

disposal. The fact that these manuscripts correspond in most regards to the earlier manuscripts discovered since his time is evidence of the wonderful way in which God providentially preserved His Word. There was no false doctrine contained in them. There is no great truth contained in the original Scripture that was not still preserved in them. Yet there were many very minor points in which they differed from the early manuscripts. In addition there are portions of the New Testament for which Erasmus had no manuscript available. These he himself translated back into Greek from the Latin Bible of the Roman Catholic church. One of these is a verse that is contained in no known Greek manuscript written before the time of Erasmus. Erasmus did a great service, but he was not inspired.

In the next few years some other manuscripts became available to Bible students, and a few changes were made in Erasmus's text. Yet his text was substantially the same as that used by the translators of the King James Version. The term *Textus Receptus* did not originate until some years after the publication of the King James Version, and then was applied to a text that differs in hundreds of cases from the text used in preparing that excellent version of the Bible.

In recent years a great number of early manuscripts have been discovered. Comparing these with one another, new texts have been prepared. These have some points in common with the pioneer suggestions of Westcott and Hort, but differ from them at many places. These texts do not differ in any significant way from the text used for the King James Version or from the later so-called *Textus Receptus*. A man can come to Christ through either text, and he can learn the principal doctrines of the Scripture from either text.

It is humanly impossible to copy by hand as much as twenty chapters of the Bible without making at least one mistake. Most of us would make several mistakes in making such a copy. Old books that have thus been copied and recopied are often so different from the original that one cannot even recognize the similarity. Thus there was a story of Alexander the Great, written at his time, in which his twelve companions were named. This manuscript was copied and recopied in subsequent years. There is in existence a copy written a few centuries after the time of Alexander in which it is impossible to find a similarity between the name of any one of the twelve companions and any of the