

**Psalm 12:6-7 – a “7-fold refining”
of the *Textus Receptus*?
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Psalms 12:5 For the oppression of the poor,
for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise,
saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from
him that puffeth at him.

6 The words of the LORD are pure words: as
silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven
times.

7 Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt
preserve them from this generation for ever.

Inconceivably, many academicians & pastors deny that the words “keep them” and “preserve them” in verse 7 refer to “the words of the LORD” in verse 6. They insist verse 7 applies to the preservation of God’s people in verse 5 rather than God’s words (vs. 6). They argue that the pronoun *them* in verse 7 (‘thou shalt keep them’) cannot refer to the ‘words’ of verse 6 for grammatical reasons. It is not the purpose of this brief work to refute such. We merely assert that their argument is greatly overstated and flawed.¹ If verse 7 applies to 5, verse 6 would serve no purpose as it would then neither apply to 5 nor 7 (the old rule of *proximity* applies here).

Moreover, some well-intending brothers have offered Psalm 12:6 as a prophecy telling us *how* God actually did preserve His Word – namely, by a “7-fold refining” of the majority *Textus Receptus* Traditional Text. Their proposed refining steps are Erasmus’ 3 editions, Stephanus’ 1550 3rd edition, Beza, the 1633 AD 2nd edition of the Elzevir brothers, and the King James translators. But such is not really the primary interpretation of Psalm 12:6 and I doubt “7-fold refining” would convince textual critical antagonists, Majority Text proponents, or Ruckmanites. Indeed, I would never use it against them in a debate.

Now it is true that these editions of the *Textus Receptus* are part of the overall framework within which providential preservation has operated and that all the words of the God-inspired NT are to be found within the work of the various editors – Erasmus, Stephanus, Beza and the Elzevirs. Moreover, theirs was the result of God’s providence in stabilizing

the TR as a settled entity. Thus, no further revision of the Greek wording is needed, for through His providence God has settled the text. God did use all this, yet it was only to *confirm* His text – other than for that, such was completely unnecessary! Let me explain.

When the Church wanted to obtain the Old Testament did it go to the Chinese, to Peru, or the Bulgarians? Of course not: Israel was the God chosen vehicle through whom He gave the Word as a deposit – and to them alone. So we went to Israel for the Old Testament (Rom. 3:1-2) – and in those days they were a Christ rejecting cult, but still the best and completely reliable source available.

Now text critics assert that they are engaged in an ongoing *scientific* process of examining the extant NT manuscripts in order to restore and purify the text. This claim gave them the cloak of credibility. Yet they essentially only examine less than 10 verses per manuscript in order to select which MSS/mss to utilize. As a natural result of their text critical theories, this cursory check immediately eliminates c.97% of the data! They actually determine the text almost exclusively from two uncial MSS (Vaticanus B and Sinaiticus Aleph) and several papyri. But merely counting (correlating) NT manuscripts is hardly “scientific” (10th graders can “count” mss) anymore than are text critical theories with their make-believe “history of text transmission”.

Could there be another source? If so, where could we find it? Could we find it by going to the Japanese, the Brazilians, or the Germans? Well, the OT was written in Hebrew and so we logically went to them for that text. Hummm, the New Testament was given in Koiné Greek – so I contacted Archbishop Geron Iakovos, Patriarchate of the Greek Orthodox Church of all the Americas from 1959 to 1996 (2½ million members), in 1991 to confirm just what was their NT text.

After being emphatically told they “did not use the thoroughly corrupt Westcott-Hort or any other critical text”, he said their text had been kept (via apostolic succession) and that, aside from spelling and type-set errors, their manuscripts (dating to at least the early 300’s) read *exactly as Stephanus’ 1550 edition which was almost word-for-word Erasmus’ 1522*

¹ Dr. Jeffrey Khoo (Academic Dean, Far Eastern Bible College in Singapore) well documented this in 2003.

3rd edition. He sent the names & dates of all their bishops who had vouchsafed that text back to Christ and the apostles (including Chrysostom). Of course I was unconvinced of those *before* 300). Furthermore, he verified 1 John 5:7–8, Mark 16:9–20, and the woman taken in adultery (John 8:1–8:11) as authentic. We should have gone to the Greek Church first!² It's *not* a cult.

² Sadly, in 1902 the Greek Church succumbed to text critical pressure and sent a committee to the Great Monastery of Mt. Athos, Greece to “re-establish the old text according to the tradition of the Church of Constantinople”. The committee consulted about 20 of their Byzantine (TR) manuscripts but, for the most part, the foundation of their now official 1904 published edition was based on 116 lectionaries. The official position of the Greek Church is that the 1904 Patriarchal edition is a revision of the Byzantine text as preserved at Constantinople and guided by the authority of Chrysostom.

The 1904 text has about 2,000 variations with both the critical text and the *Textus Receptus*, but this number includes the Apocalypse. The Greek Church maintains that most of the variants do not change the meaning of the New Testament. In 2004, Peter Papoutsis (a Greek) translated the 1904 edition into English. He states that, other than the Apocalypse, all variations between the 1904 text and the *Textus Receptus* are “extremely minimal”.

Nevertheless, Archbishop Iakovos rejected the 1904 edition and held all the Americas to Stephanus’ AD 1550 edition of the *Textus Receptus*, which was almost word-for-word Erasmus’ 1522 3rd edition.

In answer to “what translation should I use”, his Eminence Metropolitan Isaiah of Proikonisou and Presiding Hierarch of the Greek Orthodox Diocese of Denver replied: “the King James Version is the most reliable and faithful English translation” (Greek Orthodox Diocese of Denver Bulletin: Mar. 1995, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp. 14-17). In our first 1991 telephone interview, Archbishop Iakovos gave me, practically word-for-word, the same testimony regarding the King James Bible’s faithfulness.

Iakovos was born in 1911 at Imvros, Turkey. He received a Master’s degree in 1934 from Istanbul’s Ecumenical Patriarch’s Theological School, obtained a second Master’s degree from the Harvard Divinity School in 1945, and became a U.S. citizen in 1950. He spent nine years on the World Council of Churches and held a term as its president. (At issue here are not his doctrines or his ecumenism, only that of his denomination’s NT text.) Archbishop Iakovos died at 93 on April 10, 2005.

After several near hour-long conversations with the Archbishop concerning their continuing preservation of the text, I became convinced that I had both found and moreover had for years in my own possession the providentially preserved New Testament which had for centuries lain in the bosom of the Greek Church. Due to the language, who else could have or would have so zealously guarded it?

So we do not need “7-fold refining” for a proof-text. We have a more ancient witness than the refining process, and we need not count mss! As both maintain the text requires “fine-tuning”, they are compromises – for even “7-fold refining” is actually a denial that God has kept His many promises to preserve His Word (Isa. 40:8; Psa. 12:6-7; Mk. 13:31; 1 Peter 1:25).

My New Testament text requires no theory, “majority reading”, restoration or “refining”. Similar to the Old Testament, my NT has been given by the Creator as a deposit to the church bearing the language into which it was originally given. We needed only to find with whom God had entrusted to keep and preserve it. Selah.