

The King James Version: Section VI. Tyndale Perfected in English What Luther Created in German



Figure 12 William Tyndale died for translating the Bible into English, creating the forerunner of the KJV.

Continued from [Part V. One Reformation, One Evangelical and Protestant Church](#)

The Wycliffe Bible was an early translation of the Bible from a group of Oxford scholars connected with John Wycliffe. He translated part of the Bible from the Latin Vulgate to English, and his associates translated the Old Testament – it is thought. This began the early stages of English reform, which often teetered back and forth between Protestantism and Romanism, depending on the actual faith of the monarch. The criticized and glamorized Ann Boleyn moved Henry VIII toward Protestantism. Edward VI followed his father Henry VIII but only reigned as a Protestant for six years. Queen Mary, following her mother's Catholic convictions, reversed King Edward's gains and prosecuted Protestants. Queen Elizabeth I favored the Protestants but always kept everyone off-balance. A pope said, "She only controls part of an island, and yet all of Europe is afraid of her." England supposedly chose a Protestant in King James I, but that began an era where the Stuart kings left an indelible bad impression on England.*

* The monarchs between Henry VIII and James I provide a fascinating look at the time when the Bible was becoming the Book of the people, which really started with Wycliffe. The rumors and facts are abundant about the rulers involved, narratives mixed together in Biblical dramas and romances.

William Tyndale is the pivotal figure in the history of the English Bible, because he translated from Greek and Hebrew – and Henry VIII had him killed and then burned at the stake. Tyndale was born in 1494, between the births of Luther (1486) and Melanchthon (1497). He shared the excitement of the Bible being available in Hebrew (with help from Reuchlin, Melanchthon's uncle) and

Greek (thanks to Erasmus). Tyndale was an exceptional scholar in many languages. He earned his first degree from Oxford in 1512 and his master's degree in 1515. He was fluent in Hebrew, Greek, German, Latin, and more – beyond the requirements of a PhD in theology today. But he found the same ossified principles that plagued Luther and caused the Reformer to learn directly from the Scriptures. Tyndale wrote:

They have ordained that no man shall look on the Scripture, until he be noselled (nursed, nuzzled) in heathen learning eight or nine years and armed with false principles, with which he is clean shut out of the understanding of the Scripture.

Tyndale also studied at Cambridge, where Erasmus had previously taught, another step in giving the linguist the best of language training. This is another telling anecdote about Tyndale:

It was not long after this, that in disputing with a divine reputed to be quite learned, Tyndale utterly confounded him with certain texts of Scripture; upon which the irritated papist exclaimed, – “It were better for us to be without God's laws, than without the Pope's!” This was a little too much for Tyndale, who boldly replied, **“I defy the Pope, and all his laws; and if God spare my life, ere many years, I will cause a boy that driveth the plow to know more of the Scripture than you do!”** A noble boast; and nobly redeemed at the cost of his life! (Alexander McClure, *The Translators Revived*, p. 14.)

Tyndale could get no support for translating the Bible in England, so he traveled to Germany and enrolled at Wittenberg University. He translated the New Testament into English by 1525. He also stayed at Worms for a year, according to Spalatin. Since Tyndale was fluent in German, Luther's Bible was a great help, but as every language student knows, having another translation in a different language is an aid in many ways, but the path to clarity in another language is still laborious. However, this safe haven in Germany brought together Tyndale and the Luther circle; their concentration of genius and faithfulness to the Word of God channeled the Reformation into Tyndale, and through Tyndale, the King James Version, and the British Empire.

The way of the cross means persecution. England resisted freelance publishing of the Bible, which was illegal. Moreover, the English bishops were prone to strike out against Tyndale because he openly despised their lordly power, perks, and use of force. Lazy and overpaid ecclesiastics do not tolerate disruption of their realm. Cardinal Woolsey and Thomas Moore opposed Tyndale, so he stayed in Europe.

In 1535, Tyndale was betrayed by a friend, seized in Antwerp, strangled, and then burned at the stake. His dying words were, “Lord, open the king's eyes,” but it was another king – James – who had the Tyndale fashioned as the official, royal, and only Bible for English-speaking people. The English Bible translations were all derived from Tyndale's, some of them being –

1. The Coverdale Bible, 1535, Antwerp, used Tyndale and other sources.
2. Coverdale revised this as the Great Bible in 1539.

3. The Bishop's Bible

4. The King James or Authorised Version, 1611

Tyndale in Print

The first decided steps, however, toward giving to the English nation a Bible printed in their own tongue, were the translations of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, made by William Tyndale, and by him printed at Hamburg, in the year 1524; – and a translation of the whole of the New Testament, printed by him partly at Cologne, and partly at Worms, in 1525. After six editions of the Testament had been issued, he published Genesis and Deuteronomy, in 1530; and next year the Pentateuch. In the year 1535 was printed the entire Bible, under the auspices of Miles Coverdale, who mostly followed Tyndale as far as he had gone; but without any other connection with him. Of Coverdale, further mention will be made. But in the year 1537 appeared a folio Bible, printed in some city of Germany, with the following title, – “The Byble, which is the Holy Scripture; in which are containd the Olde and Newe Testament, truely and purely translated into Englysh –by Thomas Matthew.– MDXXXVII.” This is substantially the basis of all the other versions of the Bible into English, including that which is now in such extensive use. It contains Tyndale's labors as far as he had gone previous to his martyrdom by fire about a year before its publication. That is to say, the whole of the New Testament, and of the Old, as far as the end of the Second Book of Chronicles, or exactly two-thirds of the entire Scriptures, were Tyndale's work. The other third, comprising the remainder of the Old Testament, was made by his friend and co-laborer, Thomas Matthew, who was no other than John Rogers, the famous martyr, after wards burnt in the days of “bloody Mary;” and who, at the time of his immortal publication, went by the name of Matthew. (The Translators Revived, p. 16.)

Those who criticize the KJV for its Shakespearean eloquence only pave the way for more Surfer Dude Bibles, where the English language is so debased that only a resemblance to the original text remains. There are amplified and living Bibles, which add many more words to the concise text. But we have to concede – based on actual history and experience – that Eugene Nida has produced the era of where all the translations are really paraphrases based on the corrupted and imaginary New Testament text they now call Standard.

Whether people believe it or not, the King James and Shakespeare are the foundation of our English language. Both have remained foundational, even if modern education condemns what is good and elevates what is infantile and evil.

The King James Version was ordered by the monarch because all previous English Bibles were either inadequate or Tyndale's. Each previous English translation certainly had its influence on the final version, but Tyndale had greatest influence of all. That should make all modern Lutheran leaders consider that the Bible they despise and avoid the most is also the one most directly linked to Luther's method and language. Tyndale saw his brave efforts burned by savage prelates and commented, “They may burn me one day.” They did.

How ironic that the modern scholars have tried to replace the reliable Majority New Testament text with a bad one they conjured from Vaticanus – a dubious source unimproved by the accolades of Romanizing Protestants and rationalists. The modern scholars, publishing companies, and denominations have filled their pockets by corrupting the Gospel and telling the people – “You are not smart enough or educated enough to understand our great work of emancipation.” As the text scholar – Kurt Aland – said, “The Majority Text is dead.” But Tyndale had the exact opposite attitude toward the Bible –

“Which thing only” he says, “moved me to translate the New Testament. Because I had perceived by experience, how that it was impossible to establish the lay people in any truth, except the Scripture were plainly laid before their eyes in the mother tongue.” (The Translators Revived, p. 16.)

The KJV Editors and Translators – Seven Year Miracle

If the Bible is just another book written by man, the faith of the translators and editors does not matter. But if the Bible is the one and only revelation of God, unique and inerrant, the Book that judges all books, as Luther said, then the editors and translators should be devout, faithful Christians, devoid of papal inclinations. Tragically, the norms of the King James Version were reversed by the Revision of 1880. Westcott and Hort – who hated the Majority Text and favored “Mary religion” over Jesus religion – were allowed to create their own Greek New Testament, using no explanatory notes, secretly handing them to the committees as they produced the epic flop – The Revision. The public in Britain and America repudiated this imaginary Greek New Testament, which I own, and disliked the so-called Revision of the KJV. However, German rationalism and other factors led to the adoption of Westcott-Hort, Protestant views of the Antichrist in Rome softened over the years through Catholic participation in the Bible societies. From 1930 on, Bible editing and translating became the equivalent of Archer-Daniel-Mitchell taking over *Organic Gardening* because “we know so much more about chemical farming now.”* Ecumenical efforts camouflaged doctrinal issues and second-rate professors were flattered as advisors for each new Bible.

* The irony of modern agriculture is that man-made chemicals can be enormously damaging and expensive, while using and appreciating the engineering of Creation can work miracles for almost no cost. Cardboard and newsprint handle weed control, rain and snow fertilize with usable nitrogen. Beneficial insects grow in numbers by letting their newborns digest damaging pests. *O tempora, O mores.* (Shame on our era! shame on our principles!)

The creation of the King James Version was quite different from the shameful Revision. There was no effort to jettison the Majority Text, which Westcott and Hort did dishonestly and secretly over a period of 10 years. Bumptious Westcott and Hort, longtime friends and colleagues, created their own Greek New Testament over that decade of revision, then published their Greek volume immediately when the Revision came out in English, one boondoggle supporting the other. Nothing really compares to the audacity of two men engaging in a hostile takeover of the New Testament and the translators tolerating the shell game. But now, there is no international opposition, **so error moves forward in peace and harmony with Rome.**

The KJV Teams

Queen Elizabeth was a genius at keeping people guessing, stymied by imagining her next move. Her very threatening half-sister Queen Mary (Bloody Mary) wanted her at the Mass, and Elizabeth attended – but slipped out during service. When King James I ascended to the throne, he was met with a petition to sort out the many contradictions in English Christianity. He called for a conference at Hampton Court in 1603, where his dislike of Puritans was expressed in various forms. However, a Puritan, Dr. Reynolds, suggested a unifying Bible:

“That a translation be made of the whole Bible, as consonant as can be to the original Hebrew and, Greek; and this to be set out and printed, without any marginal notes, and only to be used in all churches of England, in time of divine service.”*

* The Translators Revived, p. 35. Dr. Reynolds is a good example for those who think standing up to the monarch (district or synod president) is a mistake, bound to accomplish nothing. We need many more Reynolds and far fewer Wormtongues.

The work began in 1604 and finished in seven years, a remarkable accomplishment which built upon the various editions of Tyndale (all the English Bibles after him) -combining the eloquence of editing with their scholarship of ancient languages.

Skeptics, grasping for excuses, claim that many people continue to use the King James because of tradition, nostalgia, superstition, and obstinance. The strength of this Bible comes from its excellence, which is so apparent that current revisions begin with the original rather than trying to invent their own.

Thus, it came to pass that the English Bible received its present form, after a fivefold revision of the translation as it was left in 1537 by Tyndale and Rogers. During this interval of seventy-four years, it had been slowly ripening, till this last, most elaborate, and thorough revision under King James matured the work for coming centuries. It is a very great advantage, that the work, which was well done at first, had the benefit of this accumulated labor and pious care bestowed upon it by so many zealous and erudite scholars in long succession. To this is to be ascribed much of its intrinsic excellence and lasting popularity. Its origin and history so strongly commended it, that it speedily came into general use as the standard version, by the common consent of the English people; and required no act of parliament nor royal proclamation to establish its authority. Some of the older versions continued to be reprinted for forty years; but no long time elapsed ere the common version quietly and exclusively occupied the field. (Reviving the Translators, p. 35.)

From Luther to Tyndale to the King James Version

Anyone who learns German or another language realizes that Tyndale did far more than use Luther’s style and expression. Tyndale adopted the true translator’s style of precision. Below are comparisons with Luther and the Tyndale KJV, compared to the new approach from Nida – dynamic corruption

based on a personal agenda.

Teach All Nations, Matthew 28:19-20
Stephanus, Majority Text.

19 πορευθεντες [Go} ουν μαθητευσατε [teach all nations] παντα τα εθνη βαπτιζοντες [baptizing] αυτους εις το ονομα του πατρος και του υιου και του αγιου πνευματος

20 διδασκοντες [teaching] αυτους τηρειν παντα οσα ενετειλαμην υμιν και ιδου εγω μεθ υμων ειμι πασας τας ημερας εως της συντελειας του αιωνος αμην – Stephanus, Majority Text.

Luther, 1545 Bible

19 Darum gehet hin [Go] und lehret alle Völker [teach all nations] und taufet sie [baptizing] im Namen des Vaters und des Sohnes und des heiligen Geistes,

20 und lehret [teach] sie halten alles, was ich euch befohlen habe. Und siehe, ich bin bei euch alle Tage bis an der Welt Ende. – Luther, 1545 Bible

KJV, 1611

Matthew 28: 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

NIV 2011

19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

“Make disciples” is also in the modern German paraphrase. The common cause for this is the Church Growth agenda for “making disciples” through Pietistic cell groups. Nida should receive condemnation for distorting the text to make it man-centered, man’s work for God. The New KJV agrees with the NIV on this passage.

1 Corinthians 10:16
Stephanus Majority Text

16 το ποτηριον της ευλογιας ο ευλογουμεν ουχι κοινωνια του αιματος του χριστου εστιν τον αρτον ον κλωμεν ουχι κοινωνια του σωματος του χριστου εστιν

Luther Bible 1545

16 Der gesegnete Kelch, welchen wir segnen, ist der nicht die Gemeinschaft [communion with the blood of Christ] des Blutes Christi? Das Brot, das wir brechen, ist das nicht die Gemeinschaft [communion of the body of Christ] des Leibes Christi?

KJV, 1611

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

NIV 2011

Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? [Participation is a vague word used for denying the Real Presence, the validity of the Visible Word. The New KJV agrees with the Greek, Luther, and KJV.]

Romans 3: 22-23

Stephanus Majority Text

22 δικαιοσυνη δε θεου δια πιστεως ιησου χριστου εις παντας και επι παντας τους πιστευοντας ου γαρ εστιν διαστολη

23 παντες γαρ ημαρτον και υστερουνται της δοξης του θεου

One "all."

King James, 1611

KJV Romans 3:22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

One "all."

The Old NIV, 1984

1984 NIV (and earlier) Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...and are justified freely by his grace...

One "all"

NIV 2011-The Extra Word Inserted – All

2011 NIV Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

This new paraphrase teaches that every single person is justified, forgiven, saved, without faith. That dogma is also called **Objective Justification, General Justification, Universal Objective Justification, and Universalism.**

Continued in [Section VII. The Greek New Testament Fraud](#)

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