)

Haymo of Halberstadt (9th century) - Commentary on Revelation

Pseudo-Augustine (1160)

Among the ancient Bible versions that also support "book of life" are the following:

Bohairic Coptic

Old Latin line

Latin Vulgate (some read "book" and others have "tree") auferet Deus partem ejus de **libro** vitæ, et de civitate sancta,

Armenian

Ethiopic

Arabic

Tepl

Andreas of Caesarea (Greek: Ἀνδρέας Καισαρείας; 563 – 637)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andreas_of_Caesarea

was a Greek theological writer and bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia... His principal work is a commentary on the Book of Revelation (Patrologia Graeca vol. 106, cols. 215–458 and 1387–94) and is the oldest Greek patristic commentary on that book of the Bible... his commentary was preserved in nearly 100 complete Greek manuscripts, as well in translation in numerous Armenian and Slavic manuscripts. Andrew's most important contribution was that he preserved many existing Eastern traditions associated with Revelation, both oral and written. His commentary was so influential that it preserved a specific text type for Revelation, known as the Andreas type.

Primasius of Hadrumetum (died around 560 A.D.)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Primasius_of_Hadrumetum

"he was called with other bishops to Constantinople and took part in the Three Chapters Controversy... While at Constantinople, Primasius studied the exegesis of the Greeks, and his fame is chiefly due to his commentary on Revelation."

NO Catholic bible has ever used the Textus Receptus as the basis of their New Testament translations, but ALL Reformation Bibles in numerous languages did and the Reformation Bibles in all languages read "BOOK of life" and not "tree of life".

The Catholics first used the various Latin Vulgate editions for their translations but today they use the same UBS (United Bible Society) Nestle-Aland critical Greek texts that are used in making up the modern Vatican Versions like the ESV, NIV, NASB,

NET and Holman Standard "Evangelical" versions.

Let me briefly illustrate the complexity and inconsistency of the modern versions and the so called "science" of textual criticism by looking at just one verse in Revelation 2:20 and comparing the KJV, NASB, ESV and NIV.

The same types of differences and changes can be shown hundreds of times over, but it is a very tedious and time consuming work. Remember, James White and others like him are often criticizing a single word found in the King James Bible.

In the King James Bible (and many others as well) we read: Revelation 2:20 - "Notwithstanding I have A FEW THINGS against thee (κατὰ σοῦ ὀλίγα) because thou SUFFEREST THAT woman JEZEBEL, which calleth herself a PROPHETESS, TO TEACH AND TO SEDUCE my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

ESV - "But I have THIS against you, that you TOLERATE that woman JEZEBEL, who calls herself a PROPHETESS AND IS TEACHING AND SEDUCING my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols."

The Traditional Greek texts read "A FEW THINGS against thee" = κατὰ σοῦ ὀλίγα, but Sinaiticus actually says "MUCH against thee (you singular) and in the Greek looks like this - κατὰ σοῦ πολὺ. But not even the modern versions followed the Sinaitic manuscript here, though they DO follow it and reject the Traditional Text in many other places.

Other Greek texts read "MANY THINGS against thee" = κατὰ σοῦ πολλὰ, but nobody followed this reading. So far we have three different Greek readings - 1. "a few things"; 2. "much" and 3. "many things". So what did the versions like the ESV, NIV and NASB do? They put a word in there that is NOT found in ANY Greek manuscript and say "But I have THIS against you".

Secondly the verb "sufferest" in the text that underlies the King James Bible is ἔῤῥα, which is a normal word for "to suffer, to allow, to permit." But there are at least THREE other verb forms found in other texts that differ from each other in how they are spelled and the one chosen by the UBS/Nestle-Aland critical texts is an entirely different Greek word than the one that underlies the KJB. It is the word ἀφεῖς, which itself is AN IRREGULAR FORM of aphaemi, but it means about the same thing. But other Greek manuscripts have another Greek word spelled ἀφηῖς and then there is the Sinaiticus correction ἀφηκας.

Thirdly when we get to the phrase "THAT woman JEZEBEL" we find that MOST Greek texts actually read "YOUR woman Jezebel" = γυναικα σου, but nobody followed the Majority reading here! And there are THREE different ways the name Jezebel is spelled among the manuscripts. A and C spell it one way - Ἰεζάβελ, and Sinaiticus spells it another way - Ἰαζάβελ, and then we have the third way - Ἰεζάβηλ.

Fourthly when we get to the Greek word for "PROPHETESS" it is a singular Feminine noun, which is what we would expect. It is NOT the Masculine form "prophet". The KJB, ESV, NASB and the NIV 1973, 1978 and 1984 editions all correctly have the word "prophetess". However the NIV 2011 edition now reads "who calls herself A PROPHET."

And fifthly, other TEXTUAL differences among the various Greek manuscripts in just this ONE verse are TWO different ways of spelling the word for "nevertheless" (ἀλλὰ and ἄλλ). There are THREE different ways of spelling or saying "which CALLS herself a prophetess" - 1. ἡ λέγει; 2. ἡ λέγουσα and 3. τὴν λέγουσαν, and there are at least TWO very different ways of saying either the infinitive "TO teach and TO seduce" (KJB) - διδάσκειν καὶ πλανᾶσθαι versus conjugated verbs "TEACHES and SEDUCES" (NASB, ESV) which the NIV paraphrases and adds words to - "BY HER TEACHING she misleads" (NIV)

These are the types of very real textual differences that exist for almost every verse found in the Greek New Testament and especially in the book of Revelation, which has more textual variants than any other New Testament book.

The King James Bible believer maintains that only God knows for sure which readings are His inspired words and only God can guide a group of men to the correct texts and the right meanings of those texts. We believe He has done this in making up His masterpiece, the Authorized King James Holy Bible.

On the other hand, the Bible agnostics (they don't know for sure) and unbelievers in the infallibility of ANY Bible in ANY language do not believe God has done this and they are still working on it themselves.

It should also be noted that there are several textual differences found in just the last few verses of Revelation, and that not even the modern versions agree among themselves.

For instance, in verses 20 and 21, the King James Bible as well as the Majority of all texts reads: "EVEN SO, come, Lord Jesus." The earlier Catholic translations like the Douay-Rheims of 1582 and the Douay 1950 included the word "even so" (or Amen) but the more modern Catholic versions like the St. Joseph NAB and New Jerusalem omit it. Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus omit the word for "even so" (Amen), and so do the NASB, NIV, ESV, NET and Holman Standard.

Again, in verse 21 in the KJB we read: "The grace of our Lord Jesus CHRIST be with YOU ALL. AMEN."

Here the word CHRIST is found in the Majority of all texts, but again Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus omit it, and so do the NASB, NIV, ESV, Holman Standard and the modern Catholic versions like St. Joseph NAB and New Jerusalem.

The previous Douay Rheims Bible of 1582 read just like the King James Bible and the Traditional texts with: "The grace of our Lord Jesus CHRIST be with YOU ALL. Amen." and so does the latest Catholic Public Domain Version of 2009.

Here is how the older Douay-Rheims of 1582 read in these verses - "And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of **THE BOOK OF LIFE**, and out of the holy city, and from these things that are written in this book. [20] He that giveth testimony of these things, saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. [21] The grace of our Lord Jesus **CHRIST** be with **YOU ALL. AMEN.**"

Then in the very last part of the last verse of Revelation, where the KJB says: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with YOU ALL, AMEN", here Sinaiticus is different from all other texts, reading "with THE SAINTS". The Revised Version, the American Standard Version and the Revised Standard Version all read "with the SAINTS" (following Sinaiticus) while the NIV paraphrases the Sinaiticus reading as "with GOD'S PEOPLE".

The Catholic versions are in total disarray as usual. The older Douay-Rheims and even the newer St. Joseph and New Jerusalem read "with YOU ALL. AMEN.", but the Douay had "with ALL. Amen." But now the 2009 Catholic Public Domain Version has come out and it has gone back to "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

However the NASB 1995 and the new 2001 ESV (English Standard Version) now reject Sinaiticus and go with Alexandrinus instead, which says: "with ALL" and omits the word "you". But wait. The even newer ISV 2014 (International Standard Version), and the 2009 Holman Christian Standard have once again gone back to the Sinaiticus reading of "with the saints".

The modern "Evangelical" versions don't even agree among themselves.

It is more than a tad hypocritical of Bible correctors to criticize the King James reading "book of life", when the two other variant readings adopted by the conflicting modern versions of "with all" and "with the saints" are found in ONLY ONE manuscript each and, according to the UBS textual apparatus, not in any other ancient version or quoted by any church father.

Regarding the final word AMEN, manuscript Alexandrinus omits this word, but it is found in the Majority of all texts as well as Sinaiticus, but this time the NASB, ESV chose to reject the Alexandrinus manuscript they had just followed, and went back to the Sinaiticus they had previously rejected and now include the word AMEN!

But Daniel Wallace's NET version 2006 omits the word AMEN.

Do the modern versions always follow the Majority reading? Not at all. In fact they reject the Majority readings literally thousands of times. Do they always follow Sinaiticus? No, not at all. They continually pick and choose among the various readings; do not always agree with each other, and their own printed Greek texts found in Nestle-Aland or the United Bible Society editions are constantly changing every few years.

We see that the reading of "book of life" in Revelation DOES have some Greek manuscript support, as well as ancient versions and church Fathers.

The Reformation Bibles.

The Providence of God has seen fit to place the reading "BOOK of life" in most Bibles that have been used throughout history to reach millions for Christ. It was the textual reading found in ALL Reformation Bibles in all languages which had a Bible during this time. These include Wycliffe 1380, Tyndale 1525, Coverdale 1535, the Great Bible (Cranmer 1539), Matthew's Bible (John Rogers) 1549, the Bishops' Bible 1568, and the Geneva Bible 1557-"God shall take away his part out of the Booke of life." and the Beza New Testament 1599.

"BOOK of life" is also found in The Bill Bible 1671, Mace's N.T. 1729, Worsley Version 1770, The Clarke N.T. 1795, the Thomas Haweis N.T. 1795, The Revised Translation 1815, the Living Oracles 1835, The Longman Version 1841, The Hammond N.T. 1845, The Morgan N.T. 1848, The Hewett N.T. 1850, The Commonly Received Version 1851, Young's- "the scroll of life", Webster's 1833, The Boothroyd Bible 1853, The Sawyer N.T. 1858, The Kenrick N.T. 1862, The Smith Bible 1876, The Dillard

New Testament 1885, the NKJV 1982, the Word of Yah 1993, The Revised Webster Bible 1995, the Interlinear New Testament Greek 1997 by Larry Pierce, Lawrie Translation 1998, The Koster Scriptures 1998 - "if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, Elohim shall take away his part from **the Book of Life**, and out of the set-apart city, which are written in this Book.", the Last Days Bible 1999 by Ray Johnson, the Heritage Bible 2003, The Resurrection Life N.T. 2005 by Vince Garcia - "God shall take away his part out of the SCROLL of Life", the Knox Bible 'You' Version 2009, the Last Days Bible (Ray Johnson) 1999, the Third Millennium Bible 1998, God's First Truth Yes Word 1999 by Theron Miller.

Other English Bibles that read "the BOOK of life" in Revelation 22:19 are Green's 2005 literal version, The Revised Geneva Bible 2005, The Tomson N.T. 2002, the Online Interlinear of 2009 by André de Mol, the Evidence Bible 2003, the Knox Bible, Copyright © 2012 Westminster Diocese, Published by Baronius Press also reads "BOOK of life", the Bond Slave Version 2009, the Jubilee Bible 2010, The Holy Scriptures VW Edition 2010, Conservative Bible 2011 - "God will subtract his portion out of the Book of Life", The Work of God's Children Illustrated Bible 2011, the 2012 Natural Israelite Bible - "and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, Yahweh shall take away his part from **the BOOK of Life**, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.", the BRG Bible 2012, the Modern English Version 2014 and The New Matthew Bible 2016.

Foreign Language Bibles = KJB

"BOOK of life" is also the reading of the 1569 Sagradas Escrituras, Cipriano de Valera 1602, and the Spanish Reina Valera versions from 1602, 1909, 1960 and 1995 used throughout the Spanish speaking world, as well as the 2010 Reina Valera Gomez translation and the 2010 Spanish Jubilee Bible - "Dios quitará su parte del **LIBRO** de la vida", the French Martin 1744 and the French Ostervald 1996, and the 2006 Ostervald-Frossard - "Et si quelqu'un retranche des paroles du livre de cette prophétie, Dieu retranchera sa part **du LIVRE de vie**, et de la sainte cité, et des choses qui sont écrites dans ce livre.", the Italian Diodati of 1602, 1649 and the New Italian Diodati 1991 - "**LIBRO** della vita", the Portugues JOÃO FERREIRA DE ALMEIDA em 1681- "Deus tirará a sua parte **do LIVRO da vida**", the 2014 Romanian Fidela Bible - "Dumnezeu îi va lua partea **din CARTEA vietii**" - "the BOOK of life"

and the Modern Greek Bible.

ο Θεος θελει αφαιρεσει το μερος αυτου απο **του βιβλιου** της ζωης και απο της πολεως της αγιας και των γεγραμμενων εν τω βιβλιω τουτω.

You can see this Modern Greek Bible online here -

<https://newchristianbiblestudy.org/bible/greek-modern/revelation/22/>

Martin Luther's translation of 1545, using Greek texts before Stephanus' 1550 edition, also reads "book of life" and so does the German Schlachter Bible of 2000 - "Gott wegnehmen seinen Teil vom **BUCH des Lebens**."

Besides all these English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Italian, German and Greek bibles, I have been able to confirm that the following Bible versions also read "book of life": **The Afrikaans Bible** of 1953 - "dan sal God sy deel wegneem uit die **BOEK** van die lewe", **the Albanian, the Basque New Testament** (Navarro-Labourdin), the **Czech BKR Bible** - "odejmeť Bůh díl jeho z knihy života" = "the BOOK of life", **the Dutch Staten Vertaling** - "En indien iemand afdoet van de woorden des boeks dezer profetie, God zal zijn deel afdoen uit het **BOEK des levens**", the **Hungarian Karoli** - "az Isten annak részét eltörli az élet könyvéből and the **Icelandic Bible** version, the **Tagalog Ang Salita ng Diyos 1998** - "Kung binawasan ng sinuman ang mga salita sa aklat ng pahayag na ito, aalisin ng Diyos ang kaniyang bahagi sa aklat ng buhay." - "God shall take away his part out of the BOOK of life", and the **Polish Updated Gdansk Bible 2013** - "odejmie też Bóg jego dział z księgi życia i ze świętego miasta, i z rzeczy, które są opisane w tej księdze." = "the book of life", **the Maori Bible** - ka tangohia e te Atua tona wahi i roto i te pukapuka o te ora = the book of life, the **Smith & van Dyke's Arabic Bible** - وان كان احد يحذف من اقوال كتاب هذه النبوة يحذف الله نصيبه من سفر الحياة ومن المدينة المقدسة ومن المكتوب في هذا الكتاب, the **Finnish Bible 1776** - Jumala ottaa pois hänen osansa elämän kirjasta, **the Lithuanian Bible** - "Dievas atims jo dalį iš gyvenimo knygos ir šventojo miesto" = the book of life, and **the Ukranian New Testament 1871** - "уйме Бог часть його з книги життя, і з города сьвятого" = the book of life.

The Catholic Versions

The older Douay-Rheims of 1582, Jerome's Vulgate and the newer, more modern Clementine Vulgate both read "BOOK of life" and the latest Catholic Public Domain Version (The Sacred Scriptures) of 2009 also has gone back to reading "BOOK of life".

I and many thousands of other Bible believers have come to the conclusion that God meant what He said in His Book about His preserved words.

Isaiah 40:8: "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."

Psalms 12:6-7: "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."

Psalms 138:2: "I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy Truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."

Psalms 100:5: "For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations."

Psalms 33:11: "The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."

Psalms 119:152, 160: "Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever. ... Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever."

Isaiah 59:21: "... My Spirit that is upon thee [Isaiah], and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever."

Matthew 5:17-18: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 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 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

1 Peter 1:23-25: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

John 10:35: "... the Scripture cannot be broken."

Will Kinney

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Additional Notes - Minority readings

We have only a very small portion remaining of all the Bibles and manuscripts that ever existed. Perhaps as little as one one hundredth, so there is no sure way of knowing what the other manuscripts and Bibles said - just as we do not have the "originals" and can't prove what they said.

Of those that remain, no two are exactly alike in every detail, but of the approximately 5,000 portions and fragments that we have today, about 95% agree about 99% of the time with the King James Bible readings. The other 5% differs a great deal even among themselves, and it is this 5% that is used in most of today's "bibles".

Even the editors of the UBS Critical Greek text admit that multitudes of Greek manuscripts that once existed are no longer accessible. It is also fallacious and hypocritical to suggest that just because a particular reading is not "in the majority of texts" that it therefore cannot be legitimate, when the very men who are behind the ever-changing modern critical text versions admit that the true reading may be found in a few or even one manuscript.

Westcott and Hort, the very men who introduced the Critical Text methods found in the RV, ASV, NASB, NIV, themselves said: "A few documents are not, by reason of their paucity, appreciably less likely to be right than a multitude opposed to them" (Introduction to the Westcott-Hort Greek New Testament, 1881, p. 45)

J. K. Elliott, a modern textual critic comments on transcriptional probabilities: "By using criteria such as the above the critic may reach a conclusion in discussing textual variants and be able to say which variant is the original reading. However, it is legitimate to ask: can a reading be accepted as genuine if it is supported by only one ms.? There is no reason why an original reading should not have been preserved in only one ms. but obviously a reading can be accepted with greater confidence, when it has stronger support."

Even **Kurt Aland** says: "Theoretically, the original readings can be hidden in a single mss. thus standing alone against the rest of tradition," and Tasker has a similar comment: "The possibility must be left open that in some cases the true reading may have been

preserved in only a few witnesses or even in a single relatively late witness." - The Effect of Recent Textual Criticism upon New Testament Studies," The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology, ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube (Cambridge: The Cambridge University Press, 1956)

Consider this statement by Kurt and Barbara Aland: "INNUMERABLE MANUSCRIPTS WERE DESTROYED during the persecutions and had to be replaced. The result was a widespread scarcity of New Testament manuscripts which became all the more acute when the persecution ceased... There also followed a sudden demand for large numbers of New Testament manuscripts in all provinces of the empire" (Aland, The Text of the New Testament, p. 65)

None of the 50 elaborately crafted copies of the Bible Eusebius made for Constantine around 331 A.D. remain. According to Eusebius, Constantine I wrote him in his letter: I have thought it expedient to instruct your Prudence to order fifty copies of the sacred Scriptures, the provision and use of which you know to be most needful for the instruction of the Church, to be written on prepared parchment in a legible manner, and in a convenient, portable form, by professional transcribers thoroughly practised in their art.

About accomplishing the Emperor's demand: Such were the emperor's commands, which were followed by the immediate execution of the work itself, which we sent him in magnificent and elaborately bound volumes.

John Calvin also mentions many of their best copies that contained to full reading in 1 John 5:7 in his day, yet these copies are unknown today.

The King James Bible translators as well as Stephanus, Beza and Elziever brothers all had access to Greek manuscripts that no longer exist today. Once a person starts down the road of being a "textual critic" who bases his findings and opinions on the relatively few surviving Greek manuscripts that are extant (exist) today, is basing his work on a massive assumption that certain readings that now have scant textual evidence, did not exist in the past in many others that long ago turned to dust or were deliberately destroyed.

The disputed meaning of Revelation 22:19.

Barne's Notes on the New Testament also comments on the meaning of Revelation 22:19 and the reading "book of life".

"God shall take away his part out of the book of life. Perhaps there is here an intimation that this would be most likely to be done by those who professed to be Christians, and who supposed that their names were in the book of life. In fact, most of the corruptions of the sacred Scriptures have been attempted by those who have professed some form of Christianity. Infidels have but little interest in attempting such changes, and but little influence to make them received by the church. It is most convenient for them, as it is most agreeable to their feelings, to reject the Bible altogether. When it said here that "God would take away his part out of the book of life," the meaning is not that his name had been written in that book, but that he would take away the part which he might have had, or which he professed to have in that book. Such corruption of the Divine oracles would show that they had no true religion, and would be excluded from heaven. On the phrase "book of life," See Barnes "Revelation 3:5".

Adam Clarke comments on Revelation 22:19 and "book of life" saying:

Verse 19. If any man shall take away -

"If any man shall lessen this meaning, curtail the sense, explain away the spirit and design, of these prophecies, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, consider this book to beware of indulging their own conjectures concerning it. I confess that this warning has its own powerful influence upon my mind, and has prevented me from indulging my own conjectures concerning its meaning, or of adopting the conjectures of others. These visions and threatenings are too delicate and awful a subject to trifle with, or even to treat in the most solemn manner, where the meaning is obscure. I must leave these things to time and event, the surest interpreters. No jot or tittle of Christ's word shall fall to the ground; all shall have its fulfilment in due time." Other Bible Commentators on Revelation 22:19 - John Gill, Albert Barnes, Adam Clarke

John Gill remarks in his commentary: Revelation 22:19

John Gill

God shall take away his part out of the book of life; by which is meant eternal election, which is the meaning of the phrase throughout this book, in which whoever are written shall certainly be saved. The worshippers of the beast, or the antichristian

party, who are chiefly regarded here, are not written in it, Revelation 13:8 wherefore taking away the part of such, is only taking away that which they seemed to have; see Luke 8:18. "Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have" and the sense is, that such shall be cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death, and will be the portion of all that are not written in the book of life, Revelation 20:15. The Alexandrian copy, one of Stephens's, and the Complutensian edition, read, "the tree of life".

Notice that he says "one of Stephen's" reads tree of life. In other words, other manuscripts that Stephens employed contained "the book of life" in Revelation 22:19, and there were at least 16 manuscripts employed by Stephanus.
