

Translations

Does it change the unchanging Word of God when it is translated differently? Apparently not, as far as the Holy Spirit is concerned. The New Testament quotations of Old Testament passages provide clear examples of free translations and paraphrases. Luke recorded Jesus' reading of Isaiah 61:1–2 in the synagogue in Nazareth. A careful comparison of Luke 4:18–19 shows distinct differences in the wording.

Isaiah 61:1–2, KJV

The Spirit of the Lord **God** is upon me;
because **the LORD** hath anointed me to
preach **good tidings unto the meek**; he hath
sent me to **bind up** the brokenhearted, to
proclaim liberty to the captives, and
_____,
the opening of the prison to them that are
bound;

To **proclaim** the acceptable year of the LORD,

Luke 4:18–19; Isa. 42:7, KJV

The Spirit of the Lord _____ is upon me,
because **he** hath anointed me to
preach **the gospel to the poor**; he hath
sent me to **heal** the brokenhearted, to
preach deliverance to the captives, and
recovering of sight to the blind,
to **set at liberty** them that are
bruised,

To **preach** the acceptable year of the Lord.

The phrase “recovering the sight to the blind” is from Isaiah 42:7, so Luke was still correct in saying that Jesus read from the scroll of Isaiah (Luke 4:17). The phrase appears in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, which is another example of a textual variant. There are a variety of explanations for the differences, but given our understanding of Scripture and view of inspiration, most are not acceptable.

NONE OF THE FOLLOWING VIEWS ARE ACCEPTABLE:

1. Luke misquoted Jesus
2. Jesus misquoted Isaiah
3. Jesus corrected what Isaiah should have written

THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS ARE ACCEPTABLE:

1. Jesus read from the Septuagint (but not likely)
2. Jesus read the Hebrew, but Luke used the Greek Septuagint when writing

The interesting conclusion about the latter two options is that the Holy Spirit inspired the writing of Isaiah and Luke. Our view of Bible translation has to be broad enough to accept that what Luke said Jesus said Isaiah said is the Word of God. In other words, what Luke reported about what Jesus read from what Isaiah wrote is the inspired Word of God even though there are translation differences.