

do about their Old Testament.

To my mind one of the great reasons for the excellence of the King James Version was the fact that the committee that prepared it had before them the results of eighty years of effort on the part of many scholars to render the Bible into the English of their day. There are thousands of places in the Bible where a glance at the original Hebrew or Greek brings out ideas, even to one whose knowledge of these languages is fairly rudimentary, that are not easy to include in a translation into another language. Translation is a very difficult problem. The features of every language are unique, and when two languages are as different from each other as Hebrew and English it is very hard to reproduce ideas that are quite obvious in the original in approximately the same number of words with at least a certain amount of word-to-word correspondence. While it is important, for careful biblical interpretation, that men be well trained in the original languages, the great problem in a translation is not so much determining the meaning as finding a way to express this precise meaning briefly and clearly in English. The translators of the King James Version had the advantage of many efforts that had been made to do this. Even a rather poor translation will sometimes hit upon an excellent way to render a certain idea, and the translators of the King James Version were thus able to pick words and phrases from many different translations in making their version. I wish that we were in a position today where a group of scholars could examine a great number of efforts that had been made to translate the Bible into present-day English and could select from them the best phrases and thus could prepare a version for our day as good as the King James Version was for its day. Of course this could be done only by Bible-believing scholars, since those whose naturalistic presuppositions make it impossible for them to believe what the Bible says are naturally led to avoid many ideas that are clearly taught in the original.

At present an effort is being made in this direction by a committee on which a prominent member is Dr Burton L. Goddard of Gordon Theological Seminary in Wenham, Massachusetts. There have been many efforts to translate the New Testament into English in recent years, and it is entirely possible that this committee may be able from them to select the words and phrases that will enable it to make a version of the New Testament in present day English that will be worthy to stand alongside the King