

THE 400th ANNIVERSARY OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE

TEXT: Psalm 138:2

Introduction:

1. This week we commemorate the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible (May 2, 1611--May 2, 2011).
2. The King James Version was authorized by King James I of Great Britain.
3. The first English translation was done by John Wycliffe (New Testament published in 1380; and the Old Testament in 1382).
4. The Roman Catholic Church condemned John Wycliffe for translating the English Bible and they showed their contempt by digging up his bones and burning them nearly 44 years after his death.
5. Later, William Tyndale's New Testament was published in 1525. His Old Testament was published later.
6. It is said that about 80 to 90% of the King James Version is taken from William Tyndale's version. Tyndale was burnt at the stake in 1536.
7. Tyndale was ordained as a Roman Catholic priest, but he boldly renounced the Roman Catholic Church and its various false teachings, and he called the pope the Antichrist.
8. In his book, *The Practice of Prelates*, Tyndale likened the pope to an ivy which climbs up a tree and gradually saps the strength of the host and kills it, emphasizing that this is what the pope had done to England and every other nation under the control of Rome.
9. Alluding to Revelation 18:2, Tyndale called Roman Catholicism "a nest for unclean birds." Ostensibly a book critiquing King Henry VIII's divorce from Catherine of Aragon, the book deals with the political machinations of the Roman Catholic Church.
10. By translating the Scriptures into English, Tyndale was disobeying the Catholic church's law forbidding the translation of the Bible into the common languages of the people without their permission.
11. When the Tyndale New Testament was smuggled into England, the Roman Catholic authorities forbade its distribution and had many copies confiscated and burned.
12. By 1528, the prisons in England were filled with those who had been accused of reading the New Testament in English, and in 1529 Thomas Hitton was burned at the stake for possessing the Tyndale Bible.
13. Others had previously been burned at the stake for possessing the Wycliffe Bible. In May 1535, Tyndale was arrested for opposing Rome and for violating their church laws by translating the Bible.

14. After being imprisoned for nearly a year and a half in a cold, dreary dungeon in the castle at Belgium, William Tyndale was taken out to the public square, strangled, and his body burned at the stake.
15. Roman Catholic authorities also burned John Rogers, the translator of the Matthew's Bible, another Bible in the lineage of the 1611 King James.
16. Furthermore, the Geneva Bible (1560), which was the most popular English Bible before the KJV, was printed in Geneva, Switzerland, rather than England because the Roman Catholic Queen Mary ("Bloody Mary") was persecuting Bible believers and many of them fled to Geneva for safety.
17. Other 16th century English Bibles which preceded the King James Version are the Great Bible (1539) and the Bishops' Bible (1568).
18. Edward F. Hills has written two excellent books on the superiority of the King James Version. He has degrees from Yale University, Westminster Theological Seminary, Columbia Theological Seminary, and Harvard University.
19. I mention his academic credentials only because certain proponents of the modern translations tend to make disparaging remarks about the qualifications of those who prefer the KJV over the new bibles.
20. Dr. Hills says, "Work on the King James Version began in 1604. In that year a group of Puritans under the leadership of Dr. John Reynolds, president of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, suggested to King James I that a new translation of the Bible be undertaken.
21. "This suggestion appealed to James, who was himself a student of theology and of the Scriptures, and he immediately began to make the necessary arrangements for carrying it out. Within six months the general plan of procedure had been drawn up and a complete list made of the scholars who were to do the work. Originally 54 scholars were on this list, but deaths and withdrawals reduced it finally to 47. These were divided into six companies which checked each other's work. Then the final result was reviewed by a select committee of six and prepared for the press. Because of all this careful planning the whole project was completed in less than seven years. In 1611 the new version issued from the press of Robert Barker in a large folio volume bearing on its title page the following inscription: `The Holy Bible, containing the Old Testament & the New: Newly Translated out of the Original tongues; & with the former Translations diligently compared and revised by His Majesties special Commandment'" (*Believing Bible Study*, p. 64).
22. The King James Version is by far more widely read than any other Bible translation. Edward F. Hills said, "Surely this is a God-guided translation on

which God, working providentially, has placed the stamp of His approval" (*Believing Bible Study*, p. 65).

23. The KJV has repeatedly been referred to as "the noblest monument of English prose."
24. The King James Bible, along with the writings of William Shakespeare, played an important role in the formation our English language.
25. The King James Bible is credited as responsible for dozens of popular phrases, such as "The love of money is the root of all evil," "How are the mighty fallen," "All is vanity," "I am escaped with the skin of my teeth," and "For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

I. GOD HAS PRESERVED HIS WORD

1. There is a difference between inspiration and preservation.
2. "Inspiration" (II Timothy 3:16, 17) literally means, "God breathed." It means God Himself gave His words to us.
3. Second Peter 1:21 says, "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The word "moved" means those holy men of God, whom God chose to write Scripture, were "carried along" by the Holy Spirit.
4. They were not communicating their own ideas but the words God gave them. They were the human penmen but God Himself was the Author.
5. "Preserved" means "the act of preserving, protecting and keeping safe." This means the Word of God was protected from corruption or destruction.
6. Our Lord said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35).
7. Inspiration and preservation go together. They are inextricably linked. You cannot have one without the other.
8. Other important terms are inerrant (the Bible is without error), and infallible (totally trustworthy).
9. Certain preachers and certain Christian colleges will affirm the inerrancy of Scripture, but they deny preservation. They say, "The original manuscripts are inspired and inerrant, etc. but now we have a multiplicity of translations to choose from."
10. May I remind you that I Corinthians 14:33 says, "God is not the author of confusion."
11. Still others acknowledge that God has promised to preserve His Word, however, they are confused as to how such preservation took place.
12. There is no reason to be confused over this. God has preserved His Word, and the King James Bible is the preserved Word of God.

13. Psalm 12:6, 7 says, "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."
14. You may recall that wicked King Jehoiakim thought he could get rid of God's Word by cutting it up and throwing it in the fire, but God preserved His Word (Jeremiah 36:27, 28).
15. Some say God has preserved the ideas and thoughts and doctrines of Scripture, but not the very words. But our Lord said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35).
16. First Corinthians 2:13 refers to "the words" which the Holy Ghost teacheth. The Scofield Bible says, "The writers of Scripture invariably affirm, where the subject is mentioned by them at all, that the *words* of their writings are divinely taught."
17. Our Lord said in Matthew 5:18, "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."
18. Our Lord has not only promised to preserve His words, He has in fact preserved even the jots and tittles. A "jot" is the smallest letter in the alphabet.
19. A "tittle" refers to a small stroke or point in writing or printing, like an accent over a letter, or the dot over the letter 'i'.

II. THE KJV IS THE PRESERVED WORD OF GOD

1. The new modern translations are missing many words, and even entire verses. The modern translations contradict the KJV, and even contradict each other.
2. Therefore, they cannot be the preserved Word of God (cf. Acts 8:37; I Tim. 3:16). If Acts 8:37 is missing from your Bible, then you have the wrong Bible!
3. If I Timothy 3:16 does not say, "God was manifest in the flesh" in your Bible, then you have the wrong Bible!
4. Proverbs 30:5, 6 says, "Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar."
5. So it is wrong to add anything to God's pure, preserved Word. If anything is added, it cannot be pure, and it cannot be preserved.
6. Deuteronomy 4:2 says, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you."

7. The strongest warning is found in the very last chapter in the Bible. "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Rev. 22:18, 19).
8. The devil knows the Bible, and he quoted Scripture when he tempted our Lord. Our Lord responded by quoting Scripture -- "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4).
9. Isaiah 40:8 says, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."

III. THE MODERN VERSIONS HAVE BEEN CORRUPTED

1. The new English translations are not reliable and trustworthy. I have already mentioned that Acts 8:37 is missing from the NIV.
2. Matthew 17:21 says, "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting," but this verse is missing from the NIV and most of the other new translations.
3. The word "fasting" is removed in several places in the modern versions.
4. In the KJV we see many instances when men worship our Lord, but several of these references to worship have been removed from the NIV and other new translations.
5. Matthew 8:2 says, "And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean" (KJV).
6. "A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, 'Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean'" (Matt. 8:2, NIV).
7. Matthew 9:18 says, "While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live" (KJV).
8. "While he was saying this, a ruler came and knelt before him and said, 'My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live'" (Matt. 9:18, NIV).
9. Matthew 15:25 says, "Then came she (the Syrophenician woman) and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me" (KJV).
10. "The woman came and knelt before him. 'Lord, help me!' she said" (Matt. 15:25, NIV).
11. Mark 5:6 says, "But when he (the man with an unclean spirit) saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him" (KJV).

12. "When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him" (Mark 5:6, NIV).
13. Many good doctrinal words like "repentance" have been omitted from the new versions. For example, Matthew 9:13 says, "For I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."
14. But the NIV and other new translations leave off the words, "to repentance."
15. Colossians 1:14 says, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." But "through his blood" is left out of the NIV and NAS and other new translations.
16. In Luke 4:8, Jesus said to the devil, "Get thee behind me, Satan." But you wouldn't know that if you were reading the NIV or the NAS or some of these other modern translations.
17. The Holy Spirit has been removed from I Peter 1:22.
18. You won't find "Calvary" in the NIV and other new versions. And you won't find "propitiation" and "Godhead."
19. The word "hell" is found 54 times in the KJV, but only 14 times in the NIV.
20. The words "sodomite" and "sodomites" (homosexuals) are found five times in the KJV, but you will not find that word in the NIV. Could it be because one of the persons on the NIV translation committee was Virginia Mollenkott, a lesbian?
21. Do you know the man who owns the exclusive printing rights to the NIV, Rupert Murdoch, is a pornographer?
22. Murdoch owns Zondervan Publishers, who are owned by Harper Collins, who also publishes *The Satanic Bible* and a filthy book entitled, *The Joy of Gay Sex*.

CONCLUSION:

Perhaps you have heard this poem by John Clifford.

"THE ANVIL OF GOD'S WORD"

Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith's door
 And heard the anvil sing the vesper chime;
 Then, looking in, I saw upon the floor
 Old hammers, worn with blasting years of time.
 "How many anvils have you had," said I,
 "To wear and batter all these hammers so?"
 "Just one," said he; and then, with twinkling eye,
 "The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."
 And so I thought, the anvil of God's Word
 For ages, skeptic blows have beat upon.

Yet tho' the noise of falling blows was heard
The anvil is unharmed--the hammers gone.