

Sunday, September 15, 2024—Grace Life School of Theology—*From This Generation For Ever*  
Lesson 238 Assessing the Printed History of the King James Text (The 1638 Cambridge Edition)

## **Introduction**

- In [Lesson 237](#) we used Job 4:6 to frame a discussion of the printed history of the AV text during the 1630s. After doing so, we came to the following conclusions:
  - The textual history of Job 4:6 in the Cambridge printings is an example of both a printer’s error (“*this*” in a 1629 folio) and an editorial change (placement of the word “and” and phrase “thy hope”).
  - Cambridge did not print the text with uniformity during the period in question (1629-1638).
  - The London printings issued by the King’s printer differed from those published by Cambridge. In the case of Job 4:6, discrepancies in the use of italics, punctuation, spelling, and word order existed between the London and Cambridge printings during the 1630s.
  - More research is necessary to determine when the London printings issued by the King’s printer conformed to the editions issued by Cambridge.
  - This is yet another reason why demanding *verbatim identity* of wording across the printed history of the King James text is not a wise position to adopt. In contrast, understanding the principle of *verbal equivalence* mitigates this problem.
- In this Lesson we will begin a consideration of the 1638 Cambridge folio edition.

## **1638 Cambridge Folio Edition**

- Thomas Fuller, author of [\*The church-history of Britain from the birth of Jesus Christ until the year M.DC.XLVIII \(1655\)\*](#) states the following regarding the quality of Bibles printed at Cambridge.
  - “. . . Cambridge-Printer, (known by the Dictionary of his name) heightened Printing to a higher degree; since exactly complicated by his Successors in that Office; witness the Cambridge Bible, of which none exacter or truer Edition in England.” (Fuller, 59)
- Regarding the Cambridge Edition of 1638, William Kilburne stated the following around 1660 in his [\*Dangerous errors in several late printed Bibles to the great scandal, and corruption of sound and true religion:\*](#)

- “. . . ‘the Authentique corrected Cambridge Bible, revised *Mandato Regio*, by the learned Doctor Ward, Doctor Goad of Hadley, Mr. Boyse, Mr. Mead, &c. and printed by the elaborate industry of Thomas Buck Esquire, and Mr. Roger Daniel.” (Kilburne, 6)
- Professor David Norton author of *A Textual History of the King James Bible* questions the reliability of some of Kilburne’s statements:
  - “Kilburne is not always reliable: ‘authentique’, presumably meaning perfect and authoritative, may well be his own description, and ‘revised *Mandato Regio*’ [Royal Mandate] cannot be confirmed; if he did not know the 1638 edition was authorised, he certainly believed it ought to have been and should be taken as authoritative.” (Norton, 89)
    - In footnote 2 on page 22 of his *The Authorized Edition of the English Bible (1611)* F.H.A., Scrivener states the following regarding Kilburne’s *Mandato Regio* claim for the 1638, “whatever that may mean.” (Scrivener, 22)
- Despite the unsubstantiated nature of some of Kilburne’s claims, A.S. Herbert states the following regarding the 1638 Cambridge edition in his *Historical Catalogue of Printed Editions of The English Bible 1525-1961*:
  - “In this edition, thus favorable noticed by Kilburne, the word of correction begun in the folio Cambridge Bible of 1629 was carried further. . . This remained the standard text until the publication of Dr. Paris’ Cambridge edition of 1762.” (Herbert, 176)
- In other words, the 1638 Cambridge folio edition exerted a powerful influence over subsequent printings for the next 124 years even if some of Kilbourne’s claims cannot be corroborated.
- In his *The Authorized Edition of the English Bible (1611)* Scrivener stated the following regarding the combined work of the Cambridge 1629 and 1638 editions:
  - “[1629] . . . inaugurated that course of systematic revision of the text, of the italics, and of the margin, which nine years afterwards was more fully and consistently carried out. . . The task seems to have been executed between the two sets of editors in no unequal shares. What the one party left undone, by reason of haste or human oversight, the others in a good measure supplied, by inserting words or clauses, especially in the Old Testament, overlooked by the editors of 1611 by amending manifest errors; by rendering the italic notation at once more self-consistent, and more agreeable to the design of the original Translators.” (Scrivener, 21-22)

- Writing more than 100 years later, Professor Norton regards Scrivener’s “summary” quoted above as a “fair” representation of the situation.
  - “This is a fair summary of the combined work, and the point that these editions worked on the italics and margin needs underlining: for the time being I concentrate on the text, but it is important to note that any work on the italics involves close attention to the originals to determine just which words in the translation have no direct equivalent in the original language, and that the margin also required a great deal of scholarly time and attention for its development.” (Norton, 90)
- One question that inevitably arises when discussing the 1638 Cambridge edition is related to the fact that John Bois and Samuel Ward, two of the original translators, are stated by Kilburne to have assisted on the project. Does this mean that some of the original translators assisted on the 1629 as well? Some argue, based upon Kilburne’s documentable piece from 1660 (c.), that translators assisted on all the prior printings of the AV.
- While I do not like to argue from silence, there just is no extant historical evidence to substantiate these claims. Moreover, as we noted in Lesson 237, it does not seem reasonable to assume that King James translators were perpetually embedded in print shops of both London and Cambridge advising on every printing of the text. Lastly, in a recent discussion regarding this topic, my friend and fellow researcher Christopher Yetzer stated the following:
  - “I highly doubt that a translator was present every single time a text was reset in the 1600s, but I really have no idea. The fact that the 1638 was advertised as such makes me think that they were not always present.”
- At the end of the day, we just do not know the level of involvement the original translators had in the editing and printing of the text before 1638. Regarding the possibility that the same Cambridge editors who worked on the 1629 folio edition also worked on the 1638 folio, Scrivener states:
  - “What persons were concerned in the edition of 1629, as Lea Wilson notices, we are wholly ignorant, but if similarity of plan and spirit afford us any ground for conjecture, one at least of them must have had a share with others in preparing the subsequent book of 1638, . . .” (Scrivener, 22)
- Professor Norton agrees with Scrivener on this point and extends the argument as follows:
  - “Scrivener’s suggestion that at least one of the named editors must have been involved in both editions seems probable (p. 22): though the 1638 editors sometimes disagree with their predecessors and sometimes direct their attention to new aspects of the text, their work is largely of the same sort. Two of the editors named, Bois and Ward, had been among the original translators, a circumstance that might be taken as giving extra authority to this Cambridge work. In one way this might make the 1638 edition the

equivalent of an author's own revision of his work: this might well be implied by Kilburne's adjective 'authentique'. Or, one might suppose, they brought to the revision knowledge of what had originally been intended at various points. The latter supposition might have a small degree of truth but is of no practical help in judging the worth of individual readings." (Norton, 90)

- Norton argues that the main editorial principle of both Cambridge editions is a more literal conformity of the text to the original languages.
  - "Rather, one should remember what the evidence from the 1629 edition has already shown, that these Cambridge editions worked on a subtly different principle from that of the original translators, namely, that wherever minimal changes are possible to align the text more literally with the originals, they should be made. The result is a still more consistent, more literal text." (Norton, 90)
- Statistically, the 1638 Cambridge editors supplied "121 readings and 114 spellings of names that became standard," according to Dr. Norton. (Norton, 90) Footnote 15 on pages 90 and 91 of *Textual History of the King James Bible* lists these follows:

<sup>15</sup> Standard readings:

Gen. 8:13; 19:21; 23:18; 39:16; Exod. 15:25; 21:32; 35:11; Lev. 1:8, 9; 2:4; 19:34; 20:11; 22:10; 23:20, 22; 25:6; 26:23; Num. 6:14; Deut. 28:23; Josh. 3:15; 11:17; 12:2; 13:29; Judg. 14:17; 1 Sam. 10:23; 20:5; 2 Sam. 6:12; 1 Kgs 9:11; 13:6; 2 Kgs 11:10; 15:15; 20:13; 23:21; 1 Chr. 7:5; 26:18 *init.*; 2 Chr. 6:27; 28:11, 22; 31:6; 32:20; Ezra 2:22; Neh. 2:12; 9:17; Job 4:6; 33:22; 41:5; Ps. 42:9; 105:30; 119:101; Prov. 7:21; 10:23; 27:26; Eccles. 1:5; Song 8:1; Isa. 49:13; 57:8; Jer. 23:30; 38:16; 40:5; 51:27; Ezek. 3:11; 5:1; 18:1; 24:5; 26:14; 39:11; 42:17; 46:23; 48:8; Dan. 2:27; 3:15; 12:13; Hos. 13:3; Amos 8:3; Zech. 7:7; 11:2; Mal. 3:4; 2 Esdras 4:47; 7:68; 16:26, 30; Tobit 13:18; Wisdom 18:18; Ecclus. 35:15; Song of Three title and 1; Susannah title; 2 Macc. 1:36; 4:21; 11:21; Apocrypha colophon; Matt. 5:22; 12:23; Mark 5:6; 10:18; 11:8; Luke 17:34; 23:11; John 21:17; Acts 2:22; 27:18; Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 14:10, 15; 15:48; 2 Cor.

8:21; 9:5, 6; 1 Tim. 1:4; 2 Tim. 1:7; Heb. 3:10; 8:8; 11:23; James 5:2; 1 Pet. 2:6; 5:10; 1 John 2:16; Jude 25; Rev. 1:4, 11; 5:13.

Standard spellings:

**Gen.** 16:14 (20:1); **Num.** 7:48 (53; 10:22), 54 (59; 10:23); **Deut.** 32:15; **Josh.** 15:28 (19:3; Neh. 11:27); 15:42, 43, 50; 19:19; 21:11; **2 Kgs** 19:37 (Isa. 37:38); 23:13; **1 Chr.** 1:25, 33, 42, 44; 2:14 (15:24; 24:6), 27; 42 (2 Chr. 11:8), 48 (9:35; 11:43), 52, 54; 3:7 (14:6); 4:6, 7, 29, 35, 37; 6:40 (two names), 57; 7:18, 25, 32; 8:14 (25:22); 8:31, 36, 37; 9:44; 12:5, 6, 10, 20; 15:18 (20, 24; 16:5; 2 Chr. 35:8; Neh. 12:41), 18, 18 (20; 2 Chr. 23:1; 26:11; 34:8; Ezra 10:18, 21, 22, 30), 18 (21), 18, 21; 25:4; 27:6, 29, 33 (34); **2 Chr.** 11:8; 20:14 (29:13; 35:9; Ezra 8:13; 10:43); 25:1; 29:12; 36:17 (etc.); **Ezra** 7:4; 8:16; 10:23, 25, 33; **Neh.** 3:4 (21; 10:5; 12:3), 6, 12; 7:7, 31, 46; 10:18; 11:8, 13; 12:5; **Esther** 3:1 (10); **Ps.** 2:6 (etc.); **Jer.** 41:1; **Ezek.** 1:2; 27:22 (23); **1 Esdras** 1:8; **2 Esdras** 3:16 (twice); **Tobit** 1:2 (Judith 1:8; 15:5; 1 Macc. 10:30; 12:47, 49; Mark 15:41; 16:7; Luke 4:44; Acts 13:31), 3 (10, 17, 22; 7:3; 11:1, 16, 17; 14:4, 8, 10, 15 [twice]; Judith 1:1, 16; 2:21); 7:3 (Matt. 4:13, 15; Rev. 7:6); **Judith** 1:8 (7:3); 2:4 (etc.); 5:3 (1 Macc. 9:37); 5:16; 7:18; 15:4, 5; **Rest of Esther** 11:1 (etc.); **Ecclus.** 48:12; 49:4; **Baruch** 3:23; **1 Macc.** 2:26 (54); 6:1; 7:45; 11:34; 15:23 (two names); **2 Macc.** 4:30; 8:33; **Mark** 14:32; **Luke** 1:5 (7, 13, 24, 36, 40, 41 [twice], 57); 4:27; 7:11; **Acts** 7:16 (twice); 21:1; 24:27; 27:7; **1 Cor.** 1:12 (etc.); **Heb.** 11:4; **2 Pet.** 2:6.

- Recall that in Lesson 237 we objectively demonstrated that Cambridge editors were making changes to the text in the lesser editions published throughout the 1630s. Moreover, I showed from his “Annotated list of Bibles” catalogued in his Bibliography on pages 362 through 364 that Professor Norton only looked at the Cambridge folio editions of 1629 and 1638. Put another way, he did not consult any of the minor Cambridge editions between 1629 and 1638. Therefore, some of the changes that Norton catalogues as having originated with the 1638 Cambridge folio edition first appeared in lesser editions throughout the 1630s. This of course means that Norton’s findings need to be taken with a grain of salt and compared against the lesser Cambridge printings for the decade in question in order to gain a wholly accurate picture.
- Let’s consider Norton’s first example from footnote 15, Gen. 8:13, as a case in point. In Appendix 9 on page 200, Norton records that the standard reading of “six hundredth and first year,” was established in the 1638 Cambridge edition.

References	1611 and Sources	Variation	Original	NCPB	Notes
Gen. 8:13	six hundredth and one yeere <i>Bod</i> : six hundred and one yeere; <i>ncn</i> .	six hundredth and first year, 1638 (six hundred . . . , 1616, 1629)		six hundredth and first year	1611 here follows <i>B</i> and <i>G</i> . Obsolete form not restored.

- Frist, note that there is a difference between the 1611 which reads, “six hundredth and one yeere” and *Bod.* 1602 which reads “six hundred and one yeere.”

Bod. 1602

13 And it came to passe in the six hundred and one yeere, in the first moneth, the first day of the moneth, the waters were dried vp from the earth, and Noah remooued the covering of the Arke, and looked, and beholde, the vpper face of the ground was dried vp.

1611

13 And it came to passe in the six hundredth and one yeere, in the first moneth, the first day of the moneth, the waters were dyled vp from off the earth: and Noah remooued the couering of the Arke, and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was drie.

- In the next column labeled “Variation” Norton comments that the reading “six hundredth and first year” originated in 1638. In addition, he notes variations in the spelling of the word “hundred” in 1616 and 1629.

1616

13 And it came to passe in the six hundred and one yeere, in the first *moneth*, the first *day* of the Moneth, the waters were dried vp from off the earth: and Noah remooued the couering of the Arke, and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was drie.

1629

13 ¶ And it came to passe in the six hundred and  
one yeare, in the first *moneth*, the first *day* of the moneth,  
 the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah  
 removed the covering of the ark, and looked; and  
 behold, the face of the ground was drie.

- So according to Norton, the standard reading for Gen. 8:13 of, “fix hundrederth and first year” where “hundredeth” is spelled with an “eth” at the end and “first year” replaced “one year” was inaugurated in the 1638 Cambridge folio edition.

1638

13 ¶ And it came to passe in the six hur-  
dredth and first yeare, in the first *moneth*, the first  
*day* of the moneth, the waters were dried up  
 from off the earth: and Noah removed the co-  
 vering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the  
 face of the ground was drie.

- But is Norton correct regarding the origin of the reading in question? Remember that Norton did not consult any of the lesser Cambridge printings between 1629 and 1638. Consider the following example from the 1630 Cambridge quarto in Roman Font.

1630 Cambridge Quarto in Roman Font (H432)

13 ¶ And it came to passe in the six hun-  
dredth and first yeare, in the first *moneth*, the first  
*day* of the moneth, the waters were dried up  
 from off the earth: and Noah removed the co-  
 vering of the ark, and looked; and behold,  
 the face of the ground was drie.

- Note that this is the exact reading that Norton says did not become standard until the 1638 Cambridge folio edition. The same reading can be found in Cambridge printings before 1638:

- 1630 Cambridge Quarto in Black Letter Font (H433)
- 1631 Cambridge Quarto in Black Letter Font (H438)
- 1629 Cambridge Roman Folio Reprint (Roger Daniel Printer, 1635)
- 1637 Cambridge Quarto in Roman Font (H513)
- 1637 Cambridge Quarto in Black Letter Font (H514)
- Meanwhile the following Cambridge editions from the 1630s still contain the reading “six hundredth and one year.”
  - 1631 Cambridge Quarto in Black Letter Font (H438)
  - 1633 Cambridge Quarto in Black Letter Font (H474)
- This survey of Cambridge printings from the 1630s leads to the following conclusions:
  - As good as Norton’s work is, it is not complete and needs to be fact-checked. Because Norton only looked at the 1629 and 1638 Cambridge folio editions, his work overlooks what was happening in the lesser Cambridge editions during this period (1630s). Therefore, Norton’s work needs to be independently verified before one can rely exclusively or definitively upon his findings.
  - Cambridge was unevenly printing their text during the 1630s.
- A comparison with London copies during the same period only serves to complicate matters further. Consider the following table for comparison:

“six hundred and one year”	“six hundredth and one year”
1630 London Quarto in Black Letter Font (H430)	1635 London Duodecimo in Roman Font (H501)
1630 London Quarto in Roman Font (H431)	1637 London Octavo in Roman Font (H517)

- What are the major takeaways from all of this? First, it seems clear that the text of the AV was not being printed with uniformity by either Cambridge or London during the 1630s. Second, not only do the Cambridge printings differ from other Cambridge printings (same for London printings) they diverge from the London printings.
- Between this Lesson and Lesson 237 we have now observed this phenomenon for two verses **!** Job 4:6 and Genesis 8:13. How many of the 121 readings noted by Norton in footnote 15 would this apply to? While I do not know the exact number, I suspect the number would be quite high.



- Again, how long did Cambridge and London continue to print different renditions of the text? We know from the last two Lessons that it spanned the decade of the 1630s at minimum and possibly (probably) longer. Exactly how long remains undetermined at this point.
- Of the “121 readings and 114 spellings of names that became standard,” listed in footnote 15 of Norton, only a handful were later rejected in favor of something else. Professor Norton records these in footnote 16 on page 91.

<sup>16</sup> Rejected readings: Mark 10:46; John 10:29; 14:16; 1 Cor. 10:28. Rejected spellings: 2 Sam. 5:14; 1 Chr. 2:49; 2 Chr. 20:36; Neh. 7:30; 1 Macc. 9:37; Rev. 2:6 (15).

- Keeping in mind that the following statistics do not account for the minor Cambridge printings of the 1630s, Norton states the following regarding the total number of changes made by Cambridge editors in the 1629 and 1638 folio editions.
  - “If we combine these figures with those for 1629, the early Cambridge editors supplied some 591 standard readings and spellings; 60% came from 1629.” (Norton, 91)
- While these numbers might falsely attribute edits to a particular Cambridge edition (1629 or 1638) they are probably fairly accurate as pertains to the total number of revisions made by the editors of the University press.
- We will continue our consideration of the 1638 Cambridge folio edition in the next Lesson.

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