

Sunday, April 3, 2022— Grace Life School of Theology—*From This Generation For Ever*
 Lesson 174 The Pre-1611 Evidence for The Text: Bod 1602 Impact on King James Old Testament
 Readings, Part 3

Introduction

- In [Lesson 173](#) we continued our look at Bod 1602 and its impact on the readings found in the King James Old Testament. We did so by tracking the examples provided by Dr. Edward Jacobs in his 1975 essay for *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* titled “An Old Testament Copytext for the 1611 Bible” (In [Lesson 172](#) we looked at Category I examples.). In doing so, we looked at the second class or category of examples where the annotations found in Bod 1602 were not an identical match to the final product of 1611. Put another way, the AV exhibits further revision beyond those noted in Bod 1602. Some five to ten percent of the readings found in Bod 1602, according to Dr. Edward Jacobs, fit this category.
- After discussing this class or category of emendations, Dr. Jacobs offers the following summary statements:
 - “The first observation evident for a study of these collated verses in Class II is that the emended and the A.V. readings do not agree with each other. Neither do the first two of the emended readings agree with any earlier readings of this verse. The emended readings do not then represent a collation effort between the Bishops’ Bible and the A.V. or between the Bishops’ Bible and an earlier English Bible.” (Jacobs, 13)
- This class of emendations is discussed in more detail in Dr. Jacobs unpublished doctoral dissertation.
 - “The second class of emended readings found within the annotated portions of the Old Testament of this Bishops' Bible, 1602, consists of those annotated or unannotated verses that are not completely accepted by the A. V. text, 1611. There is some variation between these emended readings and the corresponding A. V. readings which suggests that later translation work was performed after the work evident in the annotated portions of the Old Testament. Because these variations, however, amount to probably no more than five to ten percent of all the emended verses, it is quite possible to account for these differences as the work of the Committee of Final Review in London, who, upon receiving the work here recorded in the Old Testament, checked it carefully, and found it wanting in some five to ten percent of its revisions. Upon the nature and validity of the readings in this class rests the thesis that these annotations reveal the King James translators at work in a late stage of their translation efforts.” (Jacobs, *Bodliean*, 63-64)
- In summation, there is a direct and strong linkage between Bod 1602 and the King James Bible. Ninety percent of the annotated and unannotated verses found in Bod 1602 cohere exactly with a 1611 King James Bible. A remaining five to ten percent of the readings emended in Bod 1602 exhibit further revision in the A.V. In these cases, the emendations exhibit the choices of the General Meeting during the final stage of the work.

- In this Lesson we want to consider the additional work done on this topic by Dr. Jacobs in his 1980 piece for *The Library* titled “Two Stages of Old Testament Translation for the King James Bible” in which he expanded on his arguments from his 1975 publication.

“Two Stages of Old Testament Translation for the King James Bible”

- In 1980, Dr. Jacobs published a second essay for *The Library* titled “Two Stages of Old Testament Translation for the King James Bible” in which he expanded on his arguments from his 1975 publication. Regarding his earlier work Jacobs stated:
 - “This Bible [Bod 1602] has copious handwritten annotations throughout much of the Old and New Testaments. Scholars had long considered these annotations of little value, but Professor Allen thought otherwise. Under his direction, I studied the Old Testament while he studied the New Testament. My published conclusions argue that the Old Testament annotations represent a valid record of a large portion of the work of the Old Testament translators as it existed in its finished state before it was sent to the General Meeting for final review. I based such conclusions on three sorts of evidence: the bibliographical state of the Bible; the annotator's hand and method; and textual collation of the annotations with the King James Bible and earlier English translations.” (Jacobs, 17)
- The purpose of Dr. Jacobs’ 1980 essay is stated as follows:
 - “Since establishing these conclusions, I have sought to determine whether the Old Testament annotations can establish quantitatively and qualitatively the amounts and types of revisionary work that the Old Testament companies and the General Meeting performed.” (Jacobs, 17)
- The first half of Jacobs’ essay is devoted to sharing his quantitative findings regarding the number of revisions performed by the translational companies and the General Meeting. This takes the form of presenting a somewhat complicated table accompanied by explanatory text. The following is a copy of Jacobs’ table. I will leave the PowerPoint on the screen throughout the Lesson and annotate it as we proceed.

	TABLE I. <i>Quantitative Distribution</i>					TABLE I. <i>Quantitative Distribution</i>					TABLE I. <i>Quantitative Distribution</i>					TABLE I. <i>Quantitative Distribution</i>						
	GROUP I					GROUP II					GROUP III					GROUP IV					GROUP V	
	Total Vss	A (0)	B (1-3)	C (4-7)	D (8+)	Total GM revisions	A	B	C	D	Total GM revisions	B ¹ (1-3)	C ² (4-7)	D ³ (8+)	Total GM revisions less errors	B ¹ (1-3)	C ² (4-7)	D ³ (8+)	Total errors	Total vss	% wrong/right	
First Oxford Company (Nahum & Hab)	103	6 5.8%	23 22.3%	24 23.3%	50 48.6%	25 of 103 24.3%	2 of 23 8%	5 of 23 20%	5 of 25 20%	13 of 25 52%	25 of 103 24.3%	22 88%	1 4%	2 8%	20 of 103 19.4%	17 85%	1 5%	2 10%	5	103	4.9% 95.1%	
First Westminster Company (Ruth)	85	5 5.9%	19 22.3%	26 30.6%	35 41.1%	34 of 85 40%	2 of 34 5.9%	6 of 34 17.7%	9 of 34 26.4%	17 of 34 50%	34 of 85 40%	31 91.1%	3 8.9%	0	31 of 85 36.4%	28 90.3%	3 9.7%	0	5	85	5.9% 94.1%	
First Cambridge Company (Song of Solomon)	112	0	9 8%	21 18.8%	82 73.2%	32 of 112 28.6%	0	0	5 of 32 15.7%	27 of 32 84.3%	32 of 112 28.6%	28 87.5%	4 12.5%	0	25 of 112 22.3%	22 88%	3 12%	0	10	112	9% 91%	
Totals	300	11 3.6%	51 17%	71 23.7%	167 55.7%	91 30.3%	4 4.3%	11 12%	19 20.9%	57 62.7%	91 30.3%	81 89%	8 8.8%	2 2.1%	76 25.3%	67 88.1%	7 9.2%	2 2.7%	20	300	6.7% 93.3%	

From pages 18 & 19 of "Two Stages of Old Testament Translation For the King James Bible" by Edward Craney Jacobs in *The Library* March 1980

- Jacobs explains "Table I. Quantitative Distribution" as follows.
 - "Table 1 consists of five groups, I-V, comprising twenty-one vertical columns. These vertical columns are divided into four horizontal divisions labelled at the extreme left, 'First Oxford Company', 'First Westminster Company', 'First Cambridge Company', and 'Totals'. Statistics in these horizontal divisions represent samples of the work of the translator companies. Samples are of approximate, not exact, length, for each sample represents a complete book, or books, that each company revised: First Oxford, Nahum and Habakkuk; First Westminster, Ruth; First Cambridge, Song of Solomon. (Jacobs, 17)
- Group I in the Table takes sample passages from three of the Old Testament companies and quantifies the number of revisions made to the 1602 Bishops Bible as found in Bod 1602.
 - Group I presents statistics dealing with the work of each of the translator companies. It consists of the first five vertical columns following the name of each company. The first vertical column, labelled 'Total Vss', identifies the total number of verses in each sample of the work of the translator companies. Column 2, labelled 'A' with a zero in parentheses below, identifies the number of verses and percentage in each sample that the translator companies approved in the 1602 Bishops' Bible without making any revisions whatsoever. Column three, labelled 'B' with the numbers '1-3' in parentheses below, identifies the number of verses and percentage in each sample that the [Readers of the essay will find the Table inserted here on pages 18-19.] translator companies revised slightly, making no more than three revisions. Column four, labelled 'C' with the numbers '4-7' in parentheses below, identifies the number of verses and percentage in each sample that the translator companies revised moderately, making from four to seven revisions. And column five, labelled 'D' with the number '8 + ' in parentheses below,

identifies the number of verses and percentage in each sample that the translator companies greatly revised, making eight or more revisions.

In Group I, the total for Columns 'A' and 'B' represents 20.3% of all revisions that the translator companies made; whereas the total for Columns 'C' and 'D' represents 79.4% of all revisions that the translator companies performed. Two things are clear. The translator companies let very few verses pass their scrutiny without making any revisions — only some 11 of 300, or 3.6%. Likewise, the companies let few verses pass with only minor revisions— some 51 of 300, or 17%. Indeed, these companies substantially revised the great majority of all verses — some 238 of 300, or 79.4%. Especially noteworthy is that 92% of the work of First Cambridge Company is substantially revised. Noteworthy also in Columns 'A' and 'B' are the identical statistics of First Oxford and First Westminster Companies despite the fact that numerically First Oxford Company has 103 total verses and First Westminster Company 85. Again in Columns 'C' and 'D' these two companies are evenly matched.” (Jacobs, 17-20)

- In Group II on the Table, Jacobs includes the revision work of the General Meeting into his revision statistics. Dr. Jacobs offers the following description for Group II on the Table.
 - “Group II includes the work of the General Meeting. This group is the most complex of the five groups. It gives several different, but related ways of studying the translation work performed by the General Meeting as it made a final review and revision of the work of the translator companies. Group II is also composed of five vertical columns. Column one, labelled 'Total GM revisions', shows the total number of verses and percentages that the General Meeting further revised of each sample of the translator companies' work. Columns two through five, labelled 'A-D' perform several functions. These columns take the total number of verses that the General Meeting further revised and show the classifications to which these now further revised verses first belonged after the translator companies had examined and revised them.

An example is First Oxford Company's revisions of Nahum and Habakkuk. Column one, Group II, labelled 'Total GM revisions', reveals that out of 103 verses that First Oxford Company approved or revised the General Meeting further revised 25 verses or 24.3%. Column two, Group II, labelled 'A', shows that 2 of these 25, further revised verses, or 8% of 25, had originally been approved by First Oxford Company as needing no revision. Hence, these 2 further revised verses were originally classified as part of 6 unrevised verses in Column 'CA', Group I. These 2 further revised verses also represent 33.3% of the 6 verses in Column 'A', Group I.

Column three, Group II, labelled 'B', shows that 5 of these 25 further revised verses, or 20%, had originally been revised only slightly by First Oxford Company with 1-3 revisions each. Hence, these 5 verses were originally classified as part of 23 similarly revised verses in Column 'B', Group I. These 5 further revised verses represent 21.7% of the 23 verses in Column 'B', Group I.

Column four, Group II, labelled 'C', shows that 5 more of these 25 further revised verses, or 20%, had originally been moderately revised by First Oxford Company with 4-7

revisions each. Hence, these 5 verses were originally classified as part of 24 similarly revised verses in Column 'C', Group I. These 5 further revised verses represent 20.8% of the 24 verses in Column 'C', Group I.

Column five, Group II, labelled 'D', shows that the final 13 of these 25 further revised verses, or 52%, had originally been greatly revised by First Oxford Company with 8 or more revisions. Hence, these 13 verses were originally classified as part of 50 similarly revised verses in Column 'D', Group I. These 13 further revised verses represent 26% of the 50 verses in Column 'D', Group I.

Having thus proceeded through First Oxford Company, there is no need to labour through similar sets of statistics for Westminster and First Cambridge Companies. Let us look rather at what these figures tell us about the work of the companies and the General Meeting. The General Meeting further revised 91 of 300 verses, or 30.3% of all those verses that the translator companies had previously revised. Only 15 of these 91 further revised verses, or 16.3%, had originally minor or no revisions. The great majority of these 91 verses — 76 or 83.6% — had already received moderate to heavy revisions from the translator companies. It is clear, then, that the General Meeting paid close attention to every aspect of the work of the translator companies — to those verses that the companies had considered correct as they were in the 1602 Bible as well as to those verses that had been revised slightly, moderately, or greatly.” (Jacobs, 20-21)

- The purpose of Group III is to chart “how many additional revisions the General Meeting provided for each of the 91 verses that it further revised.” (Jacobs, 21) Professor Jacobs explains as follows:
 - “Group III consists of four vertical columns. Column one, labelled 'Total GM revisions', shows the total verses and percentages that the General Meeting further revised of each translator company's work. Columns two through four, labelled 'B2', 'C2', and 'D2', employ the same classification-numerical scheme established for the work of the translator companies in Group I.

Columns 'B2', 'C2', and 'D2', classify the verses that the General Meeting further revised according to the number of revisions that the General Meeting supplied for each verse. Column 'B2' for First Oxford Company states that the General Meeting further revised 22 of 25 verses of this Company's work, but did so by supplying only minor changes of 1-3 words per verse. Column 'C2' states that the General Meeting made moderate revisions of 4-7 words for one verse already revised by the Company. Column 'D2' indicates that the General Meeting made significant revisions of 8 or more words for two verses already revised by the Company.

Important conclusions follow from an analysis of Group III. While the General Meeting further revised 91 of 300 verses, some 30.3%, its revisions were almost totally of a minor sort, quantitatively speaking; 81 of the 91 verses further revised, or 89%, are in Category 'B2'. For only 10 of 91 verses, or 10.9%, has the General Meeting made more than minor revisions. Thus, there is an inverse relationship between Columns 'A-D' of Group I and Columns 'B²-D²' of Group III. The nature of that relationship is this: in Group I, 62 of

300 verses, or 20.3% of the verses that the translator companies revised, are in Categories 'A' and 'B'. But in Group III, 81 of 91 verses, or 89% of the verses that the General Meeting further revised, are in Category 'B2'. In Group I, 238 of 300 verses, or 79.4% of all verses that the translator companies revised, are in Categories 'C' and 'D'. Whereas in Group III, 10 of 91 verses, or 10.9% of the verses that the General Meeting further revised, are in Categories 'C²' and 'D²'.

Such a relationship substantiates Professor Allen's answer to a problem that scholars have long pondered. How much revisionary work could the General Meeting have accomplished in the short span of nine months or so? Could this committee have done much more than give formal assent to the work of the translator companies? Professor Allen's work, *Translating For King James*, has answered this question. In particular, his analysis of Bois's notes for 1 Peter argues convincingly that the General Meeting paid the closest attention to its task. And the figures regarding the inverse relationship cited above bear out Professor Allen's conclusions. The General Meeting reviewed carefully all of the translation work, approved the majority as it stood, some 70% or so, and to the remaining 30% that it found lacking, supplied mainly minor revisions of one to three corrections per verse. Based on these complete sample books, it will not do, then, to assert that the General Meeting revised 30% of the work of the companies. It did not completely revise 30% of the translators' work. Rather, 89% of this 30% figure, or 81 of 91 verses further revised, constitutes only further minor changes of one to three revisions. Conceivably, nine months of work would have been sufficient for the General Meeting to review all the work of the companies." (Jacobs, 21-23)

- For the sake of time and space we will forego commenting extensively upon Groups IV and V of Jacobs' Table. Both of these Groups are "more provisional" as they are designed to roughly quantify the number of transcribing errors found in Bod 1602 that needed to be corrected by the General Meeting.
 - "Evidence points to the fact that a single person recorded these annotations. It was surely a Herculean task for a single person to do this work in such a methodical way, not to mention the logistical problems of travelling and transporting about a bound folio Bible, or even a portion of an unbound folio. Any human was bound to err at times in transcribing work from the translator companies into the Bible." (Jacobs, 23)
- All told, the sample passages considered by Jacobs in Groups IV and V allow for the following summative take-aways.
 - "The margin of error, then, appears to be a negligible fact in ascertaining the percentage factor of the revisions that the General Meeting has made. At the same time the error factor would be significant when measuring the total amount of physical work that the General Meeting performed." (Jacobs, 24)
 - "The General Meeting not only corrected the errors, but it also revised further the already revised verses." (Jacobs, 24)

- In recording the revisions into this master copy Bible, the annotator has made 5, 5, and 10 errors in 103, 85, and 112 verses, respectively. The margin of error ranges from 4.9 to 9% for a 6.7% average. Accuracy averages 93.3%. Such a score, perhaps, would not be dissatisfying to most of us if, after several hundreds of years, our own efforts could be rated as well.” (Jacobs, 25)
- The second half of Jacobs’ paper contains a discussion of the qualitative types of linguistic revisions made by the Old Testament Companies and the General Meeting. Since this collation deals primarily with the work of the General Meeting, we forgo further discussion of the essay currently. We will circle back to it in a future Lesson when we discuss the notes of John Bois and general meeting. For now, suffice it to say that when Bod 1602 is compared against a 1611 edition of the King James Bible, the work of General Meeting comes in to focus as they placed the final touches upon the Authorized Version.
- While we have followed the work of Jacobs closely in these Lessons, it is important to note some other possible options about where the Bod 1602 Old Testament fits on the work-in-progress timeline. Dr. David Norton, author of *A Textual History of the King James Bible*, weighs the options.
 - “If there was evidence of breaks in the OT where the work of one company ceased and another began, Bod 1602’s status would be fairly clear: it began as a gathering together of the work of four companies. But the two places in the OT where one company’s work ends and another’s begins (first, the end of 2 Kings and the beginning of 1 Chronicles, second, the end of the Song of Songs and the beginning of Isaiah) both fall in the middle of a page and, though there are occasional changes of hand in the OT (for example, at the end of Joshua 18), there is no change of hand at either of these places. The likeliest inference is therefore that the OT annotations date from the general meeting, for this is when the work of the different companies came together. One of their other characteristics also points to this inference: there is little evidence of subsequent correction³² so, unlike the NT annotations, the OT annotations seem to represent the work at a single point in its history. Because the work on the text is about five-sixths complete, this point is unlikely to be the individual companies’ first draft.

Bod 1602 may represent a transcript of the earlier work made for the general meeting³³ or it may be a record of work done at the general meeting. Both possibilities present difficulties. A transcript makes sense if the companies had produced work in the form we see in the NT, that is, with revisions, and revisions of revisions, for parts of the OT are much more heavily revised than the Gospels and so would have been difficult to use as working copy. Alternatively, the work of the companies could already have been in the form represented by the OT work, in which case it is either a duplicate, allowing more people to see what the companies had done, or it is a back-up copy. Duplicates and back-ups have their uses, but they are modern concepts: the KJB was made long before the inventions of carbon paper and computer disks. So, if the OT work is a transcript, the likelihood is that it was made as a fair copy. The difficulty with this is that it appears to lack the crucial characteristic of fair copy, that it enables further work to be done: substantial portions of Bod 1602’s OT are so heavily annotated that no space remains for further work, and yet the annotations continue long after this would have become

thoroughly apparent. There was a solution to this difficulty: a final text could have been created from text in the form represented by the OT work by interleaving blank sheets and writing the remaining changes on them. The result would have been rife with possibilities of error, but printers did manage to produce good results from such material.

The difficulty with supposing that the annotations record work done at the general meeting is simply that they leave so much work still to be done. Like the NT annotations, they do not represent the translators' work in its final form. One sixth of the readings were still to be changed. The italics and the margin, both of which were given some attention in MS 98 and the NT annotations, are untouched. Chapter summaries still had to be created. These matters constitute a lot of undone work, particularly as remaining readings, the italics and the margin all involve examining the text against the originals.

All that can be safely concluded, therefore, is that the OT work is late but not final. Whether it includes work from the meeting or not, it still gives vital evidence about the near-complete state of the text." (Norton, 22-23)

- Dr. Norton offers the following statistical analysis of the Old Testament annotations found in Bod 1602 and where they place to document Old Testament portions along the work-in-progress timeline.
 - "Statistics – though they have a degree of roughness to them³⁵ – confirm that the OT work is late. Of 639 readings examined, Bod 1602 confirms 84% and differs in 16%; this is the proportion Jacobs notes in the work of the Luke/John scribe, and overall a higher proportion than that found in the NT work. In 229 instances (36%) Bod 1602 has no change marked and 1611 follows the Bishops' Bible text. In 308 instances (48%) 1611 follows a change marked in Bod 1602. Eight times (1%) 1611 reverts to a Bishops' Bible reading where Bod 1602 marks a change. In 49 instances (8%) no change is marked in Bod 1602 but 1611 gives a different reading, and in the final 45 instances (7%), a change is marked in Bod 1602 but a different change is found in 1611. That there are just over a hundred instances where the OT work in Bod 1602 does not give the 1611 reading shows that it was not the final copy and also rules out any possibility that it was a collation of 1611 with 1602 made after the KJB had been published. It is therefore authentic and late but not final." (Norton, 23-24)
- In the end, there is no reason to doubt the conclusions of Dr. Jacobs. Bod 1602 is a work-in-progress primary document recording the textual emendations of the King James translators as they revised the 1602 Bishops Bible into what would become the Authorized Version of 1611. The annotations found in the Old Testament portion of Bod 1602 are indicative of the state of the text as the work was passed from the Company stage to the General Meeting.
- In the next Lesson we will begin looking at the New Testament portion of Bod 1602.

Works Cited

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