

The First Ever Arabic (Van Dyke) Study New Testament

Understanding the 140-year-old Arabic Bible

One of the Oldest Bibles in Use Today

The Arabic Van Dyck Bible translation, produced in 1865, is one of the oldest in use today. It is the most read and most trusted translation in Egypt and the Arab world, by far, and considered the "authorized version" of Arabic-speaking churches. Since 1865, no effort has been made to assess or revise the Van Dyke.

The Egyptian Church is, in general, opposed to a new Arabic translation, due to the conservative context in which she exists.

In 1905, the Bible Societies in the Middle East provided a cross-reference edition of the Van Dyke. Most recently, in the mid-nineties, the Bible Society of Egypt put the text on the computer, which allowed an improved typesetting, making the text more readable with punctuation, paragraph headings, 2 columns rather than one, a glossary of difficult words, Harmony of the Gospels chart, maps, and index of the weights and scales, etc.

Final Effort

The language used in the Van Dyke however, remains the same, difficult 140-year-old Arabic, which is in great contrast to the contemporary Arabic used today. Because the thought of a new translation is yet unwelcome, the Bible Society of Egypt has made a final effort to provide a Van Dyke study Bible with all the background information and helps possible, in order to make the text more understandable.

Back to the Original

The project began in 1999 with the main emphasis on simplifying the meanings of difficult words. Focusing on the original Greek language, notes were provided for over 70% of the text, bringing out the varied nuances and intentions of these words.

The Ancient Context

Along with making the Arabic language more understandable, the focus was to bring to life the Greek, Roman and Jewish world of Jesus and the New

Testament writers. Things that seem puzzling or obscure will take on tremendous meaning when viewed in their ancient context. Comprehensive historical, geographical, political, social and religious backgrounds shed light on what each passage meant in Biblical times. Upholding the reliability of the Scriptures, these crucial cultural backgrounds greatly enrich personal Bible study, helping the reader to better understand the Bible and its cultures.

First Time in Arabic!

Besides the study notes at the bottom of each page, one-fourth of this book is appendixes, with much of the material appearing for the first time in Arabic. Appendixes include all the names and places



mentioned in the New Testament, a complete listing of all the Old Testament references in the New Testament, the religious and political history between the two Testaments, a dictionary and an atlas with 30 full colored maps. Many of these maps and some of the appendixes are BSOE creations, never having been published before.

Assessed and Approved by All

As with all Bible Society materials, differing doctrinal issues that might be controversial from a denominational point of view are avoided. After the BSOE translation team's 5 years of scholarly labors, all the major confessions of Egypt were involved in a review, which has lasted 2 years.

Thoroughly revised, this unique treasure has been published at last and made available in October 2006. Work continues, with the goal of releasing the Old Testament Study Bible in 7 years time. Our prayer is that the wealth of background information in this final edition will be referred to daily by millions of pastors, students, church leaders and other Bible readers around the Arabic-speaking world, shedding light on the meaning and significance of Scripture.

Great Demand for Understandable Edition

An initial 10,000 copies were printed, and expected to last through the end of the year. These were sold out within 2 weeks however! All churches are purchasing this Study Bible in extraordinary large quantities, as they recognize the special value that this book holds for ministers and lay people alike. Non-churched people are asking for the Bible as well, thankful to have an understandable edition made available. A second printing of 20,000 has been ordered.

The Bible Society is carrying out a very aggressive advertising campaign, with posters in churches, front-page newspaper ads, ads in a very popular magazine and in the BSOE magazine, televised ads in the underground subway system and on the local TV. A complimentary copy of the new Study Bible was personally presented to all the Bishops and church leaders in Egypt. Additionally, the Epistles of John were printed out separately and are being given away as a special promotion. Calendars for 2007 were also printed, featuring this new product.

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