

# WHICH KING JAMES BIBLE

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**1600's ... ? 1700's ... ? 1800's ... ? 1900's ... ?**

## **Which King James Version?**

Few people seem conscious of the fact that a currently circulating King James Bible differs in significant details (though not in general content) from the one issued in 1611. They assume that the King James is a fixed phenomenon like "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3; ASV). However, a current KJV differs from the 1611 edition in numerous details. According to modern standards, books produced in the seventeenth century were carelessly printed. The 1611 editions of the KJV had "Then cometh Judas" in Matthew 26:36, which should have been "Then cometh Jesus." The second edition by dittography repeated twenty words of Exodus 14:10. The two editions of the KJV issued in 1611 differ from each other in several other respects. Printers errors in various later printings created oddities like the "Wicked Bible" (which omitted "not" from the seventh of the ten commandments), the "Unrighteous Bible" (in which the unrighteous inherit the Kingdom), the "Vinegar Bible" (with its "Parable of the Vinegar") the Ears to Ear Bible, and many others. Though quite humorous, these examples

show that the printing of the Bible is a process subject to human error. The running together of "headstone" (Zech. 4:7) is a printer's error of 1611 which remains uncorrected. Another printing error continued in modern printings and defying explanation is "strain at a gnat" (Matt. 23:24) where the 1611 version correctly had "strain out a gnat."

### **Apocrypha Omitted in the 19th Century**

But there have also been intentional changes since 1611. Some improvements were made as early as 1612; in a 1613 edition another 413 changes were made. In 1616 an edition improved the reading "approved to death" (I Cor.4:9) to "appointed to death." Omission of the Apocrypha, which had been printed between the Testaments in all English Bibles since Coverdale's, is one of the marked ways in which a current King James Bible differs from that of 1611. A 1629 edition was the first to omit the Apocrypha, but the omission did not become general until the nineteenth century.

### **Thousands of Errors Corrected**

Additional revisions of the KJV were made in a Cambridge edition which appeared in 1629. In 1638 an edition of the King James Bible prepared by Goad, Ward, Boyse, and Mead (two of whom had served on committees preparing the 1611 KJV) continued other revisions. The most controversial of these revisions was the reading "ye may appoint" for "we may appoint" in Acts 6:3, which some have thought to be a deliberate change under nonconformist influence. William Kilburne, in 1659, claimed to find 20,000 errors that had crept into six different editions printed in the 1650's. New marginal references were introduced into printings in 1660, and still other changes came as Dr. Anthony Scattergood in 1683 added 7,250 references in an edition no longer in existence. In 1727 the King's printer at Edinburgh issued an edition in which

several thousand errors in the marginal materials on the Old Testament were amended and corrected.

### **Errors Continue to be Corrected**

In a quite revolutionary step, Bishop Lloyd, in an edition of 1701, inserted a biblical chronology – taken from Bishop Ussher – at the head of the reference column at the beginning of numerous Old Testament books. Up to this point, in keeping with rule two of the King's instructions to the translators, the KJV had ordinarily been printed with references and marginal readings but without notes. Though Ussher's dates are no longer thought to be correct they are still being printed. F.S. Paris and H. Therold in 1762 extended the use of italics, modernized the language, and added 360 marginal references. Benjamin Blayney, in 1769 did extensive revision, added 76 notes – including many on weights, measures, and coins – and added 34,495 new marginal references. At this time the spelling and punctuation were modernized. "Hierusalem," "Marie," "assone," "foorth," "shalbe," "fet," "creeple," "fift," "sixt," "ioy," "middles," "charet," and the like were no longer used. Blayney's edition became the standard edition until the publication of the Cambridge Paragraph Bible, edited by Scrivener in 1873. The American Bible Society in the nineteenth century, after examining six editions of the KJV then circulating and finding 24,000 variants in the text and punctuation, claimed that "of the great number, there is not one which mars the integrity of the text or affects any doctrine or precept of the Bible"; but the Society did a revision in 1860 which was later abandoned because of protests from its supporters. A study of all these matters was made by F.H. A. Scrivener in *The Authorized Edition of the English Bible (1611)*. Additional revision in punctuation, spelling, and running heads was done by the Bible Society in 1932. In 1962 it was decided to omit the short explanatory statements following certain epistles in the New Testament, to change some spelling, to omit hyphens in some words, and to omit some capitals. Even

after all these revision efforts, careful comparison of various current printings of the KJV will show that there are still minor variations in spelling. For example, the Oxford, Cambridge, and some Nelson printings have "an hungered" (Matt. 4:2); other Nelson and Zondervan printings have "an hungered"; and the American Bible Society printing has "ahungered." The marginal readings and chapter headings of the 1611 edition are often not printed in current printings.

### **When did the KJV Become Flawless?**

The King James Bible, then, as a currently circulating book, becomes a phantom, a figment of an imagination clinging to the past. Which of all these revisions is to be considered the real King James? If we are to use only the KJV and read the other versions for comparison, which King James shall we use? If revision has been tolerated and even encouraged in the past, why should it be terminated now?

### **Is the KJV Translation Sacred or Holy?**

Admirable as the KJV was when it was launched, valuable as has been its contribution to the religions and literary life of the English-speaking public, and loved as it is by those who have studied it in detail from their childhood, time has done to the KJV what it does to all works of men. The message of the Bible should not be the peculiar possession either of scholars or of those initiated into and trained in the church; it should be open (as the King James scholars themselves said) "to the very vulgar," that is, to the uneducated and to children. However, the KJV is no longer completely intelligible to all readers. It is no longer the most accurate and most readable English rendering of the Word of God. Who wishes to affirm that the KJV in all its aspects accurately represents what the inspired writers originally gave us? It is a sad commentary on the attitudes of those who claim to love the Bible that they, with oratory

about its literary merits, are zealous to bind men to that which has demonstrated inaccuracies and is not completely intelligible in all its parts.

### **Errors In Today's KJV**

The previous four pages of information, taken from Jack P. Lewis's book *The English Bible from KJV to NIV*, present to us some simple facts that should be of immense value to those who have been lured into the "KJV only" mentality, or those who have been approached by such people and are considering the translation controversy. If you are still thinking that today's KJV is the only inspired, inerrant, totally accurate and flawless Bible, consider the following KJV verses. These are just a few of the errors that exist today;

*Acts 12:4* ...intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.

Why does the KJV use "Easter" to refer to the sacred Old Testament memorial of the passover? Easter is the name of a pagan goddess of spring, also given to her pagan holiday borrowed by the Catholic religion to bring pagans into their religion. After learning what Easter really means, what God respecting Christian would continue to grieve his Holy Savior by using this idolatrous word to refer to anything truly Christian, especially the resurrection of our Savior. The Greek word, pascha, should be properly translated "passover," as it is in all other places in the KJV. The sad truth is that most KJV only people still observe the pagan holiday that the Catholic religion began.

*1 Cor. 11:29* ...he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself...

Why is the word "damnation" used here? Do you think one loses their salvation and is "dammed to hell" if he does not take the Lord's Table correctly? Luther, Calvin, and the Roman religion think so! They focus on this verse. This was written to the saints at Corinth, born-again believers. Those who think they can lose their salvation must be doing something to keep it. That "something" is works, therefore they are not saved. True Believers have "eternal" life, we can "never" perish (see John 10:28). The word "damnation" should be properly translated "judgment" as it is in vs. 31 and 32, referring to "chastening" of the Lord.

*1Tim. 3:1* ...If a man desires the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

Do you have the "office of bishop" in your church, or any "bishops?" Not if you are in a sound fundamental Bible church. You have elders who are "overseers." "Bishop" is a Catholic word adopted by other apostate religions. The KJV Bible states in Acts 14:23 that the apostles "...had ordained them elders in every church..." , in Acts 20:28, "overseers," not bishops."

Some other errors are as follows:

*2 Samuel 8:4* And David took from him a thousand chariots, and **seven hundred horsemen**, and twenty thousand footmen: and David houghed all the chariot horses, but reserved of them for an hundred chariots.

*1 Chronicles 18:4* And David took from him a thousand chariots, and **seven thousand horsemen**, and twenty thousand footmen: David also houghed all the chariot horses, but reserved of them an hundred chariots.

"Seven hundred" or "seven thousand?"

*2 Samuel 10:18* And the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew the **men of seven hundred chariots** of the Syrians, and forty thousand **horsemen**, and smote Shobach

the captain of their host, who died there.  
*1 Chronicles 19:18* But the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew of the Syrians **seven thousand men which fought in chariots**, and forty thousand **footmen**, and killed Shophach the captain of the host.

"Seven hundred" or "seven thousand?" "Horsemen or footmen?"

*2 Chronicles 22:2* **Forty and two years old** was Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Athaliah the daughter of Omri.

*2 Kings 8:26* **Two and twenty years old** was Ahaziah when he began to reign; and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Athaliah, the daughter of Omri king of Israel.

Twenty two" or "forty two?"

*2 Kings 24:8* Jehoiachin was **eighteen years old** when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And his mother's name was Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem.

*2 Chronicles 36:9* Jehoiachin was **eight years old** when he began to reign, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem: and he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD.

"Eighteen" or "eight?"

### **Absolutely No Flawless Translation**

The KJV has errors in it, but so does every translation. As long as human beings are involved, there will be some error. Yet these errors are usually minor, and if we are diligently studying God's word, seeking the truth, we are promised that we "shall find." Do not be so foolish as to claim that the translation of the scriptures you use is

flawless. You should have several Bible translations for study, including interlinear of the Greek and Hebrew texts, commentaries, concordances, dictionaries, and other study helps. No one Bible translation should exclude all other translations. Rather, each one of us needs to diligently study, to grow in knowledge and truth, and be faithful and obedient to the text that we are using.

### **Poor Translations to be Avoided**

If you are a student of the Bible, and you should be, you will discover that certain translations have more errors than others. Though we will never be perfect, we should be striving for perfection. This holds true with the translations we use also. Examples of poor translations are: The Good News Bible, Restoration of Original Sacred Name Bible, and The New World Translation published by the Jehovah's Witnesses. However, God's word is so complete and exhaustive in its coverage of doctrines that a mature, well trained Christian should be able to use even these poor translations to communicate God's truths. You should have a New World Translation marked and ready to use when a Jehovah's Witness knocks at your door. You should be able to lead them to your Savior with their Bible, teach the trinity, the deity of Christ, the reality of hell, eternal security, and salvation by grace through faith alone, from their Bible. If you can't, we are willing to help you.

### **Some Other Questions**

- + Do you commonly use King James English in your everyday speech?
- + Do those who teach you from the Bible use King James English when they speak?
- + Is King James English being taught in your Christian schools and homeschools?
- + Do you know anyone at all who commonly uses King James English in his everyday conversations?
- + What was the inerrant translation of the Word of God



before the KJV?

+ Has there been a consistent inerrant Bible since the time of the apostles?

+ Do you think Bibles in foreign languages should be translated from the KJV or from the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek manuscripts?

## **Be Prepared**

Whether our church is evangelizing door-to-door, or in the marketplace, on the streets, at the airport, on the phones, or at the mall, we try to have with us different translations to avoid "foolish questions ...and contentions". We certainly do not want to avoid people and their spiritual needs. We will not say to them, as we have heard others say, " Come back and talk to us when you have the right translation." We have been called to "....not strive: but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those..." ( 2 Tim. 2:24-25 KJV ). We recommend the NASB, but also carry a KJV, a NIV, a NKJV, and a New World Translation. Besides these, our evangelism team has available a Lutheran Catechism, a Catholic Bible, a 1611 version of the KJV. According to Eph. 6:17, the Word of God is our weapon---"the sword of the Spirit." You cannot be a good soldier if you do not know how to use your weapon. An excellent soldier is versatile, and is comfortable with anyone's weapon. Do you want to be an excellent soldier? Then you are in the minority. Most Christians are content with mediocrity and do not want to be in the battle. They will never be excellent soldiers, because the training is done in the battle. Are you one of the few? Give us a call.