

Reina-Valera-Gómez?

Over 20 reasons why I cannot endorse the Reina-Valera “Gómez”

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In recent weeks and months I have been asked on repeated occasions what I thought of this new Spanish Bible revision on the scene. For over a year I have studied material written by its reviser, carried on some correspondence with him, and spent some time studying the revision; therefore, I have put some time and thought into this before writing down my conclusions. Some no doubt will portray me as being against the KJV for not endorsing this translation, when the truth of the matter is I have a personal conviction for only using the KJV in English. However, I do not believe the English Bible has the authority to correct the Bible in any other language.

Introduction

After at least three new Spanish Bible revisions by independent Baptists have been introduced in the last few years, all of them rejected overwhelmingly by Spanish-speaking fundamentalists, yet another one has surfaced recently. This one has been dubbed “RVG” (Reina-Valera-Gómez), which is what the reviser calls it also. The reviser is Humberto Gómez Caballero of Brownsville, Texas. He is the Spanish director of Helps Ministries of Brandon, Florida, and his home church is located in Ohio. He was granted an honorary doctorate by Landmark Baptist College of Haines City, Florida (founded by Pastor Mickey Carter), where he has taught as a visiting professor. His home church website makes the seemingly impossible claim that he has started over 75 churches and evangelized Mexico more than any other missionary.¹ In a conference in 2005 in Toronto, Gómez himself claimed that the number of churches he was able to start could be as many as 100.²

The title page of his revision, translated to English, states the following:

The old version of Casiodoro De Reina (1569) Revised by Cipriano De Valera (1602) (1909) 2004 Revision. Reviser: Dr. Humberto Gómez Caballero

¹ <http://www.charitybaptist.org/Missions/Mexico/Humberto%20SR/Gómez%20Humberto%20Sr.htm> Accessed Nov. 21, 2005

² “The Spanish Bible Problems” 27th Annual Meeting of the Dean Burgon Society, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. July 21, 2005. Audio recording.

Beneath the title the following statement can be found, also translated to English:

Each and every one of the words has been minutely revised taking as a basis the original Greek text (Textus Receptus), referred to in Spanish as *Texto Recibido* (Received Text) and collated with the King James Bible, and with all the “Reina Valera” versions.

In an article printed in 2004, Brother Gómez stated that the following were the guiding principles for his revision:

To accomplish this work we have put [*sic*] parallel the Textus Receptus, the 1909 Spanish Bible, and King James. We have gone verse by verse making sure first of the purity of the text and then comparing the 1909 with the Authorized KJV. Every single verse that did not line up with the TR or the KJV we immediately corrected. Because not all the words mean the same in every language we have used the best words available in our Spanish language, the words that have the most meaning, never contradicting the TR or the KJV.³

1. The reviser has provided conflicting reports on the source used as a starting point in the revision

There is some conflicting information on the part of Gómez as to exactly what Spanish translation he used as a starting point in his project. The article quoted above states that it was the Valera 1909, but a prayer letter of Humberto Gómez which I have in my possession, states that his revision will be based on the Valera 1602. Also one of his websites states the following: “King James 1611 only. We believe that the 1611 is the perfect word of God...However, we are currently working on a new translation from the Textus Receptus, the King James, and the 1602.”⁴ So far, my cursory examination of the RVG seems to indicate it used the 1909 as a starting point. From that point, in passages where complaints have been made primarily by those with a Ruckmanite view of the superiority of the English Bible, changes were made in addition to updating some of the outdated grammar.

2. The doubtful “great acceptance” claim

On the title page of his Bible revision, Gómez thanks his collaborators but does not name them. So far he has refused to reveal a complete list of the names of those who were his advisers. He refers to them as being “a great number” from different Spanish-speaking countries. In the introduction of the RVG, it assures readers that the RVG New Testament has achieved “great acceptance.” At the time of this writing, I only know of a few Spanish-speaking preachers or missionaries in Spanish-speaking regions who plan to use his revision. In Puerto Rico where I minister, for instance, I am not aware of any church interested in having the Spanish Bible revised. If even one of the approximately 60 Spanish-speaking fundamental churches in Puerto

³ Gómez, Humberto “The Spanish Bible Issue” <http://www.charitybaptist.org/Missions/Mexico/Humberto%20SR/The%20Spanish%20Bible.htm> Accessed Nov. 21, 2005

⁴ Gómez, Humberto “Our Doctrine” <http://gomezministries.gaius.org/ourdoctrine.htm> Accessed March 21, 2006

Rico were interested in Gómez' personal translation, that would only be 1.6 percent! It seems that the "great acceptance" claim is greatly exaggerated. It is possible that the "great acceptance" claim has to do with those who have requested or accepted free copies of the RVG for their own examination to satisfy their curiosity and for complimentary distribution, but still plan to use the 1909 or 1960 in teaching and preaching.

3. There has been virtually no demand for a new Spanish Bible revision from native Spanish-speaking fundamentalist leaders. I would personally calculate that 99% of the demand stems from missionaries or other English speakers who believe the English Bible is capable of correcting the Spanish.

I grew up on the mission field in a Spanish-speaking country, have preached in eight different Spanish-speaking countries, operate what some consider to be the largest and most visited Spanish website with fundamental Baptist material. I do not say this to boast but rather to emphasize that I have a good idea of what is going on in the fundamental Spanish-speaking world. As of this writing, I cannot remember even one instance in which an independent Baptist native fluent Spanish speaker told me face-to-face that he felt the Spanish Bible needed revised (the only few cases were via telephone or e-mail). In every case I have studied of native Spanish speakers wanting their Spanish Bible revised, there was an American influencing them. Even Gómez admits that an American preacher influenced him by showing him comparisons between the English and Spanish Bible.⁵

4. The reviser has maintained close ties with some who have been very bitter in their denunciation of the Reina-Valera

Gómez has maintained close ties with some who have been very bitter in their denunciation of the 1960. For example, in a conference in his own church in November 2007, Gómez referred to Missionary Carlos Donate as one of his "main collaborators." Carlos Donate in a Spanish Bible conference at Landmark Baptist Church in Haines City, Florida (Pastor Mickey Carter), in 2002 declared boldly from the pulpit that the Reina-Valera 1960 came from the sewers of hell (among other blasphemous things).⁶ The church in Haines City also published and is still making available a book that alleges that the Reina-Valera 1960 teaches cannibalism and evolution among other unsavory things.⁷ A critique of said book is available here: <http://en.literaturabautista.com/node/8> Material on the Spanish Bible written by Gómez continues to appear occasionally in a monthly publication of the church which sponsored the above-mentioned conference and book.

⁵ Gómez, Humberto "The Spanish Bible Issue"

<http://www.charitybaptist.org/Missions/Mexico/Humberto%20SR/The%20Spanish%20Bible.htm> Accessed Nov. 21, 2005

⁶ "What I'm going to say this morning, what I'm going to emphasize, are terrible things. Because I'm going to join the 1960 with the most corrupt putrefaction that has emerged from the sewers of hell. The most stinking miry place there is—hell, the deepest. And the 1960 is the bridge or the door that guides or attempts to guide them to that putrefaction." "The Bridge" speech by Carlos Donate. Sep. 24, 2002, during Spanish Bible conference. Landmark Baptist Church, Haines City, FL. Audio tape.

⁷ Carter, Mickey (General Editor) *The Elephant in the Living Room*. Haines City, FL: Landmark Baptist Press, 2002, pp. 167-169.

5. The sole reviser has implied that Spanish Bibles that contain the term *ojalá* (such as the Reina-Valera 1909 & 1960) are invoking Allah

In correspondence with me, Gómez implied that the Spanish Bibles that utilize the word *ojalá* are invoking Allah. His mere reasoning for insulting these Spanish Bibles and those who use them is that the origin of the Spanish word *ojalá* allegedly comes from the Arabic phrase “wa-sa allah” according to a dictionary.

6. The reviser claims he is very careful not to insult men or Bibles, but on repeated occasions he has done just that

Gómez is slightly more careful of what he says about the Reina-Valera compared to some other groups, and he claims “we have been very careful not to insult Men, Bibles, or Ministries.”⁸ His website assures readers concerning the Spanish Bible that “we are in no controversy regarding other translations.”⁹ But frequently he slips as in the afore mentioned example about other Spanish Bibles supposedly invoking Allah. He also characterized the 1960 as “dishonest” in a recent conference.¹⁰ In this same conference he made mention of an unnamed individual who was defending a verse in the 1909 and 1960 that Gómez was criticizing. Gómez made fun of him by stating “I hope you have life insurance.” He has also used the term “poverty” when referring to Spanish Bibles other than his own.¹¹ In a conference in his church in 2007 to promote his RVG translation, it was alleged by one of the speakers that previous Spanish Bibles contain Gnostic corruptions, and they “contain poison.” A critique of the conference is available here: <http://en.literaturabautista.com/node/19>

In his writings, Gómez comes across as if we Spanish-speakers have been ashamed of previous Spanish Bibles and have not been able to consider them to be the Word of God in Spanish by such statements as: “One that will make us stand tall and proud, one that will allow us to say without an apology: ‘These are the Words of God in Spanish.’”¹²

7. The reviser’s typical attacks against readings in previous Spanish Bibles demonstrate his divisiveness and lack of scholarship.

The following is a typical attack on all Reina-Valera editions in an article by Gómez:

In my Bible and all Spanish Bibles Psalms 68:11 reads: "El Señor daba palabra,

⁸ Gómez, Humberto “The Spanish Bible Issue”

<http://www.charitybaptist.org/Missions/Mexico/Humberto%20SR/The%20Spanish%20Bible.htm> Accessed Nov. 21, 2005

⁹ <http://Gomezministries.gaius.org/ourdoctrine.htm> Accessed Nov. 21, 2005

¹⁰ “The Spanish Bible Problems” 27th Annual Meeting of the Dean Burgon Society, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. July 21, 2005. Audio recording.

¹¹ Gómez, Humberto “The Spanish Bible Issue”

<http://www.charitybaptist.org/Missions/Mexico/Humberto%20SR/The%20Spanish%20Bible.htm> Accessed Nov. 21, 2005

¹² Gómez, Humberto “The Spanish Bible Issue”

<http://www.charitybaptist.org/Missions/Mexico/Humberto%20SR/The%20Spanish%20Bible.htm> Accessed Nov. 21, 2005

de las evangelizantes habia grande ejercito." Would you like your KJV to read, "The Lord gave the word; great was the host of the evangelist ladies?" And the mistakes kept piling up one after another.¹³

In the first place, all Spanish Bibles do not read the same in this verse, but all apparently use the feminine gender, which is the issue here. He translated the 1909 reading of "evangelizing" (female tense) as "evangelist ladies" in his article to make it sound as if previous Spanish Bibles were endorsing women preachers. All the Spanish Bibles I checked on, starting with the 1553 Ferrara Old Testament, have the feminine tense. Even the Geneva Bible translated added "women" to provide the verse in a feminine tense. Respected commentators such as Albert Barnes agree that in Hebrew the key word in Ps. 68:11 is in a feminine tense: "More literally, 'The women publishing it were a great host.' The word used is in the feminine gender." If Gómez knew Hebrew or did not have the habit of rushing to judgment against Spanish translations other than his own, his divisive comment would not have been published. I believe these matters should call into question his qualifications to cast judgment on individual readings in the Spanish Bible and perform a revision in which he alone makes all the final decisions.

8. The reviser proudly reported a case of new converts that were refusing to buy a Spanish Bible until his revision was available

On his website, Gómez proudly gives a report of a church where brand new converts had been so conditioned to reject the Spanish Bible that they were refusing to buy one until the Reina-Valera-Gómez was available:

Some missionaries and pastors are eagerly awaiting for our Bible in paper and ink... "Two months ago we baptized 24 new converts; last Sunday we baptized 20 more. They would not buy a bible: They said, 'We would rather wait until we have our Bible.'" (The RVG revision.)¹⁴

9. The reviser has spoken of a pure Spanish Bible only in future tense

In the previously mentioned Toronto conference Gómez stated, "We are going to have a pure Bible like you have in the King James Bible...the changes we made got it closer to the King James than any other Bible." By speaking of a pure Bible in Spanish only in the future tense, he implies that the Spanish-speaking world has been living in darkness without a pure Bible all of this time, and he is now coming to their rescue. This kind of talk (speaking of a pure Bible in Spanish only in future terms) is highly offensive to Hispanic brethren.

10. The reviser has claimed that his revision is perfect in his opinion, yet changes have been made since that claim, and more changes are anticipated

¹³ Gómez, Humberto "The Solution" <http://www.thervg.com/solution.htm> Accessed March. 21, 2006

¹⁴ Gómez, Humberto "News" <http://www.thervg.com/english.htm> Accessed Feb. 23, 2006

In an article he authored, Gómez declared that in his opinion his revision was perfect.¹⁵ In spite of his perfection claim, in the same article he ironically requested feedback for any mistakes or suggested changes to his “perfect” revision. Changes have been made since his “perfection still being perfected” claim, and he has hinted of more changes to come.

11. The reviser admits to not being familiar with Greek and Hebrew

Brother Gómez readily admits that he is not knowledgeable in Greek and Hebrew. When I took him to task on this, he responded by e-mail strangely: “That’s an argument used against us by Catholics. Only they are experts in Greek, Hebrew, Latin, etc. We Protestants are a bunch of uneducated folk.” The reviser states in an article, “We have gone verse by verse making sure first of the purity of the text and then comparing the 1909 with the Authorized KJV. Every single verse that did not line up with the TR or the KJV we immediately corrected.”¹⁶ How could he go verse by verse with the Textus Receptus if he is not familiar with Greek? Also, the Textus Receptus covers only the New Testament, so how could he have gone through every verse in the Bible if he is also not familiar with Hebrew?

12. The reviser compromised by including a Spanish term that he himself had previously admitted represented “Catholic culture” in order to please followers of Peter Ruckman

In correspondence with Humberto Gómez on February 9, 2005, he mentioned to me that his revision would have *amor* (love) instead of *caridad* (charity) in 1 Corinthians 13. He further stated that even though both terms were correct, in the Hispanic world the term *caridad* represented “Catholic culture.” He added that someone whom I would label a Ruckmanite bitterly attacked him over this in a letter. However, in the most recent RVG edition I have in my possession, it was changed to *caridad*, which has been confirmed by Gómez. I think a group with a lot of influence blackmailed him by threatening not to endorse or print his translation if he didn’t remove *amor* and replace it with the exact word the English Bible used. What else could explain his inclusion of a term he admitted represented Catholic culture? In my opinion, his decision to change to a term in his Bible that he himself confessed was “closely related to Catholicism” in Hispanic culture was an act of betrayal against his Hispanic brethren in order to please those who lean towards a Ruckmanite philosophy regarding foreign language Bibles and are funding his project. The Greek word in question is *agape*, which was translated as “love” in dozens of other places in the English Bible. For Gómez to listen those who were insisting that he forgo the most common translation of this Greek word and go with the English equivalent in 1 Cor. 13, in spite of its Catholic association in Spanish, sounds like a case of pandering to Ruckmanites.

¹⁵ Gómez, Humberto “The Spanish Bible Issue”
<http://www.charitybaptist.org/Missions/Mexico/Humberto%20SR/The%20Spanish%20Bible.htm> Accessed Nov. 21, 2005

¹⁶ Gómez, Humberto “The Spanish Bible Issue”
<http://www.charitybaptist.org/Missions/Mexico/Humberto%20SR/The%20Spanish%20Bible.htm> Accessed Nov. 21, 2005

When the 1909 was revised, it continued to include the term *caridad* because the term may not have been as deeply ingrained in the Catholic culture as it now is. In fact, when plans were being made to revise the 1909 to produce what we now know as the Reina-Valera 1960, it was announced that the term *caridad* would be dropped because of the Catholic connotation associated with it:

The Spanish word *caridad* (even more so than the English word *charity*) bears the connotation of alms and begging. It is the common term used by beggars in the street who appeal to the religious sentiments of their potential donors by asking for *caridad* in the name of the Virgin or some patron saint.¹⁷

13. There continues to be changes without warning

The copy of Humberto Gómez' revision I have for my perusal states that it was copyrighted in 2004, but it had changes (such as *amor* changed back to *caridad*) that were not incorporated until mid-2005. There was no warning as to what edition it was nor how many editions it had been through.

14. The Reina-Valera “Gómez” is in an experimental stage, and will continue to be in the foreseeable future

In spite of \$100,000 being raised for its printing, the introduction to the RVG I have in my possession warns of more changes to come:

We will take two more years to analyze any details we may have missed; All sincere men of God who may have an opinion regarding this matter, please let us know and all suggestions will be placed in a file and after a period of two years we will form a panel in which we will make the final decisions.¹⁸

15. There is no revision panel. The reviser makes all decisions himself.

In the previous paragraph, Gómez speaks of a panel in which “we” (plural) will make final decisions, but in correspondence with me on February 24, 2005, Gómez stated that although he does use advisers, he alone makes final decisions as to his RVG revision. He used the word “we” over 45 times in describing the revision process in an article he wrote, but this is misleading if he is making all the final decisions himself. Gómez has further stated that officially, nobody is a consultant, and that those he has consulted may not necessarily consider themselves consultants.

16. You may still have to pay royalties for printing the RVG if you will not be giving them away for free

Gómez copyrighted his revision, although to his credit, he states on the copyright page that no royalties are required for those who wish to distribute it for free. It should be noted however that

¹⁷ Nida, Eugene A. “Report on the Reina-Valera Spanish Revision.” *The Bible Translator*. October 1951, p. 171

¹⁸ This statement comes from the introductory material of a digital edition of the Reina-Valera-Gomez in a PDF file.

this arrangement could allow those behind the RVG to charge anyone who wants to print it if it is not intended for free distribution.

17. In at least one case a change was made to accommodate the Bible to a certain doctrine

For the first time in Spanish Bible history (as far as I can tell) Humberto Gómez translated a Hebrew masculine pronoun as a feminine pronoun in Spanish at Ps. 12:7. The RVG official website accuses previous Spanish Bibles of being in error in this passage. The RVG in Ps. 12:7 now reads "...Las guardarás; Las preservarás..." I know that the motive of strengthening a Bible doctrine is noble, but I disagree with the tactic of manipulating a translation in the process. I have asked Brother Gómez on more than one occasion for evidence showing that the Hebrew pronoun in question was feminine, but to date my requests for such evidence has been ignored. When such matters are noticed, the RVG will fall in disrepute no doubt, and be considered un scholarly, and be referred to in a derogatory manner as the "fundamental Baptist Spanish Bible version" outside the fundamentalist realm. In contrast, the Reina-Valera 1909 & 1960 are generally respected and held in high esteem both in and out of fundamentalist circles.

18. Misleading charts that do not take into account variations between different Textus Receptus editions are being used to promote the RVG

I consider the charts on the Dean Burgon Society website misleading because it is possible to turn the tables around and prove the exact opposite. To prove how misleading the charts are, I made my own chart adhering consistently to the Stephanus 1550 Textus Receptus edition. Instead of being selective going all over the Bible to pick certain verses, I restricted myself to omissions of only one word in only one book of the New Testament.

Reference	Word omitted	Reina-Valera 1960	Textus Receptus Stephanus 1550	RVG
Acts 8:12	evangelio	√	√	omitted
Acts 10:36	evangelio	√	√	omitted
Acts 15:35	evangelio	√	√	omitted
Acts 17:18	evangelio	√	√	omitted

As you can observe from the above chart, reliance on the Textus Receptus is not such a black-or-white matter as some portray it. There are definitely some gray areas. We need to take this into account and be willing to give foreign Bibles the benefit of the doubt when they deserve it.

In Acts 8:12 and 15:35, the Spanish 1569, 1602, 1909, 1960 have had the Spanish word for "gospel." The underlying Greek word is interesting, because it can be translated as either "preach/announce," or "preach/announce the Gospel." The RVG removed the word "gospel" from this verse. On a technicality, the underlying Greek word can be translated without "gospel." However, according to Pastor Gomez' own criteria in his November 2007 conference (see <http://en.literaturabautista.com/node/19>), if a reading was doctrinally sound to begin with, it should not be changed. It had been translated with "gospel" in 1569, 1602, 1909 and 1960. Was

this another case of Pastor Gomez using the English Bible as “the standard to follow?” Other similar examples could be given.

Even deviating from the word “Gospel” and the book of Acts, I can easily come up with another chart that makes the RVG appear as if it was not based on the Textus Receptus:

Reference	Problem	Reina-Valera 1960	Textus Receptus Stephanus 1550	RVG
Mark 15:3	"mas él no respondió nada" added	√	√	addition
John 8:6	"como si no" added	√	√	addition
Romans 3:26	"es de la fe" (1909) changed to "cree"	√	√	change
Titus 2:4	"a ser prudentes" added	√	√	addition
Revelation 16:5	"el Santo" omitted	√	√	omission

I believe this shows that the vague criteria used on the charts promoting the RVG can be very misleading.

19. The reviser has shown little interest in the matter of variations among Textus Receptus editions

My opinion that the reviser has shown little interest in variations among Textus Receptus editions is deducted from the attitude he demonstrated in my personal correspondence with him when I approached him about it, as well as the silence regarding different TR editions in his writings. He would not state what Textus Receptus editions he was using in his revision. As can be seen in the previous charts, variations in Textus Receptus editions account for some of the apparent differences between Spanish and English Bibles.

20. The RVG is just one of many Spanish Bibles revised by fundamentalist missionaries that are creating confusion with so many choices and fights between the various groups

There is the Versión Creyentes Bíblicos, the 1602-R, the Enzinas Spanish Bible project, the former Valera 1865 revised and published in 2005, the Barry Smith project translating straight from KJV into Spanish, etc. All these groups are attacking previous Spanish Bibles as well as their competitors in order to justify their project. Although some deny it, it is my observation that every one of these groups including the RVG is motivated by the desire to correct the Spanish Bible with the English Bible. Read for yourself this statement by Gómez and conclude for yourself what his motivating factor was: “We are going to have a pure Bible like you have in the King James Bible...the changes we made got it closer to the King James than any other Bible.”¹⁹

¹⁹ “The Spanish Bible Problems” 27th Annual Meeting of the Dean Burgon Society, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. July 21, 2005. Audio recording.

Also: “The standard to follow needs to be the King James. I say that publicly, and I am not ashamed of it. 100 percent!” (<http://en.literaturabautista.com/node/19>)

While these different groups are spending so much time and energy and money producing so many different Spanish Bibles and fighting amongst each other over them, only 426 of approximately 6,000 languages have the entire Bible translated in their language. The focus is not where it should be.

21. It appears that the reviser was self-appointed to carry on the revision

Concerning this matter, a Spanish-speaking missionary stated to me in a letter: “there have been NO congresses, committees, clamors, or cries in the Spanish speaking world who wish to address this issue.” In correspondence with me, Gómez has acknowledged that his work was not under anyone’s authority. He apparently has the blessing of his home church in Ohio, but it is an English-speaking church in America whose pastor does not even speak Spanish.

I have not heard of even one well-known leader among Spanish-speaking fundamentalists who encouraged Brother Gómez to initiate his revision. The times he has mentioned names of people encouraging him they were either Americans or others I had never heard of.

If a significant number of Spanish-speaking fundamentalists would have even wanted a revision, and had a say in the matter, would they have selected only one reviser, who was not even well versed in Greek and Hebrew? Certainly not.

It has been stated that the RVG has as much right to be produced as the 1960 was. However, when plans were being made to revise the translation we now know as the Reina-Valera 1960, 95 percent of Latin-American evangelical leaders were in agreement.²⁰ That this many were in agreement is shown by the nearly equal amount of those who adopted the new revision in the following decades. The RVG does not have much support among native Spanish-speaking fundamentalists, and many are disgusted by the false charges that have been raised against the Reina-Valera.

Could it be that no Hispanic even wanted to join Gómez to form a revision committee? Or could it be that Gómez did not want any other Hispanic on the revision committee for fear they would not want to correct the Spanish Bible with English? I believe these are valid questions.

There are many dangers associated with a one-man revision team. What if the sole reviser someday commits an immoral indiscretion, and is disqualified from the ministry? Who would want to carry a Bible revision that bore his name on the title page as the sole reviser if such a thing were to occur? I’m not predicting that the reviser will end up losing his testimony, but if it happened it would be disastrous for those who adopted his revision.

²⁰ Estrello, Francisco E. “Latest Revision of the Reina-Valera Bible.” *Bulletin of the United Bible Societies*. 3rd Quarter 1955, p. 17.

Another danger of a one-man revision committee is that it is easier for one man to be unduly influenced by a group with an agenda, such as Ruckmanites, compared to an entire group of men, which would help ensure balance.

22. The Spanish RVG Gomez Bible has connections to Ruckmanism

Virtually all attempts to create doubt in foreign language Bibles already based overwhelmingly on the Textus Receptus can be traced back to Peter Ruckman. Starting in 1964, Ruckman wrote a number of books that went much farther than simply defending the King James Version. In his 1970 book *The Christian's Handbook of Manuscript Evidence* he went as far as to state that “where the Greek says one thing and the A.V. says another, throw out the Greek” (p. 137) and “mistakes in the A.V. 1611 are advanced revelation!” (p. 126). He teaches that the English can correct the Greek and Hebrew, and different plans of salvation for different ages. For more information on Ruckmanism see <http://literaturabautista.com/english/dangerruckmanism.htm>

A Ruckmanite plants a seed of doubt in Brother Gomez' heart

It was no surprise to me when Humberto Gomez admitted that the first person to bring to his attention supposed errors in Spanish Bibles compared to the KJV, it was a Ruckmanite by the name of Jack Wood.²¹ The late Jack Wood was so much in agreement with Ruckman's teachings that he was invited to preach many times in Ruckman's church. The June 2006 issue of Ruckman's periodical *The Bible Believer's Bulletin* offers no less than 11 hours of recordings of Jack Wood preaching at past annual “Bad Attitude blowouts” hosted at Ruckman's church.

A Ruckmanite home church

The home church of Humberto Gomez has been Charity Baptist Church of Beavercreak (formerly Dayton), OH for over twenty years.²² It is indisputably a Ruckmanite church. Ruckman has preached in Gomez' home church,²³ many preachers they invite preach for Ruckman,²⁴ some classes in the Bible institute in his church use some of Ruckman's books as textbooks,²⁵ the founding pastor (Greg Estep) got an honourable mention in at least three of Ruckman's books, the present pastor graduated from a Bible institute whose website declares it was patterned after Ruckman's school,²⁶ there is an evangelist out of Gomez' church (David Spurgeon) that regularly preaches for Ruckman (including just this year).²⁷ The tape and book catalog of Gomez' home church—which was mailed to an acquaintance of mine this year—listed hundreds of sermons and dozens of books by Peter Ruckman.

²¹ Gómez, Humberto “The Spanish Bible Issue”

<http://www.charitybaptist.org/Missions/Mexico/Humberto%20SR/The%20Spanish%20Bible.htm>

²² <http://gomezministries.gaius.org/index.htm>

²³ See book and tape catalog of Charity Baptist Church

²⁴ See book and tape catalog of Charity Baptist Church, as well as the list of preachers that have preached in the past two years available at

<http://www.charitybaptist.org/Picture%20Pages/Camp%20Meeting/2004/Camp%20Meeting%202004.htm>

²⁵ <http://www.charitybaptist.org/CBBI/Courses.htm#Christian%20Studies>

²⁶ <http://www.blueridgebibleinstitute.com/instructors.html> & <http://www.blueridgebibleinstitute.com/letter.html>

²⁷ <http://www.kjv1611.org/February%202006%20Blowout.htm> &

<http://www.charitybaptist.org/Our%20Church/Evangelist%20&%20Missionaries/Spurgeon/Spurgeon%20David.htm>

Other Ruckmanite influence

The influence of Ruckmanism upon Brother Gomez doesn't seem to end with his home church. Jim Fellure, the person who claims to have encouraged Gomez to proceed with his revision project and promised to publish his New Testament once it was done, has a Ruckmanitish view of Scripture, as revealed in the following statement:

Now if somebody that's got an unprejudiced view said "alright, that says she, the King James Bible says he." You know how I know it ought to be? It's gonna be he. I know that. And if the King James Bible said inspired or inspiration one place and moved another place, it ought to be inspiration one place and moved another place. If the Spanish Bible has inspiration in both places it's wrong. You know. My standard is King James Bible. . . We're convinced that's [RVG] the best Spanish Bible available. You say do you believe it's perfect? No, I believe there's but one perfect book in the world, and that's an English King James Bible. [That's Ruckmanism] That's the only thing. I don't believe [the RVG] it's perfect. I believe it's got some human error in it. But I believe it's the best thing going.²⁸

As documented, the Spanish RVG Bible is a product of the influence of Ruckmanism. The acceptance of this Bible is a step towards legitimizing Ruckmanism. Ruckmanism has been dividing American Fundamentalism for over 40 years. We must not allow Ruckmanism to penetrate and divide Spanish-speaking fundamentalism!

Conclusion

Those who are ready to endorse the RVG "as is" should be warned that at this point it is only a test model and even more changes are likely to be made in the future, as stated in the introduction of this new revision.

I would not have had a problem with Gómez occasionally consulting the KJV and other foreign language Bibles when encountering unusually difficult Greek or Hebrew expressions. It is a common practice for translators to refer to foreign translations to check how others have translated difficult passages. According to the preface of the KJV 1611, its translators did this, and they wrote that they even consulted the Spanish Bible! However, as documented earlier, Gómez stated publicly in November of 2007 regarding his RVG that "the standard to follow needs to be the King James. I say that publicly, and I am not ashamed of it. 100 percent!" When you consider Gómez' lack of knowledge of Greek and Hebrew and his statement about the KJV, this leads to the logical conclusion that the KJV had more weight than the original languages in the RVG. This is a characteristic of Ruckmanism.

Every Christian and every church has the right to decide for themselves whether to adopt this new translation or not. I simply wanted to express my reasons for not endorsing it. I believe God has not failed the Spanish-speaking people, and we have had reliable translations of the Word of

²⁸ Fellure, Jim. <http://harvesthillbaptistchurch.com/fellowship.html>

God in Spanish in the Reina-Valera line for hundreds of years. My fear is that Spanish Bibles which are responsible for the growth and revival we have seen will continue to be viscously maligned in attempts to justify the adoption of new Spanish Bibles now on the scene, unnecessarily dividing Spanish-speaking fundamentalists. May God help us approach this most important matter in a way that honors Christ, upholds His Word, and sets forth the truth.