

## Preface to the King James Version 1873 Edition

The most time-honored and widely used edition of the English Bible is the translation of 1611, commonly known as the Authorized Version or King James Version (KJV). But though it has served as the standard translation for millions of users through nearly four centuries, there has never been a standard edition to which all printings are conformed.

No two early printings of the KJV were identical—not even the two printings of 1611—and no two modern settings are identical, either. These differences are due to accidental human error as well as to intentional changes by printers and editors, who sought to eliminate what they judged to be the errors of others and to conform the text to their standards of English usage. This said, most differences involve only spelling, punctuation, and italics, and few variations materially affect the meaning of the text.

As early as 1616 there were systematic attempts to revise and standardize the KJV. Other important early editions were issued by Cambridge in 1629 and 1638. In the eighteenth century, the two great English universities (who were also officially chartered printers) commissioned thorough and systematic revisions. The edition of Dr. F. S. Paris was published by Cambridge in 1762 and that of Dr. Benjamin Blayney by Oxford in 1769. Though far from perfect, these remained the standard editions until

*The Cambridge Paragraph Bible* of 1873.

*The Cambridge Paragraph Bible* began with the simple plan of arranging the text of the KJV according to the sense of the literature: arranging the prose sections into paragraphs and the poetic sections into parallel lines. This simple plan, however, was enhanced by the editor's desire to create the most thorough standardization of the text ever attempted. To this task Dr. F. H. A. Scrivener devoted seven laborious years: 1866 to 1873.

Because the translators' original manuscript no longer exists, the KJV text must be established by consulting the earliest settings. Dr. Scrivener compared at least 15 early settings and important revisions, including both settings of 1611; Bibles of 1612, 1613, 1616, 1617, 1629, 1630, 1634, 1638, 1640; and the significant editions of Drs. Paris (1762) and Blayney (1769).

In his 120-page introduction, Dr. Scrivener addressed the various features of the KJV he worked to standardize:

*Italic type.* Italic type was used in the KJV, as in the Geneva Bible, to indicate words in the English translation that have no exact representative in the original language. Dr. Scrivener, following many earlier scholars, noted that the KJV translators were noticeably inconsistent in their use of italics, sometimes even in the same paragraph and verse. To cite one small pattern from the

1611 edition, Leviticus 11:20 has “upon all foure,” while for the same Hebrew 11:21 and 42 have “upon all foure,” and 11:27 has “on all foure.”

Dr. Scrivener carefully analyzed why italic type was used throughout the KJV, reduced this analysis to 14 major principles, and then applied these principles with meticulous consistency throughout the entire Bible. A substantial portion of the editor’s “seven laborious years” was devoted to this significant improvement.

**Punctuation.** Later printings of the KJV added a great deal of punctuation to the editions of 1611. Dr. Scrivener restored the major punctuation (periods, colons, parentheses, question marks) of 1611, and used commas and semicolons to help divide longer sentences into more manageable units for reading.

**Spelling and capital letters.** Spelling of proper names and common words was very fluid in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: “Inquire” and “enquire” were interchangeable, as were “ceiling,” “cieling,” and “sieling.” Most differences between modern settings of the KJV and early settings involve standardization of spelling. Dr. Scrivener’s general rule was that whenever a word was spelled more than one way, he conformed all occurrences to the standard spelling of the late nineteenth century. Proper names, on the other hand, vary according to their spelling in the original languages, so “Elijah” throughout 1 and 2 Kings and in Malachi 4:5 becomes “Elias” throughout the New Testament, as in Matthew 11:14

and 17:3. For the benefit of modern readers, three spelling patterns are changed in this edition that are not changed in Scrivener’s edition: twenty-nine occurrences of “mo” and “moe” are conformed to “more”; four occurrences of “unpossible” are conformed to “impossible”; and “neesed” in 2 Kings 4:35 is spelled “sneezed.”

**Paragraphs.** According to Dr. Scrivener and other scholars, the paragraph marks (¶) were unequally and inconsistently distributed, and they disappear altogether after Acts 20:26. So, while consulted, the original marks were not always followed in *The Cambridge Paragraph Bible*. Since *The KJV Reference Bible: Compact Edition* is a paragraphed Bible, paragraph marks are not used.

In *The KJV Reference Bible: Compact Edition*, Hendrickson Publishers conforms its setting of the King James or Authorized Version to its most highly regarded edition: *The Cambridge Paragraph Bible* of 1873, edited by F. H. A. Scrivener. As in the case of the first edition of the version of 1611, this is done out of “zeal to promote the common good, whether it be by devising any thing ourselves, or revising that which hath been laboured by others” (“The Translators to the Reader,” the preface to the version of 1611). With the original translators, we hope our efforts will be “welcomed,” not “with suspicion” but with “love,” and that the reissue of this edition will contribute to improvement of this great treasure of the English-speaking church.

## Epistle Dedicatory

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.

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

Great and manifold were the blessings, most dread Sovereign, which Almighty God, the Father of all mercies, bestowed upon us the people of *England*, when first he sent Your Majesty's Royal Person to rule and reign over us. For whereas it was the expectation of many, who wished not well unto our *Sion*, that upon the setting of that bright *Occidental Star*, Queen *Elizabeth* of most happy memory, some thick and palpable clouds of darkness would so have overshadowed this Land, that men should have been in doubt which way they were to walk; and that it should hardly be known, who was to direct the unsettled State; the appearance of Your Majesty, as of the *Sun* in his strength, instantly dispelled those supposed and surmised mists, and gave unto all that were well affected exceeding cause of comfort; especially when we beheld the Government established in Your Highness, and Your hopeful Seed, by an undoubted Title, and this also accompanied with peace and tranquility at home and abroad.

But among all our joys, there was no one that more filled our

hearts, than the blessed continuance of the preaching of God's sacred Word among us; which is that inestimable treasure, which excelleth all the riches of the earth; because the fruit thereof extendeth itself, not only to the time spent in this transitory world, but directeth and disposeth men unto that eternal happiness which is above in heaven.

Then not to suffer this to fall to the ground, but rather to take it up, and to continue it in that state, wherein the famous Predecessor of Your Highness did leave it: nay, to go forward with the confidence and resolution of a Man in maintaining the truth of Christ, and propagating it far and near, is that which hath so bound and firmly knit the hearts of all Your Majesty's loyal and religious people unto You, that Your very name is precious among them: their eye doth behold You with comfort, and they bless You in their hearts, as that sanctified Person who, under God, is the immediate Author of their true happiness. And this their contentment doth not diminish or decay, but every day increaseth and taketh strength, when they observe, that the zeal of Your Majesty toward the house of God doth not slack or go backward, but is more and more kindled, manifesting itself abroad in the farthest parts of *Christendom*, by writing in defence of the Truth, (which hath given such a blow unto that man of sin, as will not be healed,) and every day at home, by religious and learned discourse, by frequenting the house of God, by hearing the

Word preached, by cherishing the Teachers thereof, by caring for the Church, as a most tender and loving nursing Father.

There are infinite arguments of this right Christian and religious affection in Your Majesty; but none is more forcible to declare it to others than the vehement and perpetuated desire of accomplishing and publishing of this work, which now with all humility we present unto Your Majesty. 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.

And now at last, by the mercy of God, and the continuance of our labours, it being brought unto such a conclusion, as that we have great hopes that the Church of *England* shall reap good fruit thereby; we hold it our duty to offer it to Your Majesty, not only as to our King and Sovereign, but as to the principal Mover and Author of the work: humbly craving of Your most Sacred Majesty, that since things of this quality have ever been subject to the censures of illmeaning and discontented persons, it may re-

ceive approbation and patronage from so learned and judicious a Prince as Your Highness is, whose allowance and acceptance of our labours shall more honour and encourage us, than all the calumniation and hard interpretations of other men shall dismay us. So that if, on the one side, we shall be traduced by Popish Persons at home or abroad, who therefore will malign us, because we are poor instruments to make God's holy Truth to be yet more and more known unto the people, whom they desire still to keep in ignorance and darkness; or if, on the other side, we shall be maligned by self-conceited Brethren, who run their own ways, and give liking unto nothing, but what is framed by themselves, and hammered on their anvil; we may rest secure, supported within by the truth and innocency of a good conscience, having walked the ways of simplicity and integrity, as before the Lord; and sustained without by the powerful protection of Your Majesty's grace and favour, which will ever give countenance to honest and Christian endeavours against bitter censures and uncharitable imputations.

The Lord of heaven and earth bless Your Majesty with many and happy days, that, as his heavenly hand hath enriched Your Highness with many singular and extraordinary graces, so You may be the wonder of the world in this latter age for happiness and true felicity, to the honour of that great GOD, and the good of his Church, through Jesus Christ our Lord and only Saviour.