





Wise And Foolish Versions (II)



My Purpose: Not To Ban Books

- **Vatican's *Index of Prohibited Books***
- **“I hate what you have done to the Bible!
If you ever come to NYC, I will run you
over with my cab, and then I will back
up and do it again.
In Christian love...”**

– To Bruce Metzger

Why So Many Translations?

- **Between 1952-1993, 26 English translations and revisions appeared, not counting 25 more of NT alone**
- **Why so many?**
 - 1. Money. Living Bible (20+ million copies in first 5 years). GNFMM, 50 million in 8 years. NIV, 150+ million**
 - 2. Promote false doctrines
Scofield / Ryrie / Dake**

Characteristics of “Standard” Versions

Translators noted for:

Scholarship

KJV

ASV

Faithfulness

to the

text

Reverence

for Bible

J. B. Phillips' Paraphrase

“For the most part I am convinced that they had no idea that they were writing Holy Scripture. Paul, for instance, writing in haste and urgency to some of his wayward and difficult Christians, was not tremendously concerned about dotting the i’s and crossing the t’s of his message. I doubt very much whether he was even concerned about being completely consistent with what he had already written...” (viii-ix). **[Ga.3:16; 1 Co.14:37]**

Why Do We Need Translations?

- **Hebrew OT (Gn.1:1):**

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת
הָאָרֶץ:

- **Greek OT (Gn.1:1):** Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν
ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν

- **Greek NT (Jn.1:1):** Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος,
καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Reasons for Translating

1. To spread the gospel. W/in a few years after completion of the NT canon, we find NT translations in Syriac, Latin, Coptic

Jerome insisted there were as many different Latin translations as there were Latin manuscripts of the Bible

2. Linguistic changes

- The only certain thing about the future of any living language: **it will change**
 - E.g. – “**Presently**” in Shakespeare means “**at once,**” “**instantly**”
 - “**Loe, where she comes along with *portly* pace**” (Spenser)
(*Dignified, stately*)

Biblical examples

- Ps.119:148, “*My eyes **prevent** the night watches.*” (Anticipate)
- Dt.21:4, “*...a valley with running water, which is neither **eared** nor sown.*” (Plowed)

**“As literal as possible,
as free as is necessary”**

***“Such was the
burial of Hector,
master of horses”***
– Iliad, ch.24

***“Such honors Ilion
to her hero paid
And peaceful slept
the mighty Hector’s
shade”*** – Iliad, ch. 24
(Alexander Pope)

Ancient English Bible

(Probably before Wiclif, with glosses)

- *He eete haye as an oxe, and with dewe of heven his body was informid or defoulid, till his heris wexiden into licnesse of eglis, and his naylis as naylis or clees of briddis. Dn.4:33*

Gutenberg and beyond

- **1455, Gutenberg: first Bible from movable type; Latin**
- **Since then: 500+ versions of NT (over 160 English translations since 1900); translations into 1000+ dialects**
- **1 Th.2:13; 1 Pt.1:25**
 - **Does not guarantee accuracy of every passage in every version**

Coming To Terms

- **Translation** – rendering from one language into another, either written or spoken. What would the word mean to the ordinary Greek-speaking-man-on-the-street at the time of writing?
- **Version** – a particular translation (KJV, ASV...)

Printing Errors

- 1653, publisher John Field omitted “**not**” in 1 Co.6:9, “*Know ye not that the unrighteous **shall** inherit the kingdom of God?*”
- 1638, typesetters changed “forgiven” to “forgotten”: “*Her sins, which are many, are **forgotten***” (Lk.7:47)

The “Breeches Bible” (Geneva)

- Adam & Eve “...*made themselves breeches*”
 - Favorite Bible in Colonial America
 - Some Pilgrims who arrived in 1620 considered KJV too “newfangled a translation and immoral”

AD 1382: great interest in biblical matters

- 1348, Bubonic Plague (Black Death) hits England; at least **one out of four** of your friends/relatives die within a few months
- Your local priest rejects any request for help in understanding the Bible. He cannot help anyway; he reads only in Latin, and **only** portions that he uses for the liturgy. He has **never** read the whole Bible himself

- Church is interested only in two things:

Your money

Your confession

- Into this climate walks **Wycliffe**, a Roman Catholic priest, who condemns excesses of the Church
- **“Morning star of the Reformation”**

Wycliffe circulated first complete English Bible

- His translation was completed more than 70 years *before* the invention of the movable-type printing press
- All Wycliffe Bibles were **handwritten**
- One Bible could take up to a year to copy; they made thousands

Wycliffe – Mt.8:23-27

“And Jhesu steyinge vp in to a litel ship, his disciplis sueden him. And loo! A grete steryng was made in the see, so that the litil ship was hilid with wawis; but he slepte. And his disciplis camen nigh to hym, and raysiden hym, sayinge, Lord, saue vs: we perishen. And Jhesus seith to him, What ben yhee of litil feith agast? Thanne he rysyng comaundide to the wyndis and the see, and a grete pesiblenesse is maad. Forsothe men wondreden, sayinge: What manere *man* is *he* this, for the wyndis and the see obeishen to hym.”

William Tyndale, 1526

- Most influential Bible translator of all time
- ***First to translate from Heb. and Gk.*** All others had been secondary versions
- ***90% of KJV is from Tyndale***
- First **English** NT after age of printing
 - “If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou doest”

Tyndale's death

- **Condemned to death for heresy**
- **Oct. 6, 1536, strangled and burned**
- **Last words: “Lord, open the King of England’s eyes.” [The Lord had already done so]**

The Word Spreads

- **1453: Turks invade Byzantium; Greek scholars flee with mss to Europe**
- **1458: first time, Greek is offered at European university; leads to first published Greek NT, March 1, 1516**
- **Months before Tyndale's death, Henry VIII allows printing of English version based largely on Tyndale's work**

Translators and Versions

- ***Coverdale*, 1535.** Secondary translation. First complete printed Bible in English. Licensed by Henry VIII
- ***Matthew's Bible*, 1537 (John Rogers).** Licensed by Henry VIII
 - In 1555, Rogers became first martyr burned at the stake under Mary Tudor (“Bloody Mary”), Catholic monarch

- ***Great Bible***, 1539. Named for its size (15" by 9+"). **Authorized Version**
- ***Geneva Bible***, 1560. Pilgrims; Shakespeare. First to use verse divisions
- ***Bishops' Bible***, 1568. Revision of Geneva. **Second Authorized Version**
- ***Douay***, 1609. R. Catholic attempt to counteract influence of other versions
- ***King James***, 1611. **Third Authorized Version**. James Stuart of Scotland. 47+ scholars

Mostly American Versions

- ***English Revised Version***, 1881-1885
 - Sold 3 million copies in first year
 - ***Chicago Tribune, Chicago Times*** published NT in May 22, 1881 issues, part of it telegraphed from New York
- ***American Revised Version***, 1901
- ***Revised Standard Version***, 1946, 1952

American Versions

- *New English Bible*, 1961
- *New American Standard Bible*, 1963, 1971
- *New International Version*, 1973
- *New King James Version*, 1982
- *Contemporary English Version*, 1995
- *New Living Translation*, 1996
- *English Standard Version*, 2001

Which Version To Use?

1. Scholarship - Individual or group?

- Robert Bratcher, *TEV* (*Good News For Modern Man*):

Acts 20:7 “On Saturday evening we gathered together for the fellowship meal. Paul spoke to the people, and kept on speaking until midnight, since he was going to leave the next day”

2. Translation or paraphrase?

Formal Equivalence: attempts to translate the original *as literally as possible*, w/o doing violence to English usage

Dynamic Equivalence: attempts to convey thoughts of the text in free and idiomatic English *with less regard for the exact wording of the original*

- Many commentaries come disguised as translations

Four Basic Types Of Translations

Literal
Interlinear

Standard
[N]KJV; [N]ASV

“Thought”
NEB
NIV

Paraphrase
Phillips,
Living Bible

3. Theological bias?

“LIMITS OF SYNTAX. After all is done, instances remain where syntax cannot say the last word, where theological bias will inevitably determine how one interprets the Greek idiom”

Ac.2:38

- “...So in Ac.2:38 **eis** does not of itself express design (see Mt.10:41), but it may be so used. When the *grammarian* has finished, the *theologian* steps in, and *sometimes before the grammarian is through*” (A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar Of The Greek New Testament...*, p. 389)



Mr. Thayer

J. H. Thayer obtained permission from Professor Grimm to make changes in his work that might better adapt it to the needs of English speaking students, placing these additions in brackets ([])

Thayer on *baptisma*, p. 94-95

3. of Christian baptism; this, according to the view of the apostles, is a rite of **sacred immersion, commanded** by Christ, **by which** men confessing their sins and professing their faith in Christ **are born again** by the Holy Spirit unto a **new life**, come into the **fellowship of Christ** and the church (1 Co. xii. 13), and **are made partakers of eternal salvation**; [but see art. "Baptism" in BB.DD., McC. and S., Schaff-Herzog]: Eph. iv. 5; Col. ii. 12



When lexicons agree...

When lexicons agree on a word's *usage*,
you can believe it

When a lexicon says a word means a
certain thing *in a certain verse, the
lexicographer becomes a commentator*

4. How does it differ from [N]ASV and [N]KJV?

- Ro.3:28, “For we conclude that a man is put right with God **only through faith**, and not by doing what the Law commands” (TEV)
- Ro.1:17, “For the gospel reveals how God puts men right with himself: it is **through faith alone**, from beginning to end. As the scripture says, ‘He who is put right with God through faith shall live.’” (TEV)

5. Does it teach doctrinal error?

- *“But I shall remain at Ephesus until **Whitsuntide**, for a great opportunity has opened for effective work, and there is much opposition”* (NEB, 1 Co.16:8-9)

Which Version To Use?

1. *Scholarship – Individual or Group?*
2. *Translation or paraphrase?*
3. *Theological bias?*
4. *How does it differ* from [N]ASV, [N]KJV?
5. *Does it teach doctrinal error?*

King James Version

- Revision of Bishop's Bible (1568). Rules:
 1. The ordinary Bible read in church, commonly called the **Bishops' Bible**, to be followed and as little altered as the truth of the original will permit.
 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

King James Version revisions

- **1615...1629...1638...1762...1769 (most used KJV)**
 - **From 1611 to 1769, revisers made almost 100,000 changes in KJV**

The King James Version

Translators met in
six groups:
Westminster Group:

OT	NT
Genesis- Kings	Romans – Jude
Ten translators	Seven translators

The King James Version

Translators met in
six groups:
Oxford Group:

OT	NT
Isaiah – Malachi	Gospels, Acts, Revelation
Seven translators	Eight translators

The King James Version

Translators met in
six groups:
Cambridge Group:

OT	*
1 Chron. – Eccles.	Apocrypha
Eight translators	Seven translators

Since 1611...

Some words have changed meanings:

Gay

Blackberry

Twitter

- Ps.4:2, *leasing* = lying
- Mt.3:15, *suffer* = allow
- Mk.6:25, *charger* = platter
- Lk.15:8, *candle* = lamp
- Lk.17:7, *by and by* = immediately
- Ac.17:3, *allege* = prove

- Ac.21:15, *carriages* = baggage
- Ac.28:13, *fetches a compass* = sailed around
- Ro.1:13, *let* = hinder
- 1 Co.13:1-3, *charity* = love
- 2 Co.8:1, *do you to wit* = make known to you
- Ga.6:6, *communicate* = share with
- Ph.1:27, *conversation* = conduct
- 1 Th.4:15, *prevent* = precede

King James Passages Examined

- Ac.2:27,31, **hell**
- KJV: **hell** represents three Greek words

Hades

Ac.2:27
Mt.16:18

Gehenna

Mt.10:28

Tartaroo

2 Pt.2:4

Easter, Ac.12:4

- Geneva Bible: *passover*
- 29 occurrences in NT; KJV renders each *passover* except Ac.12:4. (Jn. 18:39; 1 Co.5:7)
- KJV followed the *Bishops' Bible*

“KJV always translates literally”

- Mt.27:44, KJV: “*cast the same in his teeth.*” WNEIDIZON AUTON
 - “*reviled* Him with the same thing” NKJV
- Ro.6:2, KJV: “*God forbid,*” paraphrase of MH GENOITO
 - “*Certainly not!*” NKJV

