**GOD’S WORD INTO ENGLISH**

**HANDOUT OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**FIFTEEN RULES TO THE TRANSLATORS**

King James issued 15 rules to guide the translators. These rules are listed below in their original wording. Brackets have been added to help clarify some of the meaning.  
  
1. The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the Bishops Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the Truth of the original will permit.  
  
2. The names of the Prophets, and the Holy Writers, with the other Names of the Text, to be retained, as nigh as may be, accordingly as they were vulgarly used.   
  
3. The Old Ecclesiastical Words to be kept, viz. the Word Church not to be translated Congregation &c.   
  
4. When a Word hath divers Significations, that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most of the Ancient Fathers, being agreeable to the Propriety of the Place, [the context of the verse] and the Analogy of the Faith. [Comparing the text with the accepted beliefs of faith and also would have included Comparing Scripture with Scripture to gain a proper interpretation of the text]   
  
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 thinketh good, all to meet together, confer what they have done, and agree for their Parts what shall stand.   
  
9. As any one Company hath dispatched 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 the Review of the Book so sent, doubt or differ upon any Place, to send them Word thereof; note the Place, and withal send the 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 Man in the Land, for his Judgement of such a Place.   
  
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 skilful in the Tongues; and having 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 the Hebrew or Greek in either University.   
  
14. These translations to be used when they agree better with the Text than the Bishops Bible: Tyndale's, Matthew's, Coverdale's, Whitchurch's [Great Bible], Geneva.   
  
15. Besides the said Directors before mentioned, three or four of the most Ancient and Grave Divines, in either of the Universities, not employed in Translating, to be assigned by the vice-Chancellor, upon Conference with the rest of the Heads, to be Overseers of the Translations as well Hebrew as Greek, for the better observation of the 4th Rule above specified.

**THE TITLE PAGE OF THE 1611 KJV**

The completed work was issued in 1611, the complete title page reading:

"THE HOLY BIBLE, Conteyning the Old Testament, and the New: Newly Translated out of the Originall tongues: & with the former Translations diligently compared and revised, by his Majesties Special Commandment. Appointed to be read in Churches. Imprinted at London by Robert Barker, Printer to the Kings most Excellent Majestie. ANNO DOM. 1611."

The New Testament had a separate title page, the whole of it reading:

"THE NEWE Testament of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST. Newly Translated out of the Originall Greeke: and with the former Translations diligently compared and revised, by his Majesties speciall Commandment. IMPRINTED at London by Robert Barker, Printer to the Kings most Excellent Majestie. ANNO DOM. 1611. Cum Privilegio."

Notice the wording of the translation coming from the original tongues with the former translations being diligently compared. The Bishops’ Bible may have been the starting source text, but the original languages of Hebrew and Greek were very much a part of the translation process.

**QUOTES FROM THE PREFACE**

The translators were exacting and particular in their work, as related in their preface:

*Neither did we disdain to revise that which we had done, and to bring back to the anvil that which we had hammered: but having and using as great helps as were needful, and fearing no reproach for slowness, nor coveting praise for expedition, we have at the length, through the good hand of the Lord upon us, brought the work to that pass that you see.*

TO THE MOST HIGH AND MIGHTY PRINCE

JAMES,

BY THE GRACE OF GOD

KING OF GREAT BRITAIN, FRANCE, AND IRELAND, DEFENDER OF THE FAITH, &C.,/P

The Translators of the Bible wish Grace, Mercy and Peace, through JESUS CHRIST, our Lord.

For when Your Highness had once out of deep judgment apprehended how convenient it was, that out of the Original Sacred Tongues, together with comparing of the labours, both in our own, and other foreign Languages, of many worthy men who went before us, there should be one more exact Translation of the holy Scriptures into the English Tongue; Your Majesty did never desist to urge and to excite those to whom it was commended, that the work might be hastened, and that the business might be expedited in so decent a manner, as a matter of such importance might justly require.

*ITALICIZED WORDS*

The italicized words are not all added because they were not in the original languages.

Do not be so quick to throw out the italicized words of the KJV. They often have support from the Greek manuscripts as well as the vernacular editions.

*"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." Ps 12:6-7*

**Add timeline how we got our English bible.**

The translators expressed their early thoughts in their preface as:

"Truly (good Christian Reader) we never thought from the beginning, that we should need to make a new Translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one,...but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principal good one, not justly to be excepted against, that hath been our endeavor."

**THE BIBLE IN AMERICA**

[Although the](http://www.greatsite.com/timeline-english-bible-history/john-eliot.html) [**first Bible printed in America**](http://www.greatsite.com/ancient-rare-bible-leaves/eliot-1663-leaf.html) [was done in the native Algonquin Indian Language by **John Eliot** in **1663**; the first English language Bible to be printed in America by **Robert Aitken** in **1782** was a King James Version.](http://www.greatsite.com/timeline-english-bible-history/john-eliot.html) [**Robert Aitken’s 1782 Bible**](http://www.greatsite.com/ancient-rare-bible-leaves/aitken-1782-leaf.html) [was also the only Bible ever authorized by the United States Congress. He was commended by President George Washington for providing Americans with Bibles during the embargo of imported English goods due to the Revolutionary War. In **1808**, Robert’s daughter, Jane Aitken, would become the first woman to ever print a Bible… and to do so in America, of course. In **1791**, Isaac Collins vastly improved upon the quality and size of the typesetting of American Bibles and produced the](http://www.greatsite.com/timeline-english-bible-history/john-eliot.html) [**first "Family Bible" printed in America**](http://www.greatsite.com/ancient-rare-bible-leaves/collins-leaf.html)[... also a King James Version. Also in **1791**, Isaiah Thomas published the first Illustrated Bible printed in America...in the King James Version. For more information on the earliest Bibles printed in America from the 1600’s through the early 1800’s, you may wish to review our more detailed discussion of](http://www.greatsite.com/timeline-english-bible-history/john-eliot.html) [**The Bibles of Colonial America**](http://www.greatsite.com/timeline-english-bible-history/colonial-bibles.html)[.](http://www.greatsite.com/timeline-english-bible-history/john-eliot.html)

**THE ENGLISH MONARCHS**

An understanding of the Kings of England and their role in the process of God’s Word into English is helpful to gain a better understanding of the political climate and the dangers incurred by the translators themselves. It also reveals the Divine providence of God to insure a true translation of the Bible into the English Language.

1. Queen Elizabeth pg. 889

2. Henry VIII

3. Edward VI

4. Bloody Mary

[The ebb and flow of freedom continued through the 1540's...and into the 1550's. After King Henry VIII, King Edward VI took the throne, and after his death, the reign of **Queen “Bloody” Mary** was the next obstacle to the printing of the Bible in English. She was possessed in her quest to return England to the Roman Church. In **1555**, John "Thomas Matthew" Rogers and Thomas Cranmer were both burned at the stake. Mary went on to burn reformers at the stake by the hundreds for the "crime" of being a Protestant. This era was known as the Marian Exile, and the refugees fled from England with little hope of ever seeing their home or friends again.](http://www.greatsite.com/timeline-english-bible-history/queen-mary.html)

5. King James

When [Mary I](http://england) succeeded to the throne in 1553, she returned the Church of England to the communion of the Roman Catholic faith and many English religious reformers fled the country,[[18]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Authorized_King_James_Version#cite_note-17) some establishing an English-speaking colony at [Geneva](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geneva). Under the leadership of [John Calvin](http://calvin), Geneva became the chief international centre of [Reformed Protestantism](http://churches) and Latin biblical scholarship.[[19]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Authorized_King_James_Version#cite_note-18) These English [expatriates](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Expatriates) undertook a translation that became known as the [*Geneva Bible*](http://bible)*.*[[20]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Authorized_King_James_Version#cite_note-19) This translation, dated to 1560, was a revision of Tyndale's Bible and the *Great Bible* on the basis of the original languages

Soon after [Elizabeth I](http://england) took the throne in 1558, the flaws of both the *Great Bible* and the *Geneva Bible* (namely, that the Geneva Bible did not "conform to the ecclesiology and reflect the episcopal structure of the Church of England and its beliefs about an ordained clergy") became painfully apparent.[[22]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Authorized_King_James_Version#cite_note-21) In 1568, the Church of England responded with the [*Bishops' Bible*](http://bible), a revision of the *Great Bible* in the light of the Geneva version.[[23]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Authorized_King_James_Version#cite_note-22) While officially approved, this new version failed to displace the Geneva translation as the most popular English Bible of the age - in part because the full Bible was only printed in [lectern](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lectern) editions of prodigious size and at a cost of several pounds.[[24]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Authorized_King_James_Version#cite_note-23) Accordingly, Elizabethan lay people overwhelmingly read the Bible in the Geneva Version - small editions were available at a relatively low cost.