Introduction to Scripture & The English Bible
Do We Have A 1611 King James Bible Today?
Lesson 28

"All of these details establish the fact that there were no true revisions in the sense of updating the language or correcting translation errors."

~~ David Reagan ~~

I. HOW MANY CHANGES?

"There have been thousands of revisions of the King James Bible!" "There have been four revisions of the King James Bible." "There have been no revisions of the King James Bible!" "There have been 22,000 changes in the King James Bible since 1611." "There have been 75,000 changes in the King James Bible since 1611." "There have been 421 changes in the King James Bible since 1611." "There haven't been any changes in the King James Bible since 1611." "I hold in my hands a 1611 King James Bible!" "You couldn't read a 1611 King James Bible if you had one."

All of these statements have been made in connection with the modern debate over the King James Bible. All of them are made by people who are recognized as scholars by one group or another. How can such confusion exist about such a simple subject?

II. DEFINITIONS

A. Some of the confusion comes because people use the terms "edition," "revision" and "translation" as if they were interchangeable. They are not! There are very real differences in the meanings of these words.

B. Editions

A new edition refers to a _____ _____. The form may be new because of any number of external features. The correction of printing errors, changes in spelling, new footnotes, new marginal references, new parallel verse references, a new type size or font, a new cover or new pictures or maps create a new "edition" of the Bible. They do so without changing the words of the Scripture text.

C. Revisions

A new revision of Scripture occurs _____ _____.
Revisions occur when one word is used to replace a previous word in order to make the meaning clearer. This is usually done because the meaning of the translated word has changed. It is not applicable to a new translation but only when a new word is chosen to convey the same meaning as the original word in a clearer fashion. Changes can also take place in word order for the same reason.

D. Translations

A new translation of Scripture takes place when the _____ _____.
This involves making a decision about what _____ or _____ to accept as the original source. It also involves deciding upon _____.

These definitions of edition, revision and translation are compatible with the dictionary definitions. These definitions are also similar to the terminology used in discussing the translation of ancient books like the writings of Josephus and the various Greek historians.

III. EDITIONS OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE

There have been _____ of editions of the King James Bible. There were seventeen in the first three years after it was published. The primary reasons for new early editions were to correct printing errors, change type styles and to standardize the spelling of English words. Later editions have also focused on reference helps, including footnotes, parallel references, chapter headings, maps, and concordances.

Printing errors were numerous in the early editions. The Royal Printer was fined 300 pounds sterling for leaving out the word "not" in Exodus 20:14. It took a long time to weed out all of the printing errors. Occasionally, a typographical error will still be seen in modern editions of the Scripture.

IV. REVISIONS OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE

It is commonly accepted that there have been four real revisions of the King James text before the modern era. There are about 22,000 differences between the first 1611 King James printing and the fourth revision in 1769. However, almost all of these are the correction of printing errors and changes in spelling. Only _____ _____ "revising" a word or phrase.

D.A. Waite writes:

> "The question is, how great were those revisions? How much has the wording changed? That is why I compared the present day Old Scofield King James Version with the original 1611. Some say there are 40,000 to 50,000 changes, and
>
> if you listened to them, you would think we don't have anything like the original today.
>
> The changes, though, are largely related to spelling. For instance, take John 9, the account of the man born blind. Now, the word "blind" in verse 1 is spelled "blinde." It's a change. But is "blind" any different from "blinde"? If that is a

change you're talking about, it doesn't affect the ear. Now, in the second verse, "sin" is spelled "sinne." That is a change. Then the word "born' is spelled "borne." Bu the sound is the same.

What I did, was to count only the changes that could be HEARD. And from Genesis to Revelation, did I get 30,000? No. Did I get 20,000? No. 1,000? No. I _____, that could be heard, out of the 791,328 words. Just 421. That is actually one change out of 1,880 words. As for those 421 CHANGES to the ear - most of them were minor, just changes in spelling.

There were ONLY _____ _____. The others were only 285 MINOR CHANGES OF FORM ONLY. Of these 285 MINOR CHANGES, there are 214 VERY MINOR CHANGES such as "towards" for "toward"; "burnt" for "burned"; "amongst" for "among"; "lift" for "lifted"; and "you" for "ye." These kinds of changes represent 214 out of the 285 minor changes of form only.

Thus, you're talking about ONLY _____ REAL CHANGES out of _____.

Many people imply that the KING JAMES BIBLE is completely changed from what they had in 1611, that there are THOUSANDS of differences. You tell them about the MERE 136 CHANGES OF SUBSTANCE plus 285 MINOR CHANGES OF FORM ONLY."

(Waite, *The Four-fold Superiority of the King James Bible,* Bible for Today, 900 Park Ave., Collingswood, NJ 08108)

Most of these changes involve personal pronouns, articles, conjunctions and prepositions. They are _____ and not _____. A few English words were substituted for words of similar meaning. This was thought to be the best way of presenting the Hebrew and Greek text in English.

In 1629, a revision was produced by Cambridge University. Dr. Samuel Ward and Dean John Bois, from the original 1611 translating committee, were involved in this revision. It is the 1629 revision that dropped the Apocrypha from its position between the testaments of Scripture.

In 1638, a further revision was done by Cambridge University. Over _____ of the changes made in the King James Bible were made by this time.

In 1762, Dr. Thomas Paris, a professor at Trinity College in Oxford, issued a revision of the King James. In 1769, Dr. Benjamin Blayney, a professor at Oxford

University, issued a further revision expanding upon Dr. Paris' work. Almost all of their changes consisted in revising the italicized words. These words had been supplied by the King James translators for the purpose of dealing with the difference in the Hebrew and Greek languages and English. These words were necessary for an accurate translation.

The 1769 Paris - Blayney revision of the 1611 King James Bible is what Bible believers normally refer to as the King James Bible today. The number of revisions is so slight that some scholars are not comfortable using the term "revision" to describe it. Instead, they refer to it as an "edition."

A 1769 Paris - Blayney revision of the King James Bible is properly called a 1611 King James Bible because no new translation work has been done and no new textual authority has been introduced. The 1629 and 1638 revisions and the 1762 and 1769 revisions are all _____ The 1611 King James Bible was _____ for these revisions. This is the way that revisions of translations of _____ are referred to.

V. COULD YOU READ A 1611 KING JAMES BIBLE IF YOU HAD ONE?

Actually, the professor has read two King James Bibles published in 1611. One is in the chapel of Landmark Baptist College in Haines City, Florida. The other is in the chapel of Indiana Baptist College in Greenwood, Indiana. There are also numerous facsimile copies of the King James Bible published in 1611 available.

These Bibles can be read easily if you remember a few simple rules:

> You will sometimes see an "I" where you are used to seeing a "J." You will sometimes see an "F" where you are used to an "S."
>
> An additional "E" will be added to many words.
>
> You will sometimes see three "S's" where you are used to seeing two "S's." Vowels are sometimes doubled.
>
> Consonants are sometimes doubled.

Those who claim that you couldn't read an original 1611 if you had one, apparently haven't tried!

VI. ARE THE MODERN ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS NEW REVISIONS?

It is common for modern English translations to claim to be _____ _____. The title page of the Revised Standard Version claims that the RSV is simply a 1952 revision of the King James. However, the Revised Standard Version was clearly based on a new textual authority and different methods and rules of translation. Soon friends and foes of the RSV were calling it what it really was, a new translation.

Most English Bibles that followed the RSV admitted to being new translations of the Bible. The New International Version states that it is _____ _____. However, new translations were often promoted and marketed as a "revision" of the King James, even when they clearly were not. There was something about identifying yourself with the King James Bible that _____ _____.

In 1979, the New King James Bible was released and it clearly claimed to be a fifth revision of the King James Bible. This claim is seen in the article at the end of the translation entitled "The History of the King James Bible." It is also clearly seen in the title!

However, the first four revisions brought about slightly over _____ _____. The New King James Version produced _____ _____. In the United States, 60,000 changes is the number necessary to produce a claim for a copyright to a new translation (for a work the size of the Bible). The Thomas Nelson Company was granted a copyright on this basis. In the copyright office, it is presented as a new translation. For marketing purposes, it is presented as a revision.

The New King James translators also used new textual authorities for some of their changes. This is clearly seen in their own article, "The History of the King James Bible." The New King James Bible is clearly a new translation and the claim that it is a "revision" of the King James Bible is deceptive and misleading.

The 21st Century King James Version of the Holy Bible and the Third Millennium Bible both claim to be revisions of the King James Bible. Both are published by the same publishers in Gary, South Dakota. They reject the claim of the New King James Bible to be just a revision. However, neither publication has found any acceptance among the Bible believing fundamentalists. The publishers have placed a great emphasis on restoring the Apocrypha to their editions of the King James Bible.

The New Scofield Reference Bible places word changes in the text of the Scripture. They are marked by marginal notes which give the King James Bible rendering. It is claimed that this is simply a revision consistent with the works of Paris and Blayney. However, the authority for their changes is often a new textual authority and many of their word changes are clearly a new (and different) translation. This is not the kind of revision done

previously to the King James Bible.

VI. HAVE THERE BEEN ANY OTHER GENUINE REVISIONS OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE?

A revision was printed by Royal Printers in England in 1806. It is referred to as "The Eyre and Staham" revision. It did not meet a wide reception and was not able to take the place of the 1769 Paris - Blayney revision.

The King James II was published in the United States in 1971 by Jay P. Green. It seems to be an honest attempt at a real revision (not just a cover for a new translation). However, it never found much of an audience and was soon out of print. There has been talk of reprinting it.

There simply has been no _____ _____. The foes of the King James Bible will not settle for a _____. They want a new translation, with the new textual authority and new translation principles and rules. The friends of the King James Bible have watched it withstand attack after attack. Most of them are in no mood for a discussion of further revision.

VII. DON'T WE NEED A NEW REVISION OF THE KING JAMES?

Fundamentalism has fractured as a movement! Endless debate over the doctrines of inspiration, preservation and the role of the King James Bible has split fundamentalism into several camps. A revision done by the faculty of any fundamentalist Bible college or Christian University would immediately be rejected by large segments of fundamentalism. There exists no potential of uniting different factions to support a new revision.

Many great soul winning, separated, fundamentalist churches are booming while using the King James Bible. Everyday vibrant, growing ministries are disproving the notion that the King James Bible is a hindrance to the ministry today. People are being led to Christ from the King James Bible. They are growing and maturing in the faith while using the King James Bible in its present form. Despite the stated desires of some for a revision of the King James Bible, there simply is not a serious grassroots demand for one.