

Why I don't PREFER the King James Translation

God's word is infallible and Inerrant in its original language (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek). NO translation is infallible!

All translations are subject to personal interpretation, and use of another outside language lends to misunderstandings of the original meaning or intent.

Latin is a translation, English versions are often translations of translations.

1. It is Not the First English translation –

John Wycliffe's Bible was translated from Latin into English and hand copied in the 1400s. In 1526, almost 100 years before the KJV was first published, William Tyndale's English translation of the Greek New Testament was published. The Coverdale Bible, the Matthews Bible, the Great Bible [authorized by Henry VIII], the Geneva Bible, and the Bishops' Bible." In fact much of the KJV borrows heavily from earlier English translations, especially the Bishop's Bible.

2. Advocates of the "King James only" contend that **any** unreached people group today without the Bible in their own native language must first learn King James English before translating it a third time. This makes no sense whatsoever if you want people to hear God's word without man made influence.

3. The current edition of the KJV is different from the original 1611 translation and several other early editions. "The KJV Bible we use today is actually based primarily on the major revision completed in 1769 – 158 years after the first edition."

4. The 1611 version included the apocrypha. The 1666 edition was the first edition of the KJV that did not include these extra books

5. King James authorized the new Bible translation for political reasons. King James believed that a single 'authorized version' was a political and social necessity. He hoped this book would hold together the warring factions of the Church of England and the Puritans which threatened to tear apart both church and country.

6. It was not a direct translation from original Hebrew and Greek. Most KJV advocates claim that the KJV was translated from a Greek text known as the Textus Receptus (TR) and that the TR is especially accurate and inspired.

However the TR did not exist in 1611 when the first King James Bible was published. The first TR was written in the 1633.

7. Some words and phrases, and even a few passages, that are included in the KJV, are absent in newer translations. These are not omissions. Rather, these words and phrases are additions in the KJV. These additions are absent in the more ancient Greek manuscripts.

8. Some words used in KJV have no meaning or a different meaning today. The KJV uses the word “unicorn” nine times. Satyr is used twice in the book of Isaiah. It is a Greek mythological male nature spirit with ears and a tail resembling those of a horse.

About 50 years before he came to power, Queen Elizabeth I’s half-sister, Queen Mary I (“Bloody Mary”), a Catholic, had executed nearly 250 Protestants during her short reign.

King James (King of England) was a “Christian” only by name and social influence. He was a bi-sexual religious scholar. His motivation to translate an “authorized” English Bible was political due to fragmenting protestants of the reformation.

King James had homosexual tendencies, intense affection for three men in the course of his life, his public expressions of affection toward two of these men, and his reluctance to commit England to war was due to his “effeminate” nature.

The KJV only teaching is an error that gained traction in the USA. If you find it in Africa it will usually be in churches planted by American missionaries.

What they basically believe is that the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts (handwritten copies) used for the Bible translation commissioned by King James around 1611, were “given” providentially by God to the translators. They call it the Textus Receptus, meaning the “received text” which they misunderstand as “received from God by providence.” They also believe that the old English translation itself was inspired by God, and thus infallible.

So they are suspect of later English translations from other manuscripts as corrupted by Satan. They point to examples where the KJV says “Jesus Christ our Lord” while in the NIV or ESV it says “Jesus Christ.” Or as in Revelation where it says in the KJV that “they repented of their

sins” in the NIV it says “they washed their robes.” They see these as examples of Satan tampering with and watering down the deity of Christ or the evil of sin, etc.

In reality, the reason the newer English translations differ from the KJV is that they are based on older, and more reliable manuscripts that were discovered by archeologists later. In Bible translation, you always favor the older manuscripts because they are chronologically closer to the original, meaning they have had less interference from scribes and fewer errors creeping in from the copying process. Scribes made mistakes and sometimes would add explanations or alter the wording to make things make more sense. So, the rule of thumb is to prefer reading that is more difficult to understand since scribes never made things less clear; they were just trying to be helpful.

KJV only proponents are usually unfamiliar with the science of lower criticism (how to determine which manuscripts and which readings are preferable), and understandably so: it was by far the most difficult class in seminary. In other words, KJV only people don’t understand how the Bible is translated and why manuscripts are accepted or rejected by translation committees.

They also have no good answer for the question, “What about French or Zulu or Chinese translations? How can those be inspired translations if God only inspired the translation into old English?”

Their error stems from the wrong belief that God has “given” manuscripts and inspired translations instead of inspiring only the original Hebrew and Greek of the original writers (documents we refer to as the *autographa*, which we do not have, so we have to reconstruct them by comparing the thousands of manuscripts that have been found).

That’s a brief intro to the problem. James White has an excellent book, “The KJV Only Controversy,” that decisively dispatches the issue, showing the errors in the KJV and the problems with their reasoning.