

## A New NAR Bible (Part 1) — ‘The Passion Translation’

Posted By [Holly](#) On April 26, 2013 @ 6:48 pm In [Brian Simmons](#),[Che Ahn](#),[James Goll](#),[Miscellaneous](#),[The Passion Translation](#),[Twisted Scriptures](#) | [55 Comments](#)



<sup>[1]</sup>Beware: An [The Passion Translation](#)

<sup>[2]</sup>”

Apostle Brian Simmons, of [Stairway Ministries](#) <sup>[3]</sup>, is the lone translator of this “groundbreaking” project. To date, he has released four installments of his new translation:

- [Psalms: Poetry on Fire](#) <sup>[4]</sup>
- [Song of Solomon: Most Amazing Song of All](#) <sup>[5]</sup>
- [Luke: To the Lovers of God](#) <sup>[6]</sup>
- [Letters From Heaven by the Apostle Paul](#) <sup>[7]</sup>

Next in line is *Proverbs, Wisdom From Above*, due out in Fall 2013.

Simmons’ translation is [endorsed](#) <sup>[2]</sup> by influential [Harvest Rock Church](#) <sup>[8]</sup> in Pasadena, California, USA), prophet James Goll ([Encounters Network](#) <sup>[9]</sup>) and apostle Katherine Ruonala ([Glory City Church](#) <sup>[10]</sup> in Brisbane, Australia).

Simmons claims he undertook this work because he saw a need for a more emotionally passionate translation of the Bible that speaks to the heart. He believes the leading translations of the Bible speak mainly to the mind and don’t adequately capture God’s passion. He describes his translation like this:

**The Passion Translation Project** is a groundbreaking attempt to re-introduce the passion and fire of the Bible to the English reader. God longs to have His Word expressed in every language in a way that would unlock the ‘passion’ of His heart. The goal of this work is to trigger inside of every English speaker an overwhelming response to the truth of the Bible as it is unfiltered by religious jargon – unfolding the deep mysteries of the Scriptures in the language of love, the language of the heart. Accurate to the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts, but passionately powerful in a contemporary form.

So, what's the problem with his "passionately powerful" translation?

Simmons has taken verses of Scripture that have nothing to do with NAR teachings or practices and reworded them so they appear to support those very teachings and practices, such as "prophetic singing," the "transference of an anointing," and the issuing of "apostolic decrees." In other words, despite his claim to unveil the truth of the Bible "unfiltered by religious jargon," he's actually exploiting his audience's ignorance of sound textual criticism to smuggle in a heterodox theology along with a good measure of NAR jargon.

The bottom line? He's changing God's Word—a serious offense to God. I will look at specific verses he has changed in my next post.

But, for now, I want to point out that this translation is potentially one of the most disturbing developments in the NAR movement. Simmons is following in the footsteps of the major cults of Christianity who have released their own translations of the Bible, including the *New World Translation* used by the Jehovah's Witnesses and the *Joseph Smith Translation* used by some groups of Mormons.

By creating a new NAR translation of the Bible, Simmons is shaping the way a generation of NAR followers will read and understand Scripture—and also creating a divide between those who use the NAR translation and those who don't.

It remains to be seen how many NAR people will make the switch to this NAR translation of the Bible. If a lot of them do switch Bibles, then The Passion Translation could truly—as its advertisements say—"impact the Church for years to come."

Heaven forbid.

– By Holly Pivec

Go to [Part 2](#) <sup>[11]</sup> [Part 3](#) <sup>[12]</sup> [Part 4](#) <sup>[13]</sup>

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[1] Image: <http://www.SpiritOfError.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/passion-translation.jpg>

[2] The Passion Translation: [http://www.elijahlist.com/words/display\\_word.html?ID=12057](http://www.elijahlist.com/words/display_word.html?ID=12057)

[3] Stairway Ministries: <http://www.stairwayministries.org/>

[4] *Psalms: Poetry on Fire*:

[http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/193657828X/ref=as\\_li\\_qf\\_sp\\_asin\\_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=193657828X&linkCode=as2&tag=spioferr04-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/193657828X/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=193657828X&linkCode=as2&tag=spioferr04-20)

[5] *Song of Solomon: Most Amazing Song of All*:

[http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1936578034/ref=as\\_li\\_qf\\_sp\\_asin\\_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1936578034&linkCode=as2&tag=spioferr04-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1936578034/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1936578034&linkCode=as2&tag=spioferr04-20)

[6] *Luke: To the Lovers of God*:

[http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1936578484/ref=as\\_li\\_qf\\_sp\\_asin\\_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1936578484&linkCode=as2&tag=spioferr04-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1936578484/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1936578484&linkCode=as2&tag=spioferr04-20)

[7] *Letters From Heaven by the Apostle Paul:*

[http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1936578565/ref=as\\_li\\_qf\\_sp\\_asin\\_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1936578565&linkCode=as2&tag=spioferr04-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1936578565/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1936578565&linkCode=as2&tag=spioferr04-20)

[8] Harvest Rock Church: <http://www.hrockchurch.com/>

[9] Encounters Network: <http://www.ministrytothenations.org/>

[10] Glory City Church: <http://www.glorygathering.com.au/>

[11] Part 2: <http://www.spiritoferror.org/2013/05/a-new-nar-bible-part-2-drastic-differences/3059>

[12] Part 3: <http://www.spiritoferror.org/2013/05/a-new-nar-bible-part-3-wheres-the-manuscript-evidence/3153>

[13] Part 4: <http://www.spiritoferror.org/2013/05/a-new-nar-bible-part-4-the-passion-translation-vs-the-english-standard-version/3201>

A New NAR Bible (Part 2)–Drastic Differences

Posted By [Holly](#) On May 3, 2013 @ 8:13 pm In [Brian Simmons](#), [Miscellaneous](#), [The Passion Translation](#), [Twisted Scriptures](#) | [19 Comments](#)



Apostle Brian Simmons and wife, Candice

In my [last post](#) <sup>[2]</sup>, I wrote about a new translation of the Bible called “The Passion Translation”–released by New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) apostle Brian Simmons.

In this post, I will show you three of the verses Simmons has drastically changed in his new translation to make it look like the Bible promotes NAR teachings. I will contrast Simmons’ translation of the Bible with the standard English translations.

## **Galatians 6:6**

### *Standard English Translations*

- *Nevertheless, the one who receives instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor. ([New International Version](#) <sup>[3]</sup>)*
- *Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches. ([New King James Version](#) <sup>[4]</sup>)*
- *Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. ([English Standard Version](#) <sup>[5]</sup>)*

The teaching being promoted: Church members should take care of the financial and other material needs of their spiritual leaders.

### ***The Passion Translation***

- *And those who are taught the Word will receive an impartation from their teacher; a transference of anointing takes place between them.*

The NAR teaching being promoted: The divine authority to minister with a specific miraculous gift—such as the gift of prophesying or healing people—can be imparted or transferred from church leaders to their followers.

## **Philippians 1:1-2**

### ***Standard English Translations***

- *Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all God's holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ([New International Version](#) <sup>[6]</sup>)*
- *Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ([New King James Version](#) <sup>[7]</sup>)*
- *Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ([English Standard Version](#) <sup>[8]</sup>)*

The teaching being promoted: Actually, there is no explicit teaching in this verse. Rather, this is simply a salutation from the apostle Paul and Timothy at the beginning of a letter Paul wrote to the Christians living in Philippi. “Grace” and “peace” was a standard Christian greeting in the early church.

### ***The Passion Translation***

- *Dear Friends in Philippi, My name is Paul and I'm joined by my spiritual son, Timothy, both of us passionate servants of Jesus, the Anointed One. We write this letter to all His devoted followers in your city, including your pastors, and to all the servant-leaders of the church. We decree over your lives the blessings of divine grace and supernatural peace that flow from God our wonderful Father, and our Anointed Messiah, the Lord Jesus.*

The NAR teaching being promoted: Apostles can issue “decrees,” which are authoritative proclamations that release God’s power. In other words, a decree is not a request for God to do something, but a declaration that He will do so because the apostle has been given the authority to release God’s power.

## **2 Timothy 4:2**

## ***Standard English Translations***

- *Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.* ([New International Version](#) <sup>[9]</sup>)
- *Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.* ([New King James Version](#) <sup>[10]</sup>)
- *preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.* ([English Standard Version](#) <sup>[11]</sup>)

The teaching being promoted: Preach the Word of God at all times—whether it is convenient or not—and do so with great patience.

## ***The Passion Translation***

- *proclaim the Word of God and stand upon it no matter what! Rise to the occasion and preach when it is convenient and when it is not. Preach in the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit— with wisdom and patience as you instruct and teach the people.*

The NAR teaching being promoted: Preach the Word of God at all times—whether it is convenient or not—and do so in the “full outpouring of the Holy Spirit” and with patience. Notice how Simmons has inserted the part about the “full outpouring of the Holy Spirit,” which cannot be found in any of the other translations. Yet what does he mean by “full outpouring of the Holy Spirit?” Frankly, his meaning can be hard to pin down. But I believe that Simmons, as an NAR leader, does not want to emphasize the written Scripture alone, so he felt a need to insert something that would also allow for new revelation from the Holy Spirit outside of Scripture.

## **Drastically Different**

I hope it is clear from these simple comparisons of verses that Simmons has changed not just a few words, but their entire meanings. But how did Simmons arrive at such drastically different interpretations? I’ll address this question in my [next post](#) <sup>[12]</sup>.

– By Holly Pivec

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[1] Image: <http://www.SpiritOfError.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Brian-and-Candice-Simmons.jpg>

[2] last post: <http://www.spiritoferror.org/2013/04/a-new-nar-bible-the-passion-translation/3014>

[3] [New International Version](#):

<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians%206:6&version=NIV>

[4] [New King James Version](#):

<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians%206:6&version=NKJV>

[5] English Standard Version:

<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians%206:6&version=ESV>

[6] New International Version: <http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians%201:1-2&version=NIV>

[7] New King James Version: <http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians%201:1-2&version=NKJV>

[8] English Standard Version: <http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians%201:1-2&version=ESV>

[9] New International Version:

<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Timothy%204:2&version=NIV>

[10] New King James Version:

<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Timothy%204:2&version=NKJV>

[11] English Standard Version:

<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Timothy%204:2&version=ESV>

[12] next post: <http://wp.me/p31Pwa-OR>

A New NAR Bible (Part 3): Where's the Manuscript Evidence?

Posted By [Holly](#) On May 10, 2013 @ 5:58 pm In [Brian Simmons](#), [Miscellaneous](#), [The Passion Translation](#), [Twisted Scriptures](#) | [10 Comments](#)



[1]

A fragment of a Greek manuscript of the Gospel of John that dates to the second century. This fragment is housed at the John Rylands Library in Manchester, England.

In my last two posts ([Part 1](#) <sup>[2]</sup> and [Part 2](#) <sup>[3]</sup>), I wrote about a new *The Passion Translation* <sup>[4]</sup>, which features drastically changed verses of Scripture. See three of those changed verses [here](#) <sup>[5]</sup>.

In this post, I show how the translator of this NAR Bible, apostle Brian Simmons, attempts to justify his changes to Scripture.

In short, Simmons claims that the vast differences in meaning are the result of his decision to translate many verses from Aramaic manuscripts—not Greek manuscripts. (Yet, I must mention that even those verses he claims to translate from the Greek are still drastically different.)

Simmons said the reason he decided to translate from the Aramaic is because new discoveries have revealed that the New Testament was originally written in the Aramaic language, not Greek.

Here is what Simmons says, in his own words.

“For centuries, it has been believed that the New Testament was first written in Greek. ... Some scholars now lean increasingly towards the thought that Aramaic and Hebrew texts of the New Testament are the original manuscripts, and that many of the Greek texts are copies, and a second generation from the originals! This is radically changing translation concepts, and will result in many new translations of the New Testament based on Aramaic.” [Excerpted from “Translator’s Introduction” to *Letters from Heaven by the Apostle Paul* <sup>[6]</sup>, the fourth installment of *The Passion Translation*]

### **Astounding Claims**

These are astounding claims. If what Simmons says is true, then that would mean that all the standard English Bible translations—including the King James Version, the New International Version, the New American Standard Bible, and the English Standard Version—are not based on the earliest and most trustworthy manuscripts and should be replaced by new, more reliable translations, such as Simmons’ *Passion Translation*.

But don’t throw out your Bible yet. There is simply no evidence to support Simmons’ claims.

Contrary to what he says, the vast majority of scholars continue to believe the original manuscripts of the New Testament were written in Greek. Why do they believe this? It’s simple: the manuscript evidence.

### **The Manuscript Evidence—Or Lack Thereof**

For starters, there are fragments of New Testament manuscripts written in Greek that date back to the second century. And a [recent discovery](#) <sup>[7]</sup> of a Greek fragment of Mark’s Gospel may well date back to the first century!

In contrast to these very early manuscripts written in Greek, the earliest surviving Aramaic manuscript of the New Testament—called the “Peshitta”—is from the fifth century.

In light of the lack of Aramaic manuscripts prior to the fifth century—and the abundance of much earlier Greek manuscripts— it’s a huge stretch for Simmons to claim that the New Testament was originally written in Aramaic.

Beyond the lack of manuscript evidence itself, there are a lot of other significant problems with Simmons’ claims that Aramaic is the original language of the New Testament. Read about those problems [here](#) <sup>[5]</sup>.

### **Rehashed Theory**

But his claims are not new. They have also been promoted by the Nestorian Church and some Seventh-Day Adventists. Yet, Simmons has taken a baseless theory and rehashed it—hoping to sell it (and his new translation)—to a new audience of NAR followers.

The thing that disturbs me most about Simmons' claims is his willingness to discredit all the widely accepted Bible translations merely so he can tout his personal translation. By implying that all the standard English Bible translations are unreliable—translations that are, in fact, based on ancient and reliable manuscripts—he is undermining [next post](#) <sup>[8]</sup> about this so-called translation.

– By Holly Pivec

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[3] Part 2: <http://www.spiritoferror.org/2013/05/a-new-nar-bible-part-2-drastic-differences/3059>

[4] *The Passion Translation*: <http://www.passiontranslation.com/>

[5] here: <http://hermeneutics.stackexchange.com/questions/4146/what-arguments-exist-that-would-refute-the-theory-concerning-aramaic-primacy-of>

[6] Letters from Heaven by the Apostle Paul:

[http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1936578565/ref=as\\_li\\_qf\\_sp\\_asin\\_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1936578565&linkCode=as2&tag=spioferr04-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1936578565/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1936578565&linkCode=as2&tag=spioferr04-20)

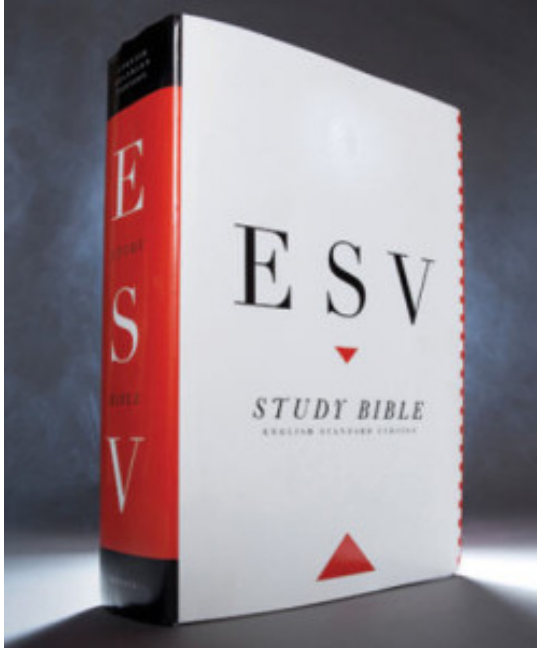
[7] recent discovery : <http://thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justintaylor/2012/03/21/an-interview-with-daniel-b-wallace-on-the-new-testament-manuscripts/>

[8] next post: <http://www.spiritoferror.org/2013/05/a-new-nar-bible-part-4-the-passion-translation-vs-the-english-standard-version/3201>

A New NAR Bible (Part 4): The Passion Translation vs. the English Standard Version

Posted By [Holly](#) On May 17, 2013 @ 6:09 pm In [Brian Simmons](#), [Developing Discernment](#), [Miscellaneous](#), [The Passion Translation](#), [Twisted Scriptures](#) | [17 Comments](#)





<sup>[1]</sup>In my past three posts ([Part 1](#) <sup>[2]</sup>, [Part 2](#) <sup>[3]</sup> and [Part 3](#) <sup>[4]</sup>), I looked closely at a new translation of the Bible called “[The Passion Translation](#)” <sup>[5]</sup>,” produced by NAR apostle Brian Simmons. I showed why it is not a trustworthy translation.

In this post, I will show four things to look for in a trustworthy translation. To illustrate those characteristics, I will contrast the The Passion Translation with another newer translation, the [English Standard Version](#) <sup>[6]</sup> (ESV).

## **Four Characteristics of a Trustworthy Translation**

**A trustworthy translation is produced by a team of translators.** Unlike *The Passion Translation*, which was produced by a lone individual, the ESV was [produced by more than 100 Bible scholars](#) <sup>[7]</sup>—an international team from many denominations. Why is team translation work important? It provides checks and balances to make sure that the translation is accurate and doesn’t reflect the pet theological views of just one person or only a certain group of Christians.

**A trustworthy translation is produced by reputable scholars.** Apostle Simmons’ [single credential](#) <sup>[8]</sup>—other than the fact that he claims to be an apostle—is that he assisted in a translation project of the New Testament for an indigenous people group in Panama. But he apparently has no formal academic training—only the on-the-job training he received during his eight-year stint in Panama working with New Tribes Mission.

In contrast, the translators behind the ESV are leading Bible scholars with the [highest academic credentials](#) <sup>[9]</sup> awarded from respected seminaries and universities.

**A trustworthy translation is produced from early manuscripts.** Much of *The Passion Translation* was translated from Aramaic manuscripts of the New Testament that date to the fifth century. I wrote about this in my [last post](#) <sup>[4]</sup>. In contrast, the ESV was [translated primarily from Greek manuscripts](#) <sup>[10]</sup> of the New Testament that were written centuries earlier. The reason the date of the manuscripts is so important is this: the closer a manuscript is to the original documents means there was less time for its text to be changed or for copyist errors to creep in. Think of the “[telephone game](#)” <sup>[11]</sup>“: the more people who transmit the message, the more it changes.

**A trustworthy translation is transparent.** In the “Translator’s Introduction” to *Letters From Heaven*, apostle Brian Simmons makes a number of bold claims without offering any way to verify the truth of his claims. For example, he claims that “many new discoveries” have been made that indicate that the original documents of the New Testament were actually written in Aramaic, not Greek. Yet, he does not identify a single discovery. So how can one know that what he says about those discoveries is true?

As another example, Simmons claims that “some scholars” are starting to believe that the New Testament was originally written in Aramaic. Yet, he does not identify who these scholars are. So, how can one know that they are legitimate scholars?

As a third example, he never identifies the specific manuscripts he translated from. So how can one know if he used reliable manuscripts?

In contrast to Simmons’ lack of transparency, the translators behind the ESV lay all their cards on the table—thus, their work can be verified. The ESV Web site provides a [complete list of the scholars](#)<sup>[9]</sup> who contributed to the ESV translation and identifies, [by name](#)<sup>[10]</sup>, the specific manuscripts that were used for their translation work.

### **Other Trustworthy Translations**

Some other trustworthy translations of the Bible that shares these four characteristics include the New International Version (NIV) and the New American Standard Bible (NASB).

You can find out if the translation you use shares these characteristics by looking at the opening pages of your Bible. The “Preface” or “Introduction” will generally explain how the translation work was undertaken—including how many scholars did the work, who those scholars were, and if their work was based on early manuscripts.

See more posts about the Passion Translation [here](#).<sup>[12]</sup>

– By Holly Pivec

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[5] The Passion Translation: <http://passiontranslation.com/>

[6] English Standard Version:

[http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1433502410/ref=as\\_li\\_qf\\_sp\\_asin\\_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1433502410&linkCode=as2&tag=spioferr04-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1433502410/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1433502410&linkCode=as2&tag=spioferr04-20)

[7] produced by more than 100 Bible scholars: <http://www.esv.org/esv/scholarship/trusted-scholarship/>

[8] single credential: <http://passiontranslation.com/about-translator/>

- [9] highest academic credentials: <http://www.esv.org/esv/scholarship/translation-review-scholars/>
- [10] translated primarily from Greek manuscripts: <http://www.esv.org/esv/translation/about/>
- [11] telephone game: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese\\_whispers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_whispers)
- [12] here.: <http://www.spiritoferror.org/?s=brian+simmons>