

Sunday, September 10, 2023— Grace Life School of Theology—*From This Generation For Ever*
Lesson 210 The AV 1611: Page Layout & Typography

Introduction/Review

- In the last Term of this class (September 2022 through June 2023) we covered the following material.
 - The General Meeting & The Notes of John Bois (Lessons [179](#), [180](#), [181](#), [182](#), [183](#), [184](#))
 - Richard Bancroft, Thomas Bilson, Myles Smith & The Finishing Touches (Lesson [185](#))
 - Bancroft’s Fourteen Changes & The Question of Authorization (Lesson [186](#))
 - Confronting the Copyright Myth & Early 17th Century Printing (Lesson [187](#))
 - More On the “Copyright Myth” & A 1612 New Testament (Lesson [188](#))
 - The First Edition & The He/She Bible Controversy (Lesson [189](#))
 - The 1611: Assessing Its Preliminary Contents (Lessons [190](#), [191](#), & [192](#))
 - The 1611: Producing A Proper Perspective On The Preface (Lessons [193](#), [194](#), [195](#), [196](#), [197](#), [198](#), [199](#), [200](#), [201](#), [202](#), [203](#), [204](#), [205](#), [206](#), [207](#), [208](#), & [209](#))
- As one can tell from this recap, we began looking at the first publication of the AV as a historical artifact in Lesson 190. In this Lesson, I would like to resume this discussion by looking at the page layout of the first folio edition of the AV from 1611 by discussing the following points:
 - Page Layout & Typography
 - Initials & Spacing

Page Layout & Typography

- Chapter 3 of Dr. David Norton’s 2005 publication *A Textual History of the King James Bible* is titled “The first edition.” In this Chapter there is subsection titled “A specimen page” in which Dr. Norton breaks down the typography and layout of a sample page from a folio of 1611. See the sample images below. They contain text stretching from the end of Genesis 14 to the first thirteen verses of Genesis 17. Regarding the formatting of the sample page, Dr. Norton states the following:
 - “The text is presented within ruled borders with space delineated for headers and for annotations. A series of typographical steps would have been necessary to create such a page. Each ruled area was set separately. First, the two columns of text were set, then, spaced out as necessary with wooden blocks, the marginal notes and references were added, and also the headers. The separation of these steps may occasionally have contributed to errors such as the misplacement or omission of notes and references.

Recto pages (as in plate 2) have the chapter number in the middle of the header (except in the Psalms), while the verso pages [see Plate 1] have the name of the book. Usually but not always the chapter number is the number of the chapter beginning on the page. The margin is used for three kinds of annotation. There are literal translations designated with a †, alternative English renderings with double vertical lines, and cross references with an asterisk. At the beginning of the chapter there is a summary of its contents. The catchword at the bottom of the right-hand column has a line to itself (something the printer could vary according to the demands of space).

The first letter or initial of the chapter is characteristic in that it is five lines deep and has no border. The second letter of the first word is always printed as a capital.

There are several points to note about the text. Perhaps the most important feature is the presentation of words that now appear in italics. At 16:6 'is' is given in small roman type: visually it appears de-emphasised – exactly the opposite to the effect of italics used for such words in roman type and all modern editions. And the diminished emphasis is the point: the small roman type represents words that have no equivalent in the original text. Now, 'is' at 16:6 is the only example of small roman type here, but the page has other such added words: modern editions recognize this by adding a further seven uses of italics, all involving the verb 'to be'. The identification of added words is inconsistent and incomplete in 1611. So is the presentation: the Apocrypha, which rarely notes such words, uses square brackets without variation of type (though the first such word, 'watch' at 1 Esdras 4:11 is given in round brackets).

Paragraphs are denoted with paragraph marks following verse numbers (16:4 etc.). One of the curiosities of the KJB is that there are no paragraph marks after Acts 20, only one in Psalms, and six in the whole of the Apocrypha. Like the identification of added words, this bespeaks incomplete work. One other feature of the page has similar implications: the holy name is given in capitals; this continues throughout Genesis, but thereafter small capitals are used, 'LORD'. Either the decision to use this form was taken after the printing had begun or the error was noticed late. The former is more likely. There are several instances through the printing history of the KJB where it is clear that a decision was made after one or more relevant examples had passed, and no backward correction was made, no matter how easy such correction might seem. For instance, in the first edition, 'Olofernes' is changed to 'Holofernes' from Judith 3:5 onwards, even though 'Olofernes' comes twice on the same page as 'Holofernes'.

There are what appear to be printer's errors – 'appear to be' because there are two areas of doubt: first, the error may come from the copy the printer worked from, in which case it is not his error; second, it may not actually be an error. In 17:4 there is an asterisk before 'father' but no cross reference in the margin; in the next line of the verse there is a double vertical line where there should be a † as in the margin. The latter is a printer's error, but it is possible that the asterisk before 'father' without a corresponding reference could reflect a problem in the copy; either way one might suspect that the repetition of 'a father of many nations' in the next verse could have caused the problem. In the chapter

summary, ‘Izsaac’ appears to be a printer’s error, as does ‘soieurnings’ in the margin to 17:8. It is just possible that these are acceptable variant spellings.

For the most part the black letter type used for the text is clean-cut and, once one is used to it, quite readable. But it has some characteristics that can lead to problems. Because it is so strongly based on thick vertical lines with diagonal connecting lines and serifs, some letters can be confused if the type is at all misformed, worn or broken, notably *n*, *u* and *m*. The *ns* of ‘Egyptian’ (16:3) and of ‘in’ (16:6, second line) show how the connecting stroke can disappear, making the distinction from *u* unclear. The *ms* show a tendency for the right side of the letter to separate, making the letter appear *ni* (compare ‘Abrams’ in 16:3 with the other *ms* in the verse), or even, under the pressure of printing, to move, apparently giving ‘Abrant’ in 17:1. Long *s* and *f*, such a problem to modern readers, may also have been a problem even to those thoroughly used to the typeface. This is the likeliest explanation for the variation between ‘flay’ and ‘slay’ at Lev. 1:6 and 2 Chr. 29:34, a variation between the first two editions that probably goes back to the indistinct nature of the *f* of ‘flay’ in the 1602 text (in which case it is evidence that the second edition was set with an annotated Bishops’ Bible as one of its sources).

One of the most obvious characteristics of the page is the antiquated spelling, most of which has disappeared from modern versions. For instance, many of the words have a terminal *e* (‘obtaine’ and ‘bee’ in the first line and its margin etc.), but this is not consistently used, as 16:5 shows: ‘when *shee* saw that *she* had conceiued’. A more substantial variation is visible in 16:8 and the chapter summary: the possessive is first modern (save that apostrophes were yet to be used) then antiquated, ‘Sarais maid’ and ‘Sara her name’. Spelling was much more fluid in 1611 than we allow: it was quite acceptable for a word to be given in several different forms.

One last thing about this page: at 16:6 it has a different reading from the second edition, ‘but Abram’ where the second edition reads ‘and Abram’. ‘But’ was the 1602 reading and remains the modern reading; however, Bod 1602 shows that the translators struck through ‘but’ and substituted ‘and’.

Closely examined, this sample page does more than demonstrate the appearance and particularities of the 1611 text: it shows some of the characteristic problems the text presents to editors – spelling, errors and variant readings. Some of these problems make one question the reliability of the text as an exact representation of the intentions of the translators. It may not have preserved their decision at 16:6, and it has muddled their work in some way at 17:4.” (Norton, 47-51)

Gods promise. Genesis. Abrams vision.

take the goods to thy selfe. 22 And Abram said to the King of Sodom, I haue lift by my hand vnto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heauen and earth, 23 That I wil not take from a threed euen to a shoe latchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I haue made Abram rich: 24 Saue onely that which the yong men haue eaten, and the portion of the men which went with mee, Aner, Eshcol, and Hamre, let them take their portion.

CHAP. XV.

1 God encourageth Abram. 2 Abram complaineth for want of an heire. 4 God promiseth him a sonne, and a multiplying of his seed. 6 Abram is iustified by faith. 7 Canaan is promised againe, and confirmed by a signe, 12 and a vision.

After these things, the word of the LORD came vnto Abram in a vision, saying; Feare not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.

*Psal. 16. 16

2 And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou giue me, seeing I goe childlesse: and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus.

3 And Abram said; Behold, to mee thou hast giuen no seed: and loe, one borne in my house is mine heire.

4 And behold, the word of the LORD came vnto him, saying, This shall not be thine heire: but he that shall come forth out of thy owne bowels, shall be thine heire.

5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Looke now towards heauen, and tell the starres, if thou be able to number them. And hee said vnto him, * So shall thy seed be.

* Rom. 4. 18.

6 And he beleued in the LORD, and hee counted it to him for righteousnesse.

* Rom. 4. 3.

galat. 3. 6.

iam. 2. 23.

7 And he said vnto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Caldees, to giue thee this land, to inherit it.

8 And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shal I know that I shall inherit it:

9 And he said vnto him, Take me an heifer of three yeeres old, and a shee goat of three yeeres old, and a ramme of three yeeres old, and a turtle doue, and a yong pigeon.

10 And he tooke vnto him all these, and diuided them in the midst, and layd each peece one against another: but the birds diuided he not.

11 And when the fowles came downe vpon the carcases, Abram droue them away.

12 And when the Sunne was going downe, a deepe sleepe fell vpon Abram: and loe, an horrour of great darkenesse fell vpon him.

13 And he said vnto Abram, Know of a surety, * that thy seed shall be a stranger, in a land that is not theirs, and shall serue them, and they shall afflict them foure hundred yeeres.

* Acts 7. 6.

14 And also that nation whom they shall serue, wil I iudge: and after ward shall they come out with great substance.

15 And thou shalt goe to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

16 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither againe: for the iniquitie of the Amorites is not yet full.

17 And it came to passe that when the Sunne went downe, and it was darke, behold, a smoking furnace, and a burning lampe that passed betweene those pieces.

18 In that same day the LORD made a couenant with Abram, saying; * Unto thy seed haue I giuen this land from the riuier of Egypt vnto the great riuier, the riuier Euphrates:

† Hebrew. a lampe of fire.

* Chap. 12.

7. and 13.

15. & 26. 4.

deut. 34. 4.

19 The Kenites, and the Kenizites, and the Kadmonites:

20 And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims,

21 And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

CHAP. XVI.

1 Sarai, being barren, giueth Hagar to Abram.

4 Hagar being afflicted for despising her mistresse, runneth away. 7 An Angel sendeth her backe to submit her selfe, 11 and telleth her of her child. 15 Ishmael is borne.

Now Sarai Abrams wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaide, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.

2 And Sarai said vnto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee go in vnto my maid: it may bee that I may obtaine

Plate 1—Verso

Hagar fleeth. Chap.xvij. Abraham.

† Heb. bee builded by her.

† obtaine children by her : and Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.

3 And Sarai Abrams wife, tooke Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten yeeres in the land of Canaan, and gaue her to her husband Abram, to be his wife.

4 And he went in vnto Hagar, and she conceived : And when shee saw that shee had conceived, her mistresse was despised in her eyes.

5 And Sarai said vnto Abram, Why wrong be vpon thee : I haue giuen my maid into thy bosome, and when shee saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes : the LORD iudge betweene me and thee.

6 But Abram said vnto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand : doe to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, shee fled from her face.

† Heb. that which is good in thy eyes.
† Heb. afflicted her.

7 And the Angel of the LORD found her by a fountaine of water, in the wilderness, by the fountaine, in the way to Shur :

8 And he said, Hagar Sarais maid, whence comest thou : and whither wilt thou goe : And she said, I flee from the face of my mistresse Sarai.

9 And the Angel of the LORD said vnto her, Returne to thy mistresse, and submit thy selfe vnder her hands.

10 And the Angel of the LORD said vnto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbred for multitude.

11 And the Angel of the LORD said vnto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt beare a sonne, and shalt call his name Ishmael ; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction.

† That is, God shall beare.

12 And he will be a wilde man ; his hand will be against every man, and every mans hand against him : * he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

* Chap. 25. 18.

13 And shee called the name of the LORD that spake vnto her, Thou God seekest me : for she said, haue I also here looked after him that seekest me :

14 Wherefore the well was called, * Beer-lahai-roi : Behold, It is betweene Cadeth and Bered.

* Chap. 24. 62.

† That is, the well of him that liueth and seekest me.

15 And Hagar bare Abram a sonne : and Abram called his sonnes name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael.

16 And Abram was fourestore and sixe yeeres old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.

CHAP. XVII.

1 God reneweth the Couenant. 5 Abram his name is changed, in token of a greater blessing. 10 Circumcision is instituted. 15 Sarai her name is changed, and shee blessed. 17 Izaac is promised. 23 Abram and Ishmael are circumcised.

And when Abram was ninetie yeeres old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said vnto him, I am the almightie God, * walke befoze me, and be thou perfect.

* Chap. 5. 22.
† Or, upright or sincere.

2 And I will make my couenant betweene me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

3 And Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying,

4 As for me, behold, my couenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a * father of many nations.

† Heb. multitude of nations.

5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall bee Abraham : * for a father of many nations haue I made thee.

* Rom. 4. 17

6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitfull, and I will make nations of thee, and Kings shall come out of thee.

7 And I will establish my couenant betweene me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations for an euerlasting couenant, to bee a God vnto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

8 And I will giue vnto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an euerlasting possession, and I will be their God.

† Heb. of thy sojournings.

9 And God said vnto Abraham, Thou shalt keepe my couenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee, in their generations.

10 This is my couenant, which yee shall keepe betweene me and you, and thy seed after thee : * every man child among you shall be circumcised.

* Acts 7. 8.

11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskinne ; and it shall be a * token of the couenant betwixt me and you.

* Acts 7. 8. rom. 4. 11.

12 And he that is * eight dayes olde, shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is borne in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed.

† Hebr. a sonne of eight dayes.

* Leuit. 12. 1. luke 2. 21. iohn 7. 22.

13 He that is borne in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must

Image 2—Recto

Initials & Spacing

- Once again, Dr. Norton provides some interesting discussion of this aspect of 1611 as well.
 - “Some aspects of typography show up when a longer view is taken. One of the distinctive and ornamental features of the text that was very much under the printer’s control was the use of initials. Large initials nine lines deep are normally found at the beginnings of books; by contrast with the initials for chapters, these generally have a double border. Some of the books are given smaller initials for reasons of space (Obadiah, possibly Micah where a nine-line initial might have caused problems at the end of the page, 2 Esdras and 2 and 3 John, where sufficient space is created by the use of the small initials so that 3 John can start on the same page as 2 John). Others have smaller initials without the need for space-saving (Lamentations, Wisdom, Susannah, Bel and 2 Maccabees). If this is not just a whim on the printer’s part, it may reflect some sense of the relative insignificance of these books. The remaining two smaller initials come at the beginnings of Luke and John and represent the evangelists. Here purpose-made initials are used even though they are the wrong size. The printer evidently liked the Luke initial enough to use it again at 1 Thessalonians 2 (see plate 3).

Curiously and inappropriately, a few of the initials have mythological scenes. Pan figures in the seven-line capital used for Wisdom (also used at Psalm 141 and 1 Peter 3). Neptune with sea horses begins both Matthew and Revelation, and Romans begins with a naked, sprouting Daphne. There is also a female figure, apparently with an asp or serpent, in the initial to 1 Thessalonians. The O beginning Hebrews has a face in it (as does the O at Isaiah 64). It seems improbable that the translators would have asked the printer to use these initials and unlikely that they would have approved their use. A degree of unsupervised freedom on the part of the printer is implicit.

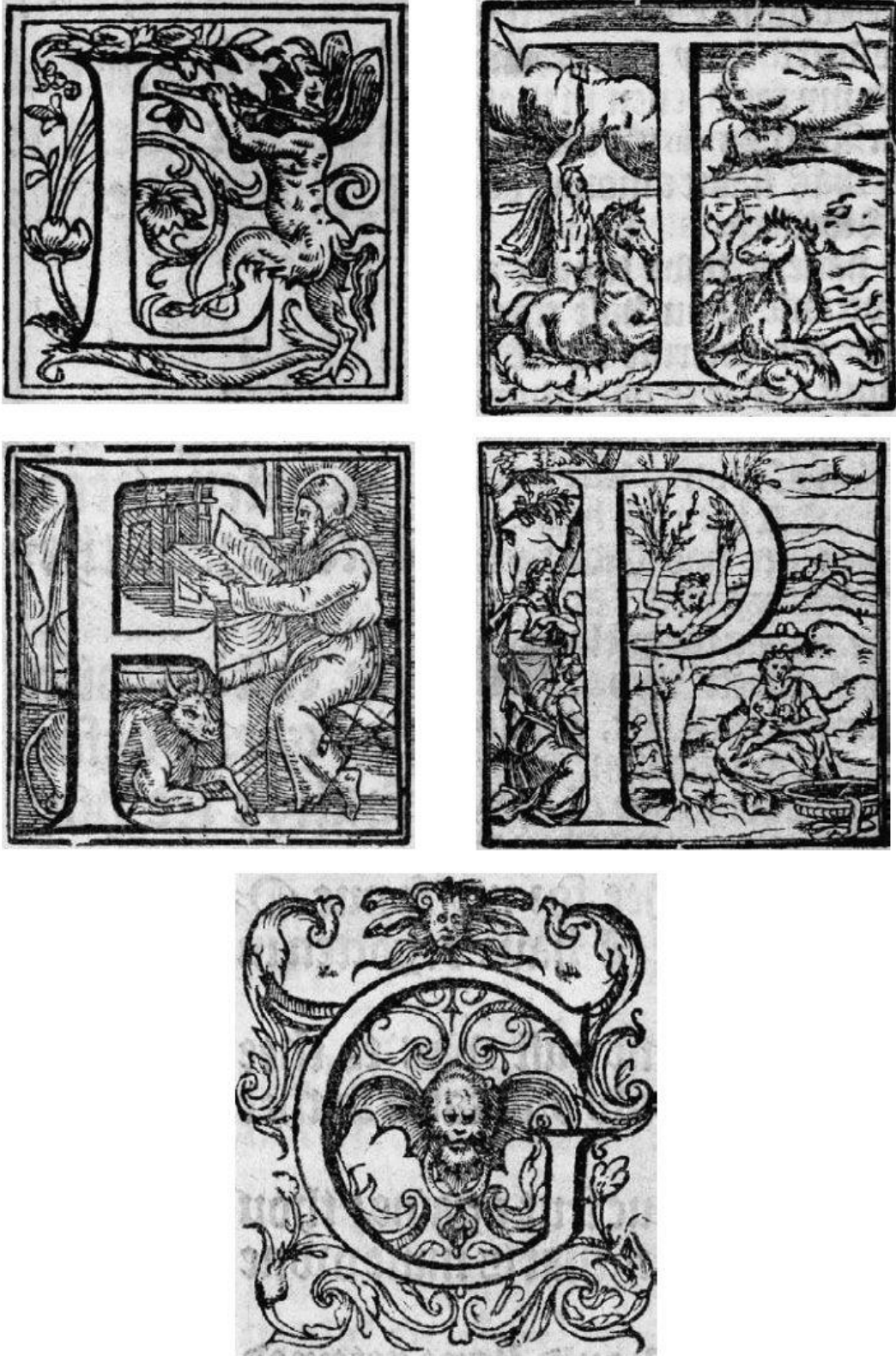


Plate 3. Five unusual initials from the first edition of the King James Bible. From top left: seven-line figure of Pan, used at Psalm 141, Wisdom 1 and 1 Peter 3; ten-line Neptune and sea horses, Matthew 1 and Revelation 1; seven-line Luke, Luke 1 and 1 Thessalonians 2; ten-line Daphne, Romans 1; ten-line initial with face, Hebrews 1.

The initials at the beginning of chapters also hint at a story. For 336 chapters nothing interferes with the uniform use of five-line unframed capitals with some kind of foliate design; then at 1 Chronicles 12 a six-line double-framed N appears. It is as if a discipline has been broken. The greatest variety is to be found in the Psalms: Psalms 6–8, for example, have successively a standard O, a four-line O given a five-line space and a six-line double-bordered O. Unless the printer was short of initial Os (quite a few are needed in the Psalms), this is variety for its own sake, perhaps even mere licence. At times the discipline is resumed, most notably in the 122 chapters from Ecclesiasticus 39 to John 9.

The majority of the variations are larger initials (very few of which correspond to the demands of space) and initials with borders. There are thirty eight four-line initials, some dictated by lack of space, some apparently not; a dozen of them are set against five lines of text. The first comes at 1 Chronicles 18 where there is only room for four lines of text at the bottom of the column. What is remarkable is that for 342 chapters such an expedient had been unnecessary. With fifty-nine lines to a column one would have expected five or six chapters would have begun four lines from the bottom by now, and that twenty-three chapters would have begun somewhere in the bottom four lines. Now, chapters never begin with three or fewer lines left, and yet there is never space left at the bottom of a column except occasionally at the end of a book. The printer was highly skilled at adjusting the layout of the text to fit the page.

Usually, the exercise of this skill is invisible, but in the last twelve pages of the Apocrypha, that is, in the last quire, the effort to cram text into a small space is obvious. The printer stopped the Apocrypha from running over the end of the quire, so ensuring that the NT could be printed separately from the OT and Apocrypha without waste of space or paper (no such provision is made for printing the OT separately from the Apocrypha). He used abbreviated forms much more than elsewhere, occasionally omitted punctuation at the end of a verse, and added an extra line at the foot of some of the columns. Here if anywhere the possibility that the printer changed the text for his own purposes might be tested: are there signs of compression in the language as well as in the typesetting? There are indeed five verses that are telegraphic, 2 Macc. 13:22–26; they are striking both by contrast with the surrounding language and in comparison with the earlier versions. Verse 26, for example, reads, ‘Lysias went up to the judgment seat, said as much as could be in defense of the cause, persuaded, pacified, made them well affected, returned to Antioch. Thus it went touching the kings coming and departing.’ This revises Geneva’s ‘then went Lysias up into the judgment seat, and excused the facte as well as he could, and persuaded them, and pacified them, and made them well affectioned, & came againe vnto Antiocha. This is the matter concerning the Kings journey, and his returne.’ Geneva is longer by forty-four characters and spaces. However, two things suggest the KJB’s compression is not a question of space. The printer had room for another twenty-seven characters before he needed to add another line. Second, the accumulation of verbs without conjunctions exactly follows the Greek (it is a device quite commonly found in campaign narratives; the most famous example is Caesar’s ‘veni, vidi, vici’). The probability therefore is that the compression of vv. 22–26 is a deliberately literal following of the original – at the expense of more fluent English and in spite of the example of the earlier translations. If this, the most blatant example of

compression, does not show (it cannot absolutely disprove) the printer interfering with the text, we must set him down as a faithful worker. If he strayed from the translators' copy, the straying was accidental." (Norton, 51-54)

Works Cited

Norton, David. *A Textual History of the King James Bible*. Cambridge University Press, 2005.