

*The following is quoted from Chapter 2 of A Woman of Chayil: Far Above Rubies:*

There is one big lemon translation in the Old Testament: Genesis 3:16. There are seven lemon translations in the New Testament: 1st Corinthians 11:2–16; 1st Corinthians 14:29–40, Ephesians 5:22–24, Colossians 3:18, 1st Timothy 2:8–15, Titus 2:3–5, and 1st Peter 3:1–2. In addition, there is one more passage that has been misused by Christian leaders with respect to authority over both men and women, and that is Hebrews 13:17, but that is another topic.

There were no female members on early Bible translation committees, so it was easy for Satan to use innate male bias to influence the translations of verses that pertained to women's roles. Historically, females have not been afforded the same access to education as males; so, even if men had desired the presence and input of women on their translation committees, at the time the Bible was being translated, there was no pool of women Bible scholars from which to select. Regardless of the reason why women were absent from translation committees, the simple fact remains: The female voice and perspective were not present in Bible translation efforts. Females would have been able to point out and challenge any translations pertaining to women that displayed male bias, something men would not be able to recognize easily. The absence of female input provides a rational explanation for why seven somewhat difficult to translate and interpret Bible passages in the New Testament stand out as anomalies among the more numerous grape passages.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Numerous other verses are sprinkled throughout the Bible which reference women, and Bushnell proves that these have been influenced by gender bias in translation. Bushnell says, referring to such verses showing male bias, "These instances are trivial, when taken one by one, but many straws floating in one direction prove that the current runs that way strongly" (p. 277). The overall effect of such translations was the cumulative development of wrong thinking and teaching about women.

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The message of the seven lemon translations is diametrically opposed to the message of the grape passages. Unfortunately, the lemon translations have become the best known Bible passages about women, and their wrong message is dominant in the church. The lemon translations bear responsibility for much of the demeaning psychological, and even physical, abuse of women throughout the centuries. They have been used by people who claim to love and serve Christ and by non-Christians alike to justify the suppression of women. They have been used to sanction and even to mandate hierarchical control of some believers by other believers. As a result, some members of the body of Christ are in bondage to other members. Christian wives are held in bondage to the dominating control of their husbands. Believers of both genders are held under unquestionable control by those Christian leaders who choose to wrongly use Hebrews 13:17 as their license to exercise control over others. The kind of control exercised in such cases is not true authority. It does not correspond with God's nature and His ways, but with the devil's nature and his ways. The bad fruit that is produced reveals the source of the lemon translations.

## **But Lemons are Prescriptive**

Some may argue that the seven New Testament lemon translations are, and should be, dominant because they are prescriptive passages, not descriptive like most of the grape passages. A general principle of Bible teaching is to teach what the Bible teaches or prescribes about behavior, and not to teach authoritatively about what can only be observed

about behaviors of people in the Bible. I will not argue this point, but will say strongly that whatever is taught prescriptively should produce what is seen descriptively in the Bible. If a teaching produces something different than what the Bible illustrates or describes as proper behavior, it is unhealthy teaching and should be questioned and re-examined.

The seven lemon translations in question have not produced behavior that matches the grape passages in the Bible. They have produced the contrary. This one fact tells us that there is something seriously wrong with the understanding and use of the lemon passages. They are misfits in the overall picture, and they produce very bad fruit (by their fruits you shall know them [Matt. 7:20]). They are responsible for a huge sin-wound in the body of Christ which has rendered the church weak and ineffective in prayer. Many born-again believers think they are serving God; but, as they live and practice the errant message of the lemon translations, they are behaving in a way that is not at all in line with the nature and character of God. The Bible says that as a man thinks in his heart, so he is (Prov. 23:7, KJV). Satan has masterfully made use of wrong translations to construct a belief system that has fueled and supported women's dilemma, men's dilemma, and society's dilemma. The fact that these passages exist as they do today is testament to the success of the devil's long-term plan of deception. We are in a time in which truth must prevail and bring a much needed wave of repentance that will catapult the church into a strong position of righteousness from which to engage in devil-stopping spiritual warfare!

## **Fertilizer for Feminism**

The lemon translations played a significant role in germinating the nineteenth century's feminist movement. The ideas set forth in these passages provided fertile soil in which feminism grew. If the truth of the freedom given to women in Christ had not become obscured by the misunderstanding, misuse, and dominance of the lemon translations, the destructive effects of ungodly feminism would probably not be twining everywhere in society today like kudzu vines.

In the beginning of the 19th century's feminist movement, some intelligent, truth-seeking Christian women began to question a God whose word appeared to support and promote the suffering and subjugation of women. Susan B. Anthony, a Quaker, was molded by the Quaker's atypical belief that men and women were equal. Her Quaker upbringing was responsible for propelling her into her lifelong quest to obtain equal rights for women.<sup>2</sup> She began a movement of women who sought equal rights for women in a society that was built on the premise that all men were created equal by God. Unfortunately, these women found their chief opponents to be the clergy of the day.

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<sup>2</sup> Quakers let women preach equally with men. This was unheard of elsewhere during the 1800s. When Anthony tried to speak in public at a temperance meeting, she was told she was a sister and was there to listen and learn only. This lit a fire in her that never went out as she spent her whole life seeking to gain equal rights for women. She also believed, as a Quaker, that girls should be educated equally with boys. She wanted to learn math in her school, but the instructor said there was no reason for this. She was despised by many in the early years of her struggle for women and wrote about how painful this was, but she had strong faith and pressed on throughout her life, joining with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who wrote Anthony's speeches. She became one of the most well known people of her day. She had tea with the queen of England and was invited to the White House regularly. Near the end of her life, she met with Theodore Roosevelt, who was famous for saying "a square deal for all," but he had been quiet on the matter of women's rights. Anthony asked him to take action about women's rights and leave it as part of his legacy. He gave a polite but vague answer and did nothing. (Bio).

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Some women during that time, one of whom was Elizabeth Cady Stanton, found that they could not reconcile their belief in the freedom of individuals with the state of woman (bondage) that was produced by the teachings of the Bible and the church. Thus, they concluded that the Bible's suppressive teachings about woman disqualified it from being the inspired word of God. One might say that the feminist movement was born and flourished because of a wrong presentation (a false one) of the Bible message about woman. In other words, the oppression of women in society and women's reaction to it, is directly tied to lemon translations. Stanton and others blamed this state of affairs on men. Unfortunately, aided by the serpent, they reached the wrong conclusion. Stanton and others worked together to write a highly controversial book in their day, *The Woman's Bible*, which, without a solid basis in scholarly research, appears to distort some of the contents of the Bible.

Women in the feminist movement were eventually able to obtain a measure of secular freedom for women, but unfortunately, the movement that they birthed also set women on a long-term path that was free from the governance of God—the only One who offered them true freedom. Waves of the feminist movement in the twentieth century became openly anti-God and paved the way for other ungodly gender-based movements. Such movements have produced unanticipated and undesirable consequences for the family unit and society at large, creating a situation of ever-increasing bondage to the enemy of God, who thrives wherever the Word of God is rejected.

The lemon translations continue to give reason for many modern-day women to line up with the causes of secular feminists and other gender-based movements that are clamoring for equality—while practicing intolerance. The lemon translations are also responsible for hiding from Christian men the message about women found in the grape passages. That message shows how men should treat women, and vice versa, and it lines up perfectly with the example observable in both Christ's life and death.