



# The Monarch of Books

## Why the King James Bible is our Final Authority

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### **PART SEVEN: THE KING JAMES TRANSLATORS AND THEIR METHODS**

Many people (*if not most*) that criticize the King James Bible are completely ignorant of the manuscript evidence facts, and they “write off” people that believe God preserved his words in English in the King James Bible as “KJV Only people that are stupid, ignorant, stubborn, and uneducated.” Moreover, many of these same people cannot tell you anything about the King James translation rules and guidelines followed or the character and skill of any man on the translation crew! Once you begin diving into the details of the men and their methods that translated the Authorized Version, there is no doubt that you will see God’s divine hand upon their work at that time in human history.

#### **THE MISSION**

- Queen Elizabeth dies in 1603 with no direct heir to the throne, thus proclaiming her nephew, James VI, the new king.
- He is approached by a delegation of pastors with a list of grievances against the church of England that was signed by \_\_\_\_\_ Puritan ministers becoming known as the “Millenary Petition”
- King James addressed the grievances at Hampton Court in January 1604 where he invited 4 Puritans, 9 Bishops, 9 Clergymen, and 4 professors from Cambridge and Oxford.
- At the conference, John Reynolds would petition the King for a new Bible to be translated literally and faithfully to the existing texts.
- Later that year, King James would commission 54 proven scholars to begin the work. It would commence in 1607.

#### **THE METHODS**

1. The basic text shall be that of the Bishop’s Bible, with as little altered as the truth of the original will permit.
2. People’s names, including those of the authors of Biblical books, shall be retained in the ordinary spelling as far as might be.
3. The old ecclesiastical words shall be retained (ex: “church”).
4. Words of more than one meaning shall be used in the sense found in most of the ancient fathers, appropriate to the context and consistent with the analogy of the faith (*In addition, to avoid any formalistic, stilted literary style, a variety of English words were used to render the same Hebrew or Greek word*).
5. The chapter divisions shall follow those of the Bishop’s Bible.
6. No marginal notes shall be added, except for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek words which cannot be briefly and fitly expressed in the text.
7. Cross-references shall only relate to the relevant passages elsewhere in Scripture.
8. Translations and revisions were to be done first by individual then submitted to the whole company for scrutiny, criticism, and final approval.



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9. As each section of Books are completed, they shall be submitted to the other companies, "to be considered of seriously and judiciously, for his Majesty is very careful in this point."
10. If any company, upon reviewing a Book, doubt or differ upon any place, they shall notify the original company. If their objection is declined, the matter shall be settled at a general meeting.
11. In cases of special obscurity the translators shall be entitled to request assistance from any learned man in the land.
12. Each bishop shall seek the judgment of those among his clergy who are "skillful in tongues" upon the work at hand.
13. The directors of each company shall be Deans of Westminster and Chester, and the Regius Professors of Oxford and Cambridge universities.
14. The following translations shall be used when they agree better with the text than the Bishop's Bible - Tyndale, Coverdale, Matthew, the Great Bible, and the Geneva Bible.
15. Three or four of the most ancient and grave divines, from either of the universities and not employed in the translating, shall be overseers of the work.

### THE MEN

1. Fifty-four men were chosen for the task and were divided into six companies: Westminster (2), Oxford (2), Cambridge (2)
2. Each member in each company made his own translation first
3. The members of each company met to compare one another's work, reading passages out loud while comparing written notes
4. When each company completes a Book, it was sent to the other five companies for their independent assessment
5. When the complete Bible was translated, it came before a select committee of twelve men, two from each company. In 1609, this group met daily for nine months at the Stationer's Hall in London. They acted as a "referral committee" in areas of difficulty or disputed passages
6. As the final step, the entire work was to be assembled and "polished" by a publication committee of two men, before being sent to the Royal Printer
7. Going through all of these steps, each passage in translation was scrutinized at a minimum of \_\_\_\_\_ times



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### Lancelot Andrews

- During his 1-2 month vacations with his family, he would find a master of a language he did not know and learn the language before returning home
- He studied Oriental languages and Divinity at Cambridge
- He became the lecturer of Divinity at Cambridge
- At 24 he became the Master at Pembroke Hall
- He left the college to be the chaplain to Queen Elizabeth, and then later he would become the Dean of Westminster
- Concerning his translation work, his work was the best among the others in his company
- Having never married and was known to spend countless hours in personal devotions
- It was said of him that he was so skilled and versatile in languages that if he was present during the tower of Babel he could have served as interpreter general as he was known to be fluent in \_\_\_\_ languages
- The Earl of Huntington took him to North of England where Andrews was known to win many Catholics to the Lord

### John Bois

- At \_\_\_ yrs old he read through the Hebrew Bible. At \_\_\_ yrs old he was able to write the Greek language in a "fair and elegant manner". At \_\_\_\_ yrs old he was enrolled at St. John's College in Cambridge, and at the halfway mark of his first year he was writing letters in Greek to his Masters
- While studying under one of his Masters, he had read through 12 Greek authors in verse and prose in the most difficult dialects and phrases that could be found
- It was common for him to go to the library at 4am and stay until 8pm
- He was so familiar with the New Testament in Greek that he could at any given point, turn to the page that a particular word appeared on by memory
- At old age he still studied for 8 hours a day, reading and correcting ancient authors
- He would preach without notes because he wanted to be heard and understood by the most humble and ignorant hearers

### Miles Smith

- It was said of him that he had "Hebrew at his fingertips" as well as Chaldee, Syriac, & Arabic



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- He studied over 300 writings of church fathers from the first 4 centuries and noted the scriptures they quoted indicating which manuscripts were received by the churches at those times
- Along with serving at all 3 levels of the translation committee (*see points 5 & 6 under "THE MEN" above*), Smith was tasked with writing the preface of the King James Bible

### **Richard Brett**

- He mastered 6 languages: Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, Arabic, & Ethiopic while also being well-versed in classical and eastern languages.
- He is most known for being "a most vigilant pastor, a diligent preacher of God's word, a liberal benefactor of the poor, a faithful friend, and a good neighbor"

### **Edward Lively**

- He was said to be one of the best linguists in the known world and eventually became the King's professor of Hebrew
- He was said to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> best Hebrew scholar on the translation committee
- He died before the translation work was completed

### **Thomas Holland**

- He held two Bachelor's degrees, a Master's degree, and was the Doctor of Divinity at Baliol College and soon became the King's professor of Divinity
- He had a wonderful knowledge of all studied languages, all arts and sciences, and theology
- He was a Calvinist and a Puritan preacher who was known to have a hatred of popery
- He said that the crowning jewel of his life was his translation work on the King James Bible in his late 60s/early 70s

### **John Spencer**

- He was elected Greek lecturer at \_\_\_\_ yrs old at Corpus Christi College in Oxford
- He became one of the Chaplains to King James, and then later return to his college to be the president
- He joined a group that "dreaded puritanism as much as Popery," and undoubtedly brought a much-needed contrast to the men in the translation work since many of them at this time were among the puritans



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### John Overall

- He became a scholar at St. John's College in Cambridge; he was a Fellow at Trinity College
- He became the King's professor of Divinity
- As he became older he leaned more towards doctrines of Arminianism
- He considered his work in the KJV translation the highest honor of his life
- The Catholic Church despised him and said that he "will be abhorred in the depths of hell!"
- He made it common practice to support every doctrinal belief with 2-3 other passages/verses of Scripture
- He was so fluent in Latin that he found it cumbersome to speak in English for long periods of time

### John Harding

- At the time he was chosen to be a translator he was *the* Royal Professor of Hebrew in the University for 13 years...
- ...at the same time, he was also *the* President of Magdalen College...
- ...while at the same time being *the* Administrator for Halsey in Oxfordshire...
- ...all of this while being on the translation committee for Isaiah-Malachi (*considered the hardest to translate*)

### Lawrence Chaderton

- He grew up Catholic; he would later be born again and become a protestant once he moved away from his family
- While in college, he asked his father for some financial aid, but his father refused based on his conversion from the Catholic Church
- He completed college with God's help and would become completely skilled in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew
- He was considered overqualified for the translation work having begun at the age of \_\_\_\_
- He was chosen as one of four divines, and was appointed by King James as being "the most grave, learned, and modest"