

The Christadelphian Advocate

1611 King James Bible



SPECIAL MAY 2011 ISSUE

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A monthly magazine in defense of the “Things Concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ” as embraced in The Hope of Israel with a view to “Taking Out A People For Yahweh’s Name”

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“The great debt of the English speaking peoples everywhere is to the translation of the Bible that we all know...the Bible as it was put forth in English three centuries ago. No other book of any kind ever written in English, perhaps no other book ever written in any other tongue has ever so affected the whole life of a people as this Authorized Version of the Scriptures has affected the life of the English speaking peoples.”

Theodore Roosevelt

Pacific Theological Seminary, Spring 1911



PSAL. XXIII.

Dauids confidence in Gods grace.

The Psalme of Dauid.



He **L O R D** is * my shep-
heard, I shall not want.

2 He maketh me to lie
downe in † greene pa-
stures: he leadeth mee be-
side the † still waters.

3 He restoreth my soule: he leadeth
me in the pathes of righteousness, for
his names sake.

4 **Pea** though I walke through the
valley of the shadowe of death, * I will
feare no euill: for thou art with me, thy
rod and thy staffe, they comfort me.

5 Thou preparast a table before me,
in the presence of mine enemies: thou
† anointest my head with oyle, my cuppe
runneth ouer.

6 Surely goodnes and mercie shall
followe me all the daies of my life: and
I will dwell in the house of the **L O R D**
† for euer.

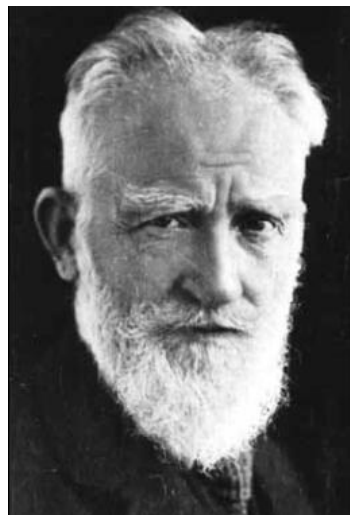
Proposition was added to the Statement of Faith following the controversy on Inspiration in 1885. Many translations have appeared since 1611, but the King James remains the primary translation used by both Protestants and Christadelphians. Ecclesias should have a rule that all readings from the stand are to be from the King James Version. It is a "second language" to us, even the uplifting and lofty language of the Old English, one that we have familiarized ourselves with, and one that should become more and more familiar as we await the apocalypse of our Lord and Saviour.

Editor (*Jim Stanton*)

(Our thanks to Brother Aaron Schofield for his suggestion of this article and his assistance in its preparation for publication.)



"The translation was extraordinarily well done because to the translators what they were translating was not merely a curious collection of ancient books written by different authors in different stages of culture, but the word of God divinely revealed through His chosen and expressly inspired scribes. In this conviction they carried out their work with boundless reverence and care and achieved a beautifully artistic result ... they made a translation so magnificent that to this day the common human Britisher or citizen of the United States of North America **accepts and worships it as a single book by a single author, the book being the Book of Books and the author being God.**"



George Bernard Shaw

(The Men Behind the King James Version, by G. S. Paine; Baker Book House; Grand Rapids, Mich.; 1959, 1977ed., pp. 182-183)

About the Back Cover

The back cover features the Title Page of the 1611 First Edition King James Bible.

The Christadelphian Advocate

He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully.

Jeremiah 23:28

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Introduction

On this occasion of the **400th Year Anniversary of the Authorized King James Version** of the Bible (May 2, 1611 – May 2, 2011), we draw attention to that Book of books we hold so dear. We know it through the title "King James" – a translation known to men world-wide reflecting the role of the monarch of Great Britain, King James I, who not only commissioned this royal "Authorized Version" but took an active role in developing rules for the translators and encouraging completion of the work. That this translation has endured for 400 years, impacting and moving both men and nations with its message, its language and its style, surely testifies to Divine providence.

Though the King James Bible no longer occupies its exclusive standing within Protestant Christianity, it remains a bulwark for many while a curiosity for others. Certainly we who have used it all our lives are indebted to it for the knowledge of God it has provided. Further, our very concept of Yahweh, His attributes, His expressions and His expectations of us are frequently reflected within our thoughts and speech in the style and language of the King James Version from which we know them. This impact is evident even within many translations that have since come into existence indicating their intent to retain the King James sentence structure while updating the language.

The King James Version represents preciseness in interpretation and reverence for the Word that exceeds other translations in popular use today. Though the style and language may be labeled archaic by some, for others it represents a speech set apart from the common and profane, a style and language reserved for prayer and praise. The sentence structures in the King James Bible are often complex and the vocabulary dated by today's standards, but in that respect the King James Version is found faithful to and consistent with the original Hebrew and Greek from which it was translated.

We offer in this issue articles addressing the **process and mechanics** of how the "Authorized Version" came about, the **history and role of King James** as background to the inception and development of the translation, **considerations regarding use of the King James Version** in relation to other versions of the Bible, along with a variety of related topics. To avoid repetition here, we commend the enclosed to your attention.

The Christadelphian Advocate Publishing Committee

King James

Most of us refer to our Authorized Version of the Bible by its common title – the King James or KJV. For 400 years it has led brethren to a saving knowledge of the *things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ*. It has been referred to as the glory of the English language, having spread across the world reaching generation after generation, its language and contents reflected through speech and writing. Though we use his name, we may not be familiar with King James or with his role in the creation of the Authorized Version of the Bible. As King James I – the founding monarch of “Great Britain,” not only did he commission the Authorized Version but he played an active role in developing the rules for translators and encouraging the completion of the work. The King's College website states:



The development of the Bible in English differs from that of other European vernacular translations. Only England has an “authorized version,” issued under the auspices of a king who was also the head of the Church. The vernacular Bible was illegal in England long before the Reformation and so began its development at a great disadvantage, but once England became a Protestant country the translated Bible became a symbol of state.

King James boldly testified to his faith in Jesus Christ and was very concerned about the spiritual well-being of his realm. Unbeknownst to many, James I was as much a reformer as was Martin Luther, as is reflected in his Works, published in 1616.

Brief Biography: James Charles Stuart was born in 1566 at Edinburgh castle in Scotland to Lord Darnley and Mary Queen of Scots. The following year James' father was killed and his mother forced to abdicate the Scottish throne due to her suspected involvement in the murder. Little James was crowned King James VI of Scotland at 13 months of age; John Knox preaching the sermon at his coronation. (After 19 years of imprisonment in England, Mary Queen of Scots was executed for her part in a Roman Catholic conspiracy to assassinate her cousin Queen Elizabeth I.)

chairman of one of the Cambridge companies, in 1605, “The untimely death of Mr. Edward Lively, much weight of the work lying on his skill in the Oriental tongues, happening about this time (*happy that servant whom his Master, when he cometh, findeth so doing*) not a little retarded their proceedings. However the rest vigorously, though slowly, proceeded in their hard, heavy, and holy task, nothing offended with the censures of the impatient people, condemning their delays, though indeed but due deliberation, for laziness.”

In 1611 the new version was published. It was indeed a most beautifully printed volume. It was printed by Robert Barker, who had considerable experience in printing editions of the earlier versions. The original title page has been altered by various publishers down through the years, and the dedication to King James (*The Epistle Dedicatorie*) which occupies about two full pages is seldom printed now. The dedication was written by Dr. Miles Smith. There was also an extensive prefatory section, “The Translators to the Reader,” which takes up about twenty one pages, written in Old English “Many other things we might giue thee warning of (gentle Reader) if wee had not exceeded the measure of a Preface aireadie, &c.”

The Authorized Version is so well known and appreciated that it seems strange to believe that it took a long time to win its way into the favor of the people (the Geneva Version was printed until 1644). Changes in spelling and to some extent in wording were made from time to time, and eventually the Apocrypha was omitted, so that the present Authorized Version differs considerably, though not substantially, from that of 1611. It has come to be recognized as the finest specimen of English literature; in fact, it is the model after which the best in English literature has been patterned.

Most of the above information is taken from John W. Lea's "The Book of Books and Its Wonderful Story" and the General Preface to Adam Clarke's "Clarke's Commentary," Volume I. We would be remiss if we failed to remark that Providence oversaw this work. Although the forty-seven men who labored to produce this translation were not divinely inspired, the Divine Hand controlled them in such a way as to produce a good translation, one that made clear the message of salvation through Christ and the relevant history and prophecy aligned to it.

Proposition XXXI of our Statement of Faith says, “That the Scriptures, composing the book currently known as the Bible, are the only source now extant of knowledge concerning God and His purposes, and that they were given wholly by the unerring inspiration of God in the writers, and that such errors as have since crept in are due to transcription or translation.” This

12. Letters to be sent from every bishop to the rest of his clergy, admonishing them of this translation in hand; and to move and charge as many as, being skilful in the tongues, have taken pains in that kind, to send his particular observations to the company, either at *Westminster*, *Cambridge*, or *Oxford*.

13. The directors in each company to be the Deans of *Westminster* and *Chester* for that place and the King's Professors in Hebrew and Greek in each university.

14. These translations to be used, when they agree better with the text than the Bishops' Bible, viz., TINDAL'S, MATTHEWS', COVERDALE'S, WHITCHURCH, GENEVA.

The character of James I as a scholar has been greatly underrated. In the Hampton Court conference he certainly showed a clear and ready comprehension of every subject brought before him, together with extensive reading and a remarkably sound judgment. For the best translation into any language we are indebted under God to King James, who was called a hypocrite by those who had no religion, and a pedant by persons who had not half his learning. Both piety and justice require that, while we are thankful to God for the gift of his word, we should revere the memory of the man who was the instrument of conveying the water of life through a channel by which its purity has been so wonderfully preserved. As to politics, he was, like the rest of the Stuart family, a tyrant.

Those who have compared most of the European translations with the original have not scrupled to say that the English translation of the Bible, made under the direction of King James I, is the most accurate and faithful of the whole. Nor is this its only praise; the translators have seized the very spirit and soul of the original, and expressed this almost everywhere with pathos and energy. Besides, our translators have not only made a standard translation, but they have made their translation the standard of our language; the English tongue in their day was not equal to such a work, "but God enabled them to stand as upon Mount Sinai," to use the expression of a learned friend, "and crane up their country's language to the dignity of the originals, so that after the lapse of 200 years [more than 300 now] the English Bible is with very few exceptions, the standard of the purity and excellence of the English tongue. The original from which it was taken is, alone, superior to the Bible translated by the authority of King James."

It has been supposed by some that the work was not actually begun until 1607, but there seems to be evidence that from the time of the appointment of the companies in 1604 the members were engaged upon it in some degree. Fuller in his *Church History* says concerning the death of Mr. Lively,

Upon the death of Elizabeth I in 1603, James acceded to the English throne. Queen Elizabeth had died childless, and it is said that she chose King James as her successor in that he was a proven king and a Protestant descendant of King Henry VII. He then became King James I of England in addition to being King James VI of Scotland. King James was a highly educated man with many firsts, among which he called his new kingdom "Great Britain" and designed the British flag in 1603 by combining England's red cross of St. George with Scotland's white cross of St. Andrew.

The following year (1604) James held the Hampton Court Conference in order to hear of "things pretended to be amiss in the church." (Pictured on the right is the "Great Gatehouse" entry into Hampton Court Palace.) It was here that King James agreed that a new translation of the scriptures was in order. He appointed fifty four men to the work of the translation, to be divided into six groups and to conduct their work at Cambridge, Oxford, and Westminster.



In 1605 the Gunpowder Plot, a Roman Catholic conspiracy to blow up the King and the Parliament, was discovered and the conspirators tried and executed. In response to Roman Catholics within the realm refusing to recognize the Church of England's authority, Parliament issued legislation that included an Oath of Allegiance requiring recognition of King James and renunciation of the Pope. Eager to explore the riches of North America, King James established two companies made up of merchant-adventurers. The first to embark was the London Company, which sent forth three ships in December 1606. "Jamestowne," (Jamestown, Virginia) became the first permanent English settlement on the American mainland, determining King James VI & I the founding monarch of the "New England." On May 2, 1611 the Authorized (King James) Version of the scriptures was published. King James died in 1625 and his son acceded to the throne as Charles I.

The English word **Bible** comes from the Greek *βιβλία* *biblia* meaning "books" which in turn is derived from *βύβλος* *hyblos* meaning "papyrus." **Canon** refers to the accepted books of the Bible differentiated from other sacred writings not accepted as inspired by God and therefore not accepted as part of the Bible.

The Indelible Legacy

The King James Version of the Bible has been enormously influential in the development of the English language. It ranks with the complete works of Shakespeare and the Oxford English Dictionary as one of the cornerstones of the recorded language. What raises the King James Version above other versions of the Bible in terms of linguistic impact is the fact that the language used has persisted into the present day; many of its words and phrases are still common-place. Below are but a few of these timeless expressions:

A broken heart and a contrite spirit: The world is full of broken hearts brought about by such causes as ill health, bereavement, financial ruin, romantic disappointments and many other causes including the realization of sin accompanied by deep regret. David in Psalm 34:18 observes: *The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.* The word contrite carries the meaning: “deep and sincere sorrow for wrong doing with an intention to amend, arising from love of God and consideration of his goodness.”

A drop in the bucket: This expression is often used in reference to something that is inadequate, i.e., “his contribution to this cause is nothing more than a drop in the bucket.” Biblically speaking, the Lord, through the words of Isaiah 40:15, compares His might and majesty to the insignificance of man. *Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.*

Can the leopard change his spots? Jeremiah 13:23 states, *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.* For instance, a person proven to be notoriously untrustworthy cannot be depended upon or given responsibility.

A soft answer turneth away wrath: Proverbs 15:1 states, *A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.* It is always advisable to take a diplomatic approach in a delicate situation, especially where the parties concerned are of an explosive temperament.

At their wit's end: Using the analogy of seafaring men who find themselves in the midst of a terrible storm from which they despair to escape, Psalm 107:23-30 describes such a hopeless situation of desperate men who know not what to do: ²³*They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;* ²⁴*These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.* ²⁵*For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.* ²⁶*They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble.* ²⁷*They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end.* ²⁸*Then they cry unto*

Oxford: 7 men; Isaiah to Malachi

Oxford: 8 men; The Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, and Revelation

“Now, for the better ordering of their proceedings, his Majesty recommended the following rules, by them to be most carefully observed:

1. The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the *Bishops' Bible*, to be followed, and as little altered as the original will permit.
2. The names of the prophets, and the holy writers, with their other names in the text, to be retained, as near as may be, according as they are vulgarly used.
3. The old ecclesiastical words to be kept, viz., the word *Church* not to be translated *Congregation*, &c.
4. When any word hath divers significations, that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most eminent fathers, being agreeable to the propriety of the place, and the analogy of faith.
5. The division of the chapters to be altered either not at all, or as little as may be, if necessity so require.
6. No marginal notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek words, which cannot, without some circumlocution, so briefly and fitly be expressed in the text.
7. Such quotations of places to be marginally set down, as shall serve for the fit reference of one scripture to another.
8. Every particular man of each company to take the same chapter, or chapters; and having translated or amended them severally by himself, where he thinks good, all to meet together, confer what they have done, and agree for their part what shall stand.
9. As any one company hath despatched any one book in this manner, they shall send it to the rest, to be considered of seriously and judiciously; for his Majesty is very careful in this point.
10. If any company, upon review of the book so sent, shall doubt or differ upon any places, to send them word thereof, note the places, and therewithal send their reasons; to which if they consent not, the difference to be compounded at the general meeting, which is to be of the chief persons of each company, at the end of the work.
11. When any place of special obscurity is doubted of, letters to be directed by authority, to send to any learned in the land, for his judgment in such a place.

posedly died before the work commenced – Adam Clarke) actually took part in the work, and there is considerable doubt as to the identity of some of them.

The workers were divided into six companies of which two met at Oxford, two at Cambridge, and two at Westminster, each company dealing with a separate portion of the Bible. The whole was afterward reviewed in London by a committee appointed from the six companies, and finally by Bishop Bilson of Winchester and Dr. Miles Smith. The workers received no financial remuneration, but were promised preferment as occasion should arise – some actually were promoted.

The names of the persons, the places where employed, the proportion of work allotted to each company and the rules laid down by King James for their direction are taken chiefly from Mr. Fuller's Church History, Book x., p. 44, & c. Dr. Reynolds, who was to work with one of the Oxford companies, made this request in the Hampton Court conference, and King James made a reply:

Dr. Reynolds: "May your Majesty be pleased that the Bible be new translated, such as are extant, not answering the original?" (*Here he gave a few examples.*)

Bishop of London: "If every man's humour might be followed, there would be no end of translating."

The King: "I profess I could never yet see a Bible well translated in English; but I think that of all, that of *Geneva* is the worst. I wish some special pains were taken for a uniform translation, which should be done by the best learned in both universities, then reviewed by the bishops, presented to the *privy council*, lastly ratified by royal authority, to be read in the whole Church, and no other."

The bishop of London in this, as in every other case, opposed Dr. Reynolds, till he saw that the project pleased the king, and that he appeared determined to have it executed. In consequence of this resolution, the following learned and judicious men were chosen for the execution of the work. (*The names and stations of the 47 individuals selected for this work are omitted from this republication.* – Editor)

Westminster: 10 men; The Pentateuch and historical books to 2 Kings

Westminster: 7 men; The Epistles

Cambridge: 8 men; Chronicles to the Song of Solomon

Cambridge: 7 men; The Apocrypha

the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. ²⁹*He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.* ³⁰*Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them to their desired haven.*

In the twinkling of an eye: ...as in, "The magician made the rabbit disappear in the twinkling of an eye," meaning instantly. We find this expression attributed to the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 15:51-52 where it is stated: *Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

The skin of my teeth: This expression is used to relate to a narrow escape from impending disaster. Job, finding himself in a very frightful condition, exclaimed in chapter 19:19-20, *All my inward friends abhor me: and they whom I loved are turned against me. My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh, and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth.*

The Land of Nod: Genesis 4:16 states: *And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.* This expression appears in popular literature (Jonathan Swift, Herman Melville, and perhaps best known through Eugene Field's "Wynken, Blynken and Nod" and Robert Louis Stevenson's poem "The Land of Nod"). In its popular use it is said of someone – often of children – who are "nodding off" or sleeping: "Oh they're in the land of Nod." It is used to describe the "place" we go when we "sleep" because of the noticeable relationship between nodding and falling asleep. Once "the land of Nod" became a cliché for "sleep," many do not recognize its origin as a biblical reference.

No rest for the wicked: This expression is not biblical, although often used by persons under the impression that they are quoting the Bible when they complain about some difficult or enduring task (especially when they are already tired). The phrase is confused with a passage found in Isaiah 57:20-21: *But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.* The meaning is the same as in the popular phrase but the word is "peace" not "rest."

The Good Samaritan: When someone renders assistance to another person in need, he is often referred to as "a good Samaritan." The origin of the expression "good Samaritan" is biblical, taken from a parable of Jesus (Luke 10:30-37), but the term itself is not there. The purpose of the parable was to define who would be one's neighbor that was to be loved as oneself. The account involves an injured Jew and a Samaritan traveler. It was said that

“the Jews,” on account of religious differences, “had no dealings with the Samaritans.” Nevertheless, the Samaritan helped the Jew to the providing of first aid, medical expenses and accommodations. In like manner, we are told by Paul in Galatians 6:10, *As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.* The lesson – be a good Samaritan!

E. R. Evans, Burlington, ON

BOOK REVIEW

Which Translation?

Which Translation is a compilation of articles on the subject of Bible translations available from **The Testimony Magazine**. Though I disagreed with some sections and comments, I found its considerations of some of the different translations of the Bible interesting and helpful. The book presents a history of the different translations and information about the direction they take. Included are several comparisons of scriptural rendering revealing some disturbing omissions in some texts. I recommend this book, particularly for those using something other than the King James Version to teach young people or as their only study Bible.

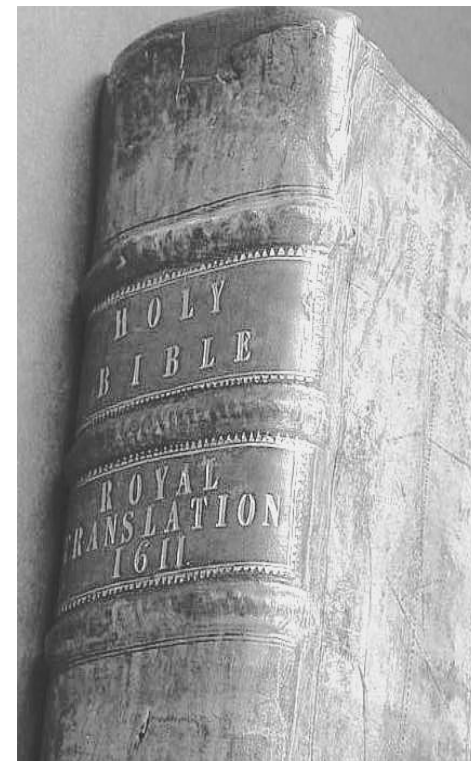
One article addressed the source of the Authorized Version (AV) and its predecessors, indicating they were based on a traditionally accepted Greek text, often loosely referred to as the Majority Text. In the 16th century, Erasmus edited the first printed Greek text of the New Testament, basing it on the Majority Text (in 1516 it was known as the Received Text). The New King James Version is based on this Received Text.

The Revised Version is said to have come about in response to the archaic language of the AV. Two Cambridge scholars were given the task of editing the NT Greek text. They used two early manuscripts, Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, which were out of Alexandria, rather than the traditional Majority Text. The two manuscripts differ markedly from each other but the scholars apparently chose these texts because Origen had edited the Bible in Greek using similar texts and these scholars believed, “Origen aimed at presenting the higher knowledge: He marked out for us the domain of Christian philosophy.” A telling comment is that the Vulgate, which followed these Alexandrian texts, was considered as corrupt by the Albigenes and Waldeneses, who used the Majority Text.

The Authorized Version (AV)

This article by Brother James Stanton, addressing the process and mechanics of how the AV came about, appeared in the April 1990 Sanctuary-Keeper under his editorship. Readers will note his notations at the end including his high regard for the Authorized Version (KJV) which he describes as the primary translation used by “Protestants and Christadelphians.”

THE AUTHORIZED VERSION has been the great Bible of the English speaking peoples of the world for 379 years. It is also called the King James Version because its publication was undertaken at the command of that king. When he ascended the throne there were two strong parties in the church, the bishops and the Puritans. Two versions of the Bible were in common use, the Bishops’ (printed in 1568) by the clergy, and the Geneva by the people. The attack made upon all Protestant versions of the Bible by the Rheims New Testament had started a lively conflict between Catholics and Protestants, and in 1589 William Fulke, a staunch Protestant, had printed the Bishops’ Version and the Rheims Version side by side with the Catholic notes and his replies to them.



The Puritans complained to James about things in the church, and James called a conference at Hampton Court Palace for January 14, 16, and 18, 1604 (another source says 1603). Among the questions discussed was that of Bible translation, and as an outcome of the conference it was decided to make a new translation from the Hebrew and Greek. By July 22, 1604, a selection of fifty four of the best scholars had been made, and on that date the king sent a letter to Bancroft, Bishop of London, asking him to inform the other bishops and seek their aid in getting the benefit of suggestions from any who had special skill in Hebrew and Greek. Though the king mentioned fifty four, it is only known that forty seven (seven of them sup-

Septuagint: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/2304116/Septuagint-Bible> (<http://www.ecmarsh.com/lxx/> allows download of Septuagint in PDF format).

Lexicons: <http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons>

Bible Gateway: www.biblegateway.com A program offering many versions of the Bible for your use as well as word and verse search capacity (free for use without downloading any software).

E-Sword: <http://www.e-sword.net/downloads.html> This is a popular programme incorporating Strong's concordance, "parallel Bible" viewing, scripture references in the Commentary, Dictionary views displayed as ToolTips and the KJV is available with Strong's numbers attached.

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TGM.org: <http://www.tgm.org/bible.htm> An online piece of software through which you can retrieve any verse or chapter of the Bible – with or without Strong's numbers attached.

Bible Study Tools: <http://www.biblestudytools.com/concordances> An online resource with multiple tools.

The Prophecy Letter: <http://sites.google.com/site/theprophecyletters/home> A Christadelphian website "exploring Endtime prophecy based strictly upon Bible exegesis."

Gospel Publicity League: <http://www.gpl.org.au/home> A Christadelphian website offering articles, books, pamphlets, Bible views on the news and Middle East updates.

WORDsearch: www.wordsearchbible.com An extensive library of publications from Bible versions to commentaries, dictionaries, historical books, maps ... also a free stripped down program called Bible Explorer.

Crosswalk: www.crosswalk.com A good resource including most versions of the Bible.

Bible History Online: www.bible-history.com Multiple resources such as maps, illustrations and archaeological updates.

Judaism 101: www.jewfaq.org An online encyclopaedia of Judaism covering Jewish beliefs, language, scripture, practices and customs.

Maps: <http://www.bible-history.com/maps>
<http://www.biblemap.org/#Israel>

Ed Duffield, London, ON

In contrast, almost all other recent versions use an eclectic text, that is, each editor manufactures his own text of the New Testament by selecting Greek text which, in his own judgment, makes the best sense or reads more like a phrase or sentence. The **New International Version**, for example, is based on such a subjective text. The problem with eclecticism is the editor's own beliefs determine which text is followed. For example, the book indicates that the NIV dropped "begotten" in "only begotten son" (John 1:14, 18), because one of the translators argued that "only begotten Son" cannot be right, because "if it has to do with origins, derivation of descent, how does that square with the Son's eternality?" In regard to the NIV, the book reveals it to have many serious short comings as a translation; of particular concern is the apparent avoidance of any rendering which would support the Biblical doctrine that Jesus had the same flesh as we do.

Most modern versions of the Bible in English, from the RV of 1885 onwards, use a significantly different Greek text for the NT from that which was used by earlier translators (for example, Tyndale, Geneva Bible, AV). It is calculated that there are 209 passages in which there are omissions from the older text, representing a total of over 1500 words that have been dropped by the modern versions. **The Living Bible** and **Good News Bible** have shortened the Old Testament by about fifteen percent.

In regard to the King James Authorized Version the book offers this observation; "One of the great virtues of the AV is the consistency with which it generally renders a particular Hebrew or Greek word by the same English word. A translation needs to be reasonably consistent in the way in which it renders original words, and to do this the English word which will be used to translate a particular original word has to be chosen with great care. A number of the translators of the modern school have not given evidence of this degree of care in their work." It makes it hard to follow a thought or concept through scripture or tie them together when the words chosen are not consistent and that beautiful thread is broken.

The appearance of so many 'new' translations implies dissatisfaction with the AV. Let us not be swept away by this critical viewpoint. The new versions of Scripture can all be helpful as we read and study Yahweh's word. They can be used to help with understanding in those cases where the AV is difficult to understand. However, after reading this book, I think they should be used only alongside the AV and not as a substitute for it; as the promotion for the book attests; "...modern versions have too many problems associated with them to be unreservedly used." These newer versions make for easier reading but we must be wary of taking them at face value. Our young people need to be informed so that they with us might remain steadfast and not be led to innocently "add to or take away" from Yahweh's

word.

Anyone using a modern translation to the exclusion of the Authorized Version (KJV) should read Which Translation and consider the translations addressed and the problems they create. This will help keep us from being unduly influenced by a poor or inaccurate translation.

An Unamended Sister



In Consideration of the King James Bible

The **King James Authorized Version** published in 1611 was the third “official” translation into English commissioned by the Church of England; the first was the Great Bible in 1539 and the second the Bishop's Bible of 1568. The King James translation has been the most widely distributed and read English language Bible in the world. For 400 years it has been revered as the word of God by successive generations and held up as a sublime monument of English prose and an enduring link (both literary and religious) among the English-speaking people of the world. Though believers recognize divine providence in its preparation, distribution and endurance over this lengthy period of time, today an ever increasing number of versions and translations of the Bible successfully compete with the King James translation for the hearts and minds of professing Christians.

Our desire here is to inform brethren of elements of the debate and to encourage them to make informed and considered choices regarding the Bibles they select...

(these are generally those who have grown up with the King James and are familiar and comfortable with its style and language). On the other hand, those who prefer other versions of the Bible generally view the King James as archaic and difficult to both read and understand due to its style and grammar. Some view it as an obsolete text out of place in the 21st century.

Christadelphians too find themselves divided as to which version to use as their primary Bible. Occasionally these differences come to the front when one opinion or the other manifests itself in a manner disparaging to the other. For those who love the King James, the modern versions are but impostors, the King James Authorized Version alone speaking with the voice of authority as the most accurate English version of the Bible available today

prove most valuable as will a good understanding of how to save digital images. These skills are an efficient and time-saving method of capturing information and images for presentation, particularly for PowerPoint users.

There are many FREE copies of Bible versions, concordances, lexicons, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, historical documents, maps, biblical images, and commentaries on every Biblical topic. The “Google” search engine is very popular with both PC and Mac computer users. If you are unfamiliar with the internet, talk to a user in your ecclesia or to someone you know who may be able to help you get started. You will find that the King James Version is always included in each piece of Bible software.

There is no necessity to use any of the sites given below, but you may find within these sites a vast array of useful resources and access to Bible software that have been used and recommended by brethren. Make certain you have an up-to-date virus checker before using the internet. Take your time at each site to look at all of the options and resources offered.

UNAMENDED PUBLICATIONS:

These sites offer a variety of resources including indices of their magazines, books, articles and downloads:

The Christadelphian Advocate: <http://www.christadelphian-advocate.org>

The Sanctuary-Keeper: <http://sanctuarykeeper.homestead.com>

Christadelphian Truth Gleaner: <http://sites.google.com/site/tgpublications>

MIDDLE EAST NEWS and UPDATES:

Weekly World Watch: www.weeklyworldwatch.co.uk A free weekly PowerPoint presentation received through e-mail focusing on “things which fit in with what the scriptures say will happen in the last days.” These are concisely presented with an attending photograph, comment and scriptural reference.

Milestones Snippets: www.milestonesuk.org.uk Free news articles received 8-12 times a month through e-mail covering current affairs of interest to students of Bible prophecy.

OTHER RESOURCES and SITES:

Concordance: Several concordances are available on the internet (the classic exhaustive Bible concordance for the English translation of the Bible is *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*). Using a search engine like Google, type in the name of the concordance you want to use and you will find many “hits” (sites).

The majesty of the KJV's language here flows sublime in contrast to the NIV verse, but of greater concern is the NIV interpretation. Although its proponents argue that none of the textual 'variants' are particularly important and no doctrine is affected, in this passage, the original desire expressed was for Christians to "walk honestly toward them that are without" while the NIV would have the believer "win the respect of outsiders," in essence substituting the desired result for the effect; and while the original statement would have the believer "lacking nothing," the NIV interprets that as not having to depend upon anyone, again a different thought. As far as accuracy and fidelity to the texts of the original languages are concerned, the NIV is found to be lacking.

We who believe in the Divine inspiration of the Bible are inclined to feel that the Lord chose the most suitable time and place in history as well as the most suitable translators to introduce His word to the English speaking people who have cherished it for four hundred years and have transported it to the ends of the earth. In the words of Miles Smith, "The Scriptures then being acknowledged to be so full and so perfect, how can we excuse ourselves of negligence, if we do not study them? of curiosity, if we be not content with them."

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Internet Bible Study Aids

The internet offers a vast source of information for the Bible student. The down side is that the information is not all correct or spiritually oriented. However, having stated this concern, if you have a computer and are not using the scriptural resources available on the internet, you are missing opportunities that could make a valuable contribution to your study of God's word. You don't type? All recent copies of "Windows" come with speech recognition software...speak into a microphone and your speech is printed onto a document.



Brethren preparing lectures or study lessons may find an electronic version of the Bible to be most useful. The ability to cut and paste Bible verses accurately and without typing is most worthwhile. The search engines available in these software packages are very rigorous and many Bible programs may be used on line without downloading the software (also useful when you want to compare your King James Version with other translations). Understanding how to use your mouse, especially the right click aspect, will

Strong opinions unfortunately result in suspicion and contention between brethren. Perhaps the questions to be considered are: is the King James Bible truly the most accurate translation of the word of God available today; and, is its style and language really a significant impediment to understanding the Word? Though there are individuals on both sides of the debate holding strong opinions, do our choices regarding which Bible we use reflect a knowledgeable and considered evaluation of the matter, or do we for the most part merely follow the tradition we have grown up with? Let us here take the opportunity to explore some of the benefits frequently cited in favor of and some of the charges frequently leveled against the King James Version.

Even those new to the debate regarding the use of (or the exclusive use of) the King James Version (KJV) are familiar with the charge of its "archaic style and language." Critics point out that the translation was produced in Shakespeare's time (William Shakespeare was a subject of King

James), referencing the difficulty that many have with reading and understanding Shakespeare's works. The point is made that even though there are those who through experience understand and are comfortable with the King James style and language ... most people today are not! Further, they correctly point out that it uses obsolete English words; words no longer used or words whose meanings have changed since the 17th century.

The King James Bible's Archaic Language: Is this objection justified as a significant impediment to the use of the King James Bible? Defenders point out the fact that every department of human learning uses language peculiar to that discipline: language which novices might readily refer to as "archaic." Biology, botany, geology, physics, chemistry, mathematics, music, medicine and law all use uncommon words peculiar to their discipline as well as phrases and expressions which the novice finds challenging. God's Word, particularly as reflected in the KJV, is similar in this respect, and the earnest study of it likewise requires that the student become familiar with the discipline's words and expressions. Words like atonement, sanctification and justification challenge the novice, but they must be mastered if the student is to progress spiritually. They are explicit Biblical terms which express vital concepts and processes! To dismiss them as archaic and too difficult would impede the purpose of the student seeking to understand God's revelations. Could we imagine a science, medical or law student objecting to the strange sounding words or technical terms in his text books?

"The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult and left untried."

In the book **The King James Version Defended: A Christian View of the New Testament Manuscripts**, apologist Edward F. Hills says concerning the language of the KJV:

Not only modernists but also many conservatives are now saying that the King James Version ought to be abandoned because it is not contemporary. The Apostles, they insist, used contemporary language in their preaching and writing, and we too must have a Bible in the language of today. But more and more it is being recognized that the language of the New Testament was biblical rather than contemporary. It was the Greek of the Septuagint, which in its turn was modeled after the Old Testament Hebrew. Any biblical translator, therefore, who is truly trying to follow in the footsteps of the Apostles and to produce a version which God will bless, must take care to use language which is above the level of daily speech; language which is not only intelligible but also biblical and venerable. Hence in language as well as text the King James Version is still by far superior to any other English translation of the Bible. (Part VIII, #4a, The King James Version)

In accord with the position stated above, advocates argue that the charge of “archaic” language within the KJV is not a compelling argument for abandonment. They point out that it really isn’t difficult or even unusual to have to look up an unfamiliar or difficult word in a dictionary, and they view the position that the KJV is hard to understand due to difficult words to be a weak excuse that would not be tolerated within other disciplines. The Bible is not a novel nor was it given for the purpose of recreational reading, but by design was given to be searched out and studied throughout one’s lifetime. The reading habits and abilities of the general public have steadily changed over the centuries and in the past few decades reading the printed word is fast falling out of fashion. Yet such men as Abraham Lincoln are set forward as examples of self-taught avid readers, Mr. Lincoln having applied himself to reading the Bible and the works of Shakespeare. Perhaps present day charges against the King James Bible are in part explained within the spirit of G. K. Chesterton’s notable quotation, “The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult and left untried.”

In response to the pervasiveness of the charge of “archaic” language, let us be reminded that there are in fact instances where the use of the “archaic” language in the KJV is more descriptive and accurate than that which our modern English allows. Consider for example the use of “archaic” pronouns:

commentary on the Prophet Moses in the last three verses of Deuteronomy (34:10-12):

James Moffat Bible: *Since then, no prophet has ever appeared in Israel like Moses, a man with whom the Eternal had intercourse face to face – unequaled for all the signal acts which the Eternal sent him to perform in the land of Egypt, on Pharaoh and all his servants and all his land, as well as for all the mighty deeds and awful power which Moses displayed in the sight of all Israel.*

In contrast, the KJV reads: ¹⁰*And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face,* ¹¹*In all the signs and wonders which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh and to all his servants, and to all his land,* ¹²*And in all that mighty hand, and all the great terror which Moses shewed in the sight of all Israel.* Moffat is rough and matter of fact; the KJV dramatic and inspiring.

No more damage could be done to a passage of Scripture, both in beauty and accuracy than has been done to the words of Job (19:25-27) in the New English Bible (NEB), which reads:

NEB: *But in my heart I know that my vindicator lives and that he will rise last to speak in court; and I shall discern my witness standing at my side and see my defending counsel, even God himself, whom I shall see with my own eyes, I myself and no other.*

In contrast, the KJV reads: ²⁵*For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:* ²⁶*And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:* ²⁷*Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.*

Truly what clarity and confidence the language of the KJV inspires in those who hope in the Lord!

The New International Version (NIV) is one of the most popular translations in use today, described as fresh and dynamic yet notorious for its deletion of words as well as whole verses in addition to other changes in its attempt to produce a translation that would speak to people ‘in their own culture.’ That goal was pursued at the expense of the inerrancy and inspiration of the individual words of Scripture. 1 Thessalonians 4:12 serves as an example of the NIV’s language impacting both style and meaning:

NIV: *So that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.*

In contrast, the KJV reads: *That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.*

provides balance and continuity; indeed, who expects to hear anything other than High English when the Lord's Prayer or the 23rd Psalm is being recited?

Our dear brothers and sisters, as the title declares, this article is offered to encourage "consideration of the King James Bible."



The Majestic Language of the King James Bible

Although some may assume that modern Bible versions are the product of scholarship superior to that of the translators of the King James Version (KJV) of 1611, this assumption is not supported by the facts. The learned men who labored on our English Bible were men of exceptional ability who approached the task with a reverent regard for the Divine inspiration, authority and inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures. To them it was "God's sacred Truth" and demanded the exercise of their utmost care and fidelity in its translation.

Miles Smith, one of the KJV translators, wrote: "There were many chosen who were greater in other men's eyes than in their own, and that sought the truth rather than their own praise." Mr. Smith wrote an introduction to the KJV which unfortunately is left out of most editions today. Under the heading "The Praise of the Holy Scriptures," he wrote in the same majestic style found in the King James Version:

"But now what piety without truth, what saving truth without the word of God? What word of God whereof we may be sure, without the Scripture? The Scriptures we are commanded to search. They are commended that searched and studied them. They are reprov'd that were unskillful in them, or slow to believe them. They can make us wise unto salvation. If we be ignorant, they will instruct us; if out of the way, they will bring us home; if out of order, they will reform us; if in heaviness, comfort us; if dull, quicken us; if cold, inflame us. Tolle lege; Tolle lege; take up and read, take up and read the Scriptures."

Time does not permit an exhaustive treatment of the majesty of the language used in the KJV. Sufficient must be a few illustrations of the 'verve' of the KJV compared to other versions. Often by coincidence and sometimes by intent, some of the so-called "improved translations" constitute a challenge to accuracy as well as style.

The James Moffat Bible, understood to be a controversial translation, was developed with the stated goal of presenting the Bible in plain English. Yet consider how the 1934 edition of the James Moffat translation presents the

"Thee and Thou:" Should all the 'thee' and 'thou' in the KJV be replaced by the word 'you' – a word used contemporarily to refer to one or many depending on the context? Actually, the word 'you' is used hundreds of times in the KJV, but not exclusively. There is a vital difference between 'you' (plural) and 'thee' (singular) and there are times when it is necessary to make that distinction which the KJV does. For example we note Christ's words in Luke 22:31-32; *And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.* In this passage Christ used the word 'you' in reference to all the disciples who were striving over which of them should be the greatest. But when he used the words '**thee**' and '**thou**' he meant Simon Peter alone. Should the '**thee**' and '**thou**' in this passage be replaced with the universal '**you**,' Christ's explicit warning to Peter is considerably weakened and the application to the other disciples (that Satan desired to sift them), would be completely lost. Similar specification is made by the use of 'ye,' 'thy' and 'thine,' and the suffixes '-est' and '-eth' likewise have to do with number and case of persons. Christ speaks definitively of every jot (smallest Hebrew letter) and tittle (small Hebrew mark) in the law; surely the Spirit was deliberate regarding the manner in which the apostles originally recorded these accounts for us.

In the early 1600's this form of the English language was not spoken in England ... the translators chose to use it for this Bible translation for two reasons: it is far more precise and it is far more reverent.

Use of archaic words that have changed meaning: Some words as used in the KJV are archaic in that they have a different meaning today than they once did, such as the word "suffer" as it appears in Matthew 19:14: *But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.* Jesus is not saying that

children should suffer, but that they should not be hindered. Though such words may present confusion upon initial encounter, their meaning is not difficult to discern or remember when considered within their context. (We also note the use of italics in the King James Bible. The translators italicized words they put into the text that do not appear in the original language, letting us know what was added and what was original, an indication of their integrity that is not found in modern day versions.)

It is not the purpose of this review to provide a comprehensive evaluation or defense of the “archaic” language found in the King James translation. The defenses cited above and the admission that the style and language of the King James Bible does in places constitute a challenge, particularly to the novice or infrequent reader, should be sufficient to assist brethren in deciding whether they wish to personally explore the matter further. Our desire here is to inform brethren of elements of the debate and to encourage them to make informed and considered choices regarding the Bibles they select for daily reading and study as well as for those selected for reference work (many brethren owning and using several translations).

Important Considerations

The benefit of High English! The King James Bible succeeded where other translations had not, perhaps due to the fact that the text is neither the work of the single man nor a small group, but of a large number of scholars working cooperatively and with ample time to accomplish their task. The translators were Protestant members of the Church of England which had pulled away from Rome some seventy years earlier. In common with the other English translations of the period, the New Testament was translated directly from the Greek and the Old Testament directly from the Hebrew. As opposed to what some may have been led to believe, the King James Version was not written in the everyday language of people on the streets of London in 1611. The prose is one of the finest examples of literary style, reflecting both a gift for language and an appreciation for the solemnity of their subject. It was written in what has been identified by some as “High English,” a very precise form of the English language; and the KJV remains today in High English. In the early 1600’s this form of the English language was not spoken in England nor did the translators themselves use it as shown by their “Epistle Dedicatory” to King James. But the translators chose to use it for this Bible translation for two reasons: it is far more precise and it is far more reverent.

Would you like your Bible easier or truer to the original? Despite the accolades and confidence the King James Bible has inspired over the centuries, it is not a perfect text (although it is recognized to be as close to a word for word translation as is available to us today). The original translation was completed in 1611 and was modified and “corrected” a few times with the most significant changes made in 1769 – the version in use today. Even for those who have grown up with the King James Bible in hand there are verses that reflect orthodoxy as well as words and verses difficult to understand, causing one to reach for the Dictionary, Septuagint, Diaglott or other translations to seek clarity (in those situations it is helpful to have more than one version to consult so that interpretations and comparisons can be made).

The King James Version tells us what it says and leaves to us, to the extent we are capable, the business of interpreting what it means.

Without question some of the modern translations are easier to read in such places, however the question should be asked, which translation represents most accurately the original text? May we not assume there are difficult verses in the original Hebrew and Greek manuscripts which find reflection in the King James translation? Shall we

depend upon modern day orthodox translators to interpret the Bible for us?

The King James translation is what scholars call “formal equivalence” to the original text, while other translations reflect, to different degrees, “dynamic equivalence.” The “formal equivalence” approach seeks to render the text word-for-word, expressing in English the meaning of the words in the original Hebrew or Greek. The “dynamic equivalence” approach seeks to convey in the modern idiom the thought expressed! If we are to live *by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*, will we not want a “formal equivalence” translation of those words? The Living Bible, for instance, advertises that their version translates “*entire thoughts (rather than just words) into natural, everyday English.*” That version provides what their committee thinks the passage means, rather than what it actually says. The King James Version tells us what it says and leaves to us, to the extent we are capable, the business of interpreting what it means.

Language: The King James translation has been the Bible most used by Americans until recent times. Its flowing language and prose rhythm has had a profound impact upon Western language and literature. Even in the present day with the popularity of the “modern” versions, the KJV continues to be the version memorized, quoted, and publicly read most often. High English has left a profound mark, permeating all aspects of life. Its influence is reflected in the incorporation of style and passages from the King James translation into the nation’s language and literature as well as through Biblical motifs and religious inscriptions on buildings and currency. Many brothers and sisters pray in the language of the King James Bible, not that they believe it is reflective of Biblical times or thought to be a language God prefers, but because they associate it with the solemnity due when one seeks to approach God in prayer. As a brother recently expressed; “I just cannot address the Heavenly Father as You! It doesn’t, to my mind, convey the reverence to our Heavenly Father that Thee or Thou does.” There is also an advantage in group reading when all read from the same translation, in that different words and structure sometimes causes confusion. There is a symmetry the mind assumes when in group reading from the same text which