

ENGLISH BIBLES FROM 1380 - 1611

Wycliffe Bible

~ N.T. 1380

~ Whole Bible 1388

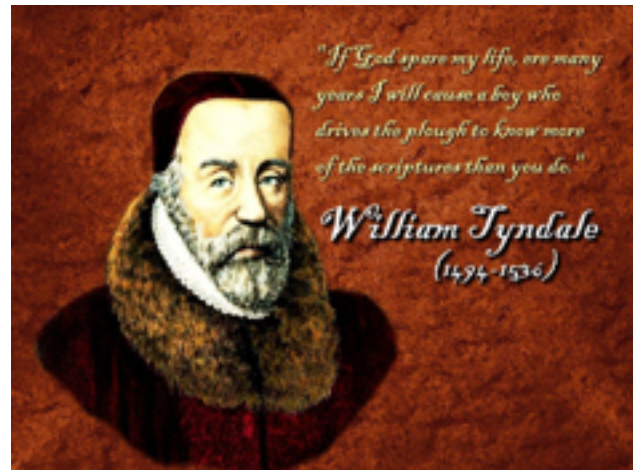
Wycliffe's translation was based on St. Jerome's Latin Vulgate from the fourth century. It was the prominent translation of that period, and was widely used throughout Europe.

Desiderius Erasmus produced a Greek text after comparing about 5,000 manuscripts that were held in museums, libraries and private collections. Many manuscripts were centuries old, dating back to a.d. 600. Of these manuscripts, Erasmus found 96% agreement of contextual records. From this extended labor he produced in 1516 what was known as the "Textus Receptus" or the 'Received Text'. This also became the foundation for Tyndale and all other valid English translations leading up to and including the King James Bible.

Tyndale Bible

~ N.T. 1526 (Printed in Germany as Tyndale was exiled from his homeland of England.)

~ Matthews Bible 1537. John Rogers completed the work started by Tyndale and appointed his pen name to the translation, calling it Matthews Bible. William Tyndale was martyred for his faith and life's work in Bohemia. He was tried for heresy, imprisoned for 18 months and burned at the stake in October 1536. Died at age 42.



Coverdale Bible

~ Miles Coverdale met Tyndale in Germany and helped with translation of the Pentateuch (first five books of the bible, or Books of Moses.) He then set out to revise the work of John Rogers and published his own work in 1535.

The Great Bible

~ This Bible was named for its size as it was printed and used in churches for public display and daily use. First printed in France 1539, but it was scorned and driven out of France by Roman Catholic clergy. It was printed then in England in 1540.

The Geneva Bible

~ The Puritan Scholars did the most thorough work of all translators up until this time. The brilliance and devotion was unmatched. They produced this bible in 1559 in Geneva Switzerland because of persecution in England. Rome held a strong grip on Religion in those days. There was tremendous tension in Great Britain with the Church of England flexing power with the kings or queens, whichever was on the throne.

Side note: This is the bible that accompanied the Pilgrims on the *Mayflower* to the New World. Thus it was the first English Bible in what is now known as America!

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The Bishops Bible

~ Sixteen Clergy from England and Wales gathered to hurriedly produce this weak translation in 1568. It was no match for the Geneva Bible which had superior scholars and workmanship. However, it was widely used and recognized by the Church of England.

King James Bible

~ In an effort of King James to bring his divided nation back together, he attempted to force unity of clergy from both the Puritans and Church of England. There was perceived willingness to work together on the project that involved more than sixty of the most brilliant scholars of their day.

The work began in 1604 and continued until 1610. It was conducted at three locations: Westminster, Cambridge and Oxford. The scholars were set in groups of 16 - 18 laborers in each location. The books and chapters were rotated for each group to review. The Bible was completed and presented to King James. He was delighted with the outcome. The printing was finished in 1611 and thus the date is forever associated with the greatest work of literature the world will ever know.

Even though it did not bring unity to the divided nation, it has since that time become the touchstone of truth. It has no equal in beauty nor perfection. It was not immediately received by the nation, but within 50 years it was the dominant bible of the day and has stood through these four centuries as the unparalleled standard for the English speaking world.

