

Is the King James Bible the final received text?

Introduction

This article is based on a sermon delivered by Matthew Verschuur at Victory Faith Centre on 19 September, 2006.

What does it mean that the Word is received?

God has given something, and it is required when something is given, it is to be received. Good gifts come from the Father of lights, and good gifts must be received. It is the will of God, and it is actually commanded of Christians to do so from God.

“The Lord gave the word: great *was* the company of those that published *it*.” (Psalm 68:11).

God has given the Word. Moreover, the Word passed through the Earth by the great company of those who published it. God gave the Word, by inspiring it. For example, Paul wrote a letter, and sent it to a Church. It was not lost, but when people got that letter, they made copies of it. And so did others, so that eventually copies were made, that were available throughout the whole region, the Roman Empire and in Europe.

It was not just a small company that published it, but there was a great increase, so that there was a great company. The scattering aboard, as a sower sows the Word, has been so that the Word goes out everywhere, even to the uttermost parts of the Earth.

We then must be receivers of the truth of the Gospel, which first by the apostles and prophets, and by believers, has come through the Church, and goes forth into all the world. Thus, we have the Word today, and people must respond to it.

The giving of the Word to the world is by the Church, and this means that the Church must have the Word to begin with. The Word goes to the world so that they may respond, and become part of the Church.

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations ... Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Matthew 28:19a, 20).

The Word goes forth, and nations must be taught. Christ is telling the Church to teach nations to observe to do His Word. How can people be observing to do the Word unless the Word is not in part, but wholly available. If Christians are relying on scholars, who are imperfect, or on believers presently having to discern the Word in many manuscripts or in part from many versions, this would show that God is weak.

God the Holy Ghost has superintended over the Church by His providential care. He has made sure that the Word has not been lost, but that at the right time and at the right places, the fullness of the message has been revealed and made present. At the time of Reformation, God used Erasmus to get the Greek manuscripts together, who brought the Greek together and printed it, and so Luther was able to use this, and produce a German New Testament, and Tyndale was also able to use this, and make an English New Testament. The giving of the Word is by the Holy Ghost, and the Word present is that which He intended to be, even as it was at the time of inspiration.

God is not weak, but strong to get the Word through. God has made everything work together, so that the Word has come, even to us today. He has put into place the English language, and is using English, which is a different language to the languages of the Originals. This means that although the words were scattered in Hebrew and Greek, that they came together in English.

The Scripture shows that something would happen with the Word, namely, that nations would hear, and that even certain whole nations would respond.

“And the gospel must first be published among all nations.” (Mark 13:10).

The Word being published is relevant to today. It appeared in books at the Reformation time, and now by the internet too. In fact, the internet shows that the Word is indeed going forth everywhere, even among all nations. So that the Word is going forth, even as it prophesied, and so, that there must be a response that that present Word, even the receiving of it.

“For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.” (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

God is able to get His Word through to people far away, and accurately. This is the external factor, showing that the Word can get through, by books and copies, in time.

And God’s Word has the internal factor, it makes an internal change — people are born again, and the hearts are changed.

There is a connection between those who internally believe the Word and them having the Word externally to look at and hear. (The Word cannot be heard or believed or change a person’s life if the Word in external form is not present. A partial or inaccurate Word is going to be a limitation too.)

“Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.” (James 1:21).

The Word is available, and it has come to a situation where Christians are able to hold in every one of their hands a book with His Word in it — the King James Bible.

What about the text?

God has given the King James Bible, and it is the Word which has come in an accurate form. The Lord wants believers to receive the King James Bible, which are God’s words. Men’s words are inaccurate. But God’s Word is true.

“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.” (Matthew 5:18).

Heaven and Earth have not passed away, so this Scripture applies to the present. Every Word is important, and even every letter. One factor of the Word is the prophetic words. The Word says that it must go forth, and be accessible more and more in various places everywhere. And it is to be available in its very accuracy.

The prophet Isaiah gave a prophecy hundreds of years ago, which relates to the King James Bible.

“Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them.” (Isaiah 34:16).

The commandment is to seek out the Book, and out of that Book. He did not say “find your own Word, one that suits you, out of many words, versions or manuscripts”, but that it is not secret. The Word must be available.

The Spirit is saying that even Gentile people in another far away place can get the Book and read. It is not restricted to Hebrew and Greek, but that anyone with a heart to do it should seek out of the Book of the Lord.

Now English is being spoken in all nations. And there is also one Book established and settled for the world. It must be the Word of God in English.

Every word in the Bible is important, it is full of prophetic words, and not one of those words shall fail. But the words are gathered, and have the power of God. They were scattered, in various fragmented manuscripts — the translators of the King James Bible looked at all the various evidence — but now one final book has been made.

What about the finality?

There was a process involved in making that Book. In the time of Reformation, from 1517 to 1611, believers were being used of God to bring together in one printed volume the words that were scattered everywhere. God’s words were available, in many different manuscripts, in many different languages — whether Latin or (Orthodox) Greek, and in the old versions such as the Syrian and the Chaldee — and they brought them all together, and into one book.

The Bible was written in separate books, and copies of different books were separate, but they came together, in early versions, in Reformation versions, to make one Bible. They came together accurately to make an accurate version of the Bible in English, which would be for the whole world in the latter days.

The gathering together of these words is something that God has done, to bring the Word in a final form in the Earth.

“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.” (Psalm 12:6, 7).

How the Received Text was gathered

The people inspired in the Bible were writing pure Words. The Lord’s words went forth, and they came together at the Reformation time. During this period there was a coming together in the English Bibles. All these versions were showing that God was bringing together the Word. It was by a purifying process.

There were seven main different Protestant English versions in the Reformation, but each one of these was part of the coming together. People would come together and improve on the English versions that went before them. They would look at the information that was available, and took into account all these things and brought together an improvement. By the time of King James, they wanted to make one more exact translation into English. They knew that they were making what would be the final English version.

There is one volume of the book with the exact words of God in English. It would be this that God would use to get His Word through to the whole world. It was a continuation of the Word, which goes forth to all the world with the power of God, so that people would respond to the Gospel.

The King James Bible

Edward Hills said, “the King James Version ought to be regarded not merely as a translation of the Textus Receptus but also as an independent variety of the Textus Receptus.” (Hills, E. F., 1984, *The King James Version Defended*, The Christian Research Press, Des Moines, Iowa, USA. page 220.) Edward Hills was showing that not only was the gathering of the Word in Greek, but when the translators of the King James Bible got together, they gathered together the words.

The King James Bible has been universally recognised as a great monument in English history. Literary people have seen it as the highest monument of Anglo-Saxon prose. Many Christians have recognised the superiority of the King James Bible. It was directly linked with the greatness of the British Empire and the rise of the United States of America to a superpower.

The King James Bible has fulfilled the prophecy of going forth everywhere, to America, into Asia by missionaries, to Africa by missionaries and to Australia with the First Fleet.

The King James Bible has been associated with revival and the highest achievements of Christianity. It was the Bible being used at the time of John Wesley. It was the Bible being used by William Booth. It was the Bible being used by the Pentecostal Pioneers, such as Smith Wigglesworth. And it was the Bible being used by the Faith Movement, for example, Kenneth Hagin. At one time, the whole nation of England became a Puritan nation. They were using the King James Bible, not some other version. In the 1650s, Cambridge University Press was printing the King James Bible (at Oliver Cromwell’s command). The signs are that God has used, is using and will continue to use and bless the King James Bible.

The King James Bible is perfect

The Law of God is not mismatched, in pieces, but has come together.

“The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether. More to be desired *are they* than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.” (Psalm 19:7–10).

Nations are graduating into speaking English. More than ever, people are now speaking one language, so English is the one language for the world.

The King James Bible is God’s Word in English, which is for the whole world.

The translators of the King James Bible were learned men. They were the right men and the right time which God raised up and used according to His providential purposes. These men were, as it were, more learned in what they had to do than any others at their time, or any since.

In its due seasons, England was blessed. And again, America was blessed. And that blessing has come even to Australia.

It is not good to take any book purporting to be a Bible — it is confusion, unbelief, and undermining what God has done and will do (if it were possible). There is a future work of God that is connected with the taking hold of the King James Bible.

“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.” (Proverbs 30:5, 6).

God’s Word is pure. Not in slang, not watered down. Believers need God’s very Word, which is accurate, and matches to what God intends. Even if it must contain hard words, believers must choose it. There are some things in Christianity that are hard to understand; nevertheless, the Holy Ghost has been given, and teachers, because believers need learning, to attain to knowledge.

The Authorized King James Bible Connection, a booklet by Pastor Craig Savige, which is freely available through Victory Faith Centre, says on pages nine and ten, “The Authorized King James Bible is the final form of the Received Text of history. The fact that it is in English is no coincidence but part of God’s plan to use this global language as the medium by which the ‘gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come’ (Matthew 24:14). The Authorized King James Bible has been received by the New Testament priesthood (i.e. true believers in Christ — see Revelation 1:5, 6) as the very Word of God preserved by God throughout history.” (It is this Bible which has the stamp of God as being completely true and without error and has been historically verified by “the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” {1 Timothy 3:15b}). The final form of the King James Bible is exhibited by the Pure Cambridge Edition.)

The final form of what God wants to get to the world, by the Church for the nations, is the King James Bible. The Anglican Burgon said, in 1882, “It may be confidently assumed that no ‘Revision’ of our Authorized Version, however judiciously executed, will ever occupy the place in public esteem which is actually enjoyed by the work of the Translators of 1611, — the noblest literary work in the Anglo-Saxon language. We shall in fact never have *another* ‘Authorized Version.’” (The Revision Revised, page 113.)

Every word in the King James Bible is exactly the word that God has used, uses, and will use. And the fulfilment is that the Gospel goes forth, the pure Word, going forth to the whole world. (The specific final form of the King James Bible referred to is the Pure Cambridge Edition.)

God will use us to preach His Word. The understanding must be brought out that the King James Bible is the final received text. We must see that we should actually bring it forth. The pure word (the Pure Cambridge Edition) is able to change people’s hearts, because God’s power is present to work in their lives. It is an act of faith to receive the Pure Cambridge Edition as the Word, which is the Word which is heard. Christians are to be complete, which means to grow in the full measure of increase, even in the hundred fold blessing.