Sunday, September 29, 2024—Grace Life School of Theology—*From This Generation For Ever*
Lesson 240 Assessing the Printed History of the King James Text (The 1638 Cambridge Edition)

Introduction

- Since teaching Lesson 239, I have come into possession of a 1642 Amsterdam printing of the AV containing the Geneva Bible marginal notes (1642 Amsterdam Folio RF (H571)). I checked Genesis 8:13 and Job 4:6 in this copy. It agrees with Cambridge in Genesis 8:13 and London in Job 4:6. The exact opposite situation that we observed with the 1633 Edinburgh printing in Lesson 239 which agreed with London in Gensis 8:13 and Cambridge in Job 4:6.

- In Lesson 239 we continued our look at the 1638 Cambridge folio edition. In doing so we considered the following points:

  o Research update on the acquisition of a 1633 Edinburgh Octavo in Roman Font (H475). From this we observed that Edinburgh was printing a mixed text containing some London as well as Cambridge readings. We can now add the 1642 Amsterdam printing into this mix. Therefore, there were at least four lines of text published during the 1630s and 1640s.

    ▪ London

    ▪ Cambridge

    ▪ Edinburgh—contained both London & Cambridge readings.

    ▪ Amsterdam—contained both London & Cambridge readings.

  o Example of Ezekiel 3:11

  o Spelling of names

  o Issues with italics

- In this Lesson we will conclude our discussion of the 1638 Cambridge edition with a focus on spelling. At the end there is an appendix containing a couple more examples of editorial changes made by the 1638 editors.

1638 Cambridge Folio Edition

- Much is made in our day regarding the spelling of certain words in the King James Bible. Some argue the words like 'ensample' and 'example' are wholly different words of discriminated meaning. Others assert that spellings must be exact to convey the exact sense. Still others

maintain that American spellings, as opposed to the traditional British spellings, divest scripture of its fullest understanding.

- According to Dr. David Norton, the spelling of words in the AV first became a topic of discussion around 1660 when William Kilburne authored his piece *Dangerous errors in several late printed Bibles to the great scandal, and corruption of sound and true religion*. Regarding this point Norton writes:

  o "The problem of the spelling of the Bible was not raised until, roughly, 1660, when a standard copy of the KJB was proposed that should be 'for Orthography so truely and critically written, that hereafter a Letter shall not bee altered' ['Humble proposals'; McKitterick, I, p. 388]. This does not signal the arrival of the idea that there was – or should be – standard English spelling; rather, it harks back to Jewish care to keep the Hebrew text pure: 'the Jews were so accurate, that they knew the number of words, syllables, nay letters in every book: whose diligence and industry in that kinde God's Providence hath used as a means to keep the Scriptures from corruption' [My copy of Kilburne reads slightly differently but the substance is the same.]. Occasionally the number of letters in the KJB has been a matter of curiosity[23] but in general the spelling of the KJB has followed, tardily, the progressive standardization of English (and American) spelling. The tardiness comes largely from conservative reverence for the text, with the result that, into the twenty-first century, inconsistencies and old-fashioned spellings remain." (Norton, 93)

- So, if I understand Norton and the sources he has cited properly, the concern regarding English spelling was born out of acknowledging the care and concern that Hebrews put into the preservation of their texts. While the McKitterick quote seems very specific, it is doubtful that uniformity in spelling was ever accomplished before the development of modern printing technologies. This is especially true when one factors in the American printings of the KJB during the late 18th and 19th centuries. For more information on this topic interested parties are encouraged to check out my book *The King James Bible In American: An Orthographic, Historical, And Textual Investigation*.

- Norton goes on to state the following regarding spelling in the Cambridge folio editions of 1629 and 1638:

  o "Through the first century and a half of the life of the KJB text all one can observe is fitful movement towards modern spelling and consistency of spelling. Some examples from the Cambridge editions will be enough to show that they constituted only a small step towards the modern and the consistent. The first edition did not distinguish between 'naught' and 'nought', but the 1638 editors did, using 'naught' where there is an implication of evil or naughtiness, 'nought' where the implication is nothingness. At 2 Kgs 2:19 they substitute 'naught' in 'the water is nought, and the ground barren', bringing out the Hebrew רָעִים, 'bad, evil'. Conversely, 'set him at naught' (Luke 23:11) becomes 'set him at nought', reflecting ἐξουθενήσας αὐτὸν, 'made him as nothing,

humiliated him'. These changes are unique among the 1629 and 1638 spellings in the way they are dictated by the original." (Norton, 93)

- Once again, Norton is saying that the 1638 Cambridge editors had recourse to the original languages when deciding how to spell the English words "naught" and "nought." One they reserved for when the sense was evil or naughty ("naught") and the other for when the sense was empty or nothingness ("nought"). Let's look at a couple of examples.

II Kings 2:19 (1611)
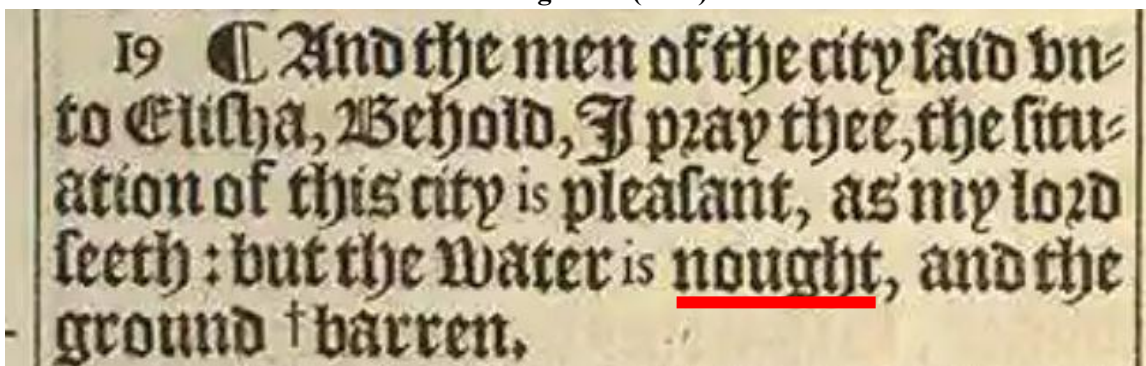
II Kings 2:19 (1638 Cambridge Folio H520)

- This is another case where Norton missed the mark by not checking the lesser Cambridge printings during the 1630s. I was able to locate this reading in the following printings before 1638:

  - 1637 Cambridge Quarto in Roman Font (H513)
  - 1637 Cambridge Quarto in Black Letter (H514)

- In II Kings 2:19 the Hebrew word revised to read "naught" by the Cambridge editors is word רַע (ra) which means "bad, evil" as an adjective and "evil, distress, misery, injury, calamity" as a noun. (Blue Letter Bible Lexicon) The use of "naught" to imply evil as opposed to nothingness was not a distinction made by the King James translators.

- Proverbs 20:14 is another example not discussed by Norton.

Proverbs 20:14 (1611)
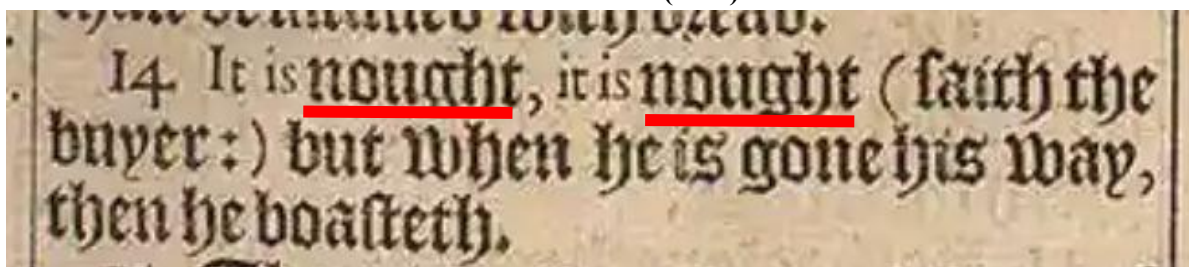
Proverbs 20:14 (1638 Cambridge Folio H520)

- Once again, the following lesser Cambridge printings contain the change to "naught" at Proverbs 20:14 before the 1638 Cambridge folio edition.

  - 1637 Cambridge Quarto in Roman Font (H513)
  - 1637 Cambridge Quarto in Black Letter (H514)

- As in the last example, the Hebrew word in Proverbs 20:14 is once again רַע (ra) thereby indicating evil or naughtiness.

Luke 23:11 (1611)
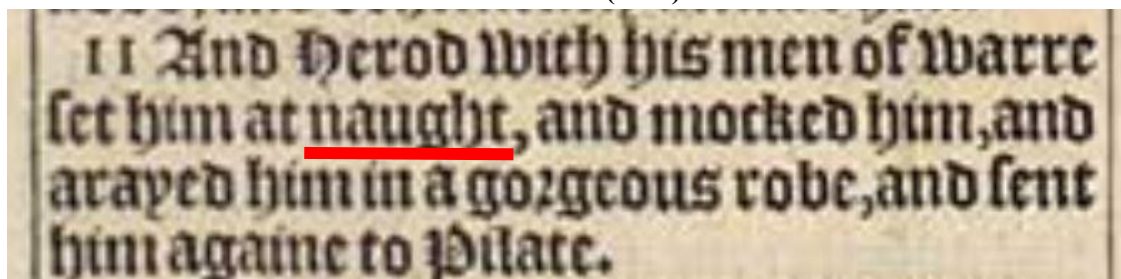
Luke 23:11 (1638 Cambridge Folio H520)

- This change originated with the 1638 edition. I checked the following lesser Cambridge editions from the 1630s and could not locate the spelling in question until 1638. This is another instance where Norton was correct as to when the change in spelling occurred in the Cambridge text.

- o 1629 Cambridge Roman Folio Reprint (Roger Daniel Printer, 1635)
- o 1630 Cambridge Quarto in Black Letter Font (H433)
- o 1631 Cambridge Quarto in Black Letter Font (H438)
- o 1633 Cambridge Quarto in Black Letter Font (H474)
- o 1637 Cambridge Quarto in Roman Font (H513)
- o 1637 Cambridge Quarto in Black Letter Font (H514)

- Norton continues his discussion of spelling changes in the Cambridge editions by stating the following on page 94 of *A Textual History of the King James Bible*:

  - o "A few words are consistently given modern spelling, as in 1629's regularisation of 'burden/burthen' and 'murder/murther'. The complexities of 'entreat . . . /intreat . . .' (a continuing problem) are more expressive of the times. The first edition uses 'intreat . . .' fifty-nine times, and 'entreat . . .' twenty-nine. 1629 changes 'entreat . . .' to 'intreat . . .' nine times, and makes the reverse change thirteen times. There seems to be an attempt in this to keep spellings consistent where the variants are near each other, but overall I suspect there is a tendency to change simply because neither spelling seems exactly right: where something seems slightly wrong, a change feels like a correction. 1638 follows 1629, except for making one more change of each sort, so adding to the sense of confusion." (Norton, 94)

- In footnote 25 on page 94 Norton lists all the changes made to "entreat" and "intreat" by the Cambridge editors.

[25] 'Entreat . . .' to 'intreat . . .': 1629: Exod. 8:9; 9:28; Judg. 13:8; Prov. 19:6; Tobit 1:22; Wisdom 19:3; 2 Cor. 8:4; Phil. 4:3; Heb. 12:19; 1638: 2 Sam. 21:14.
'Intreat . . .' to 'entreat . . .': 1629: 2 Chr. 33:13, 19; Ezra 8:23; Job 19:16; 24:21; Jer. 15:11; Judith 10:16; Ecclus. 33:31; 1 Macc. 12:8; Matt. 22:6; Luke 18:32; Acts 7:6, 19; 1638: Deut. 26:6.

- In the final paragraph in the section on spelling Norton addresses the standardization of some now archaic words in the Cambridge editions.

  - o "Finally, a few archaic words are given a new form. 'Broided' becomes 'broidred' (1 Tim. 2:9), 'happily' 'haply (2 Cor. 9:4), 'sithence' 'since' (2 Esdras 10:14), and, from 1638, 'astrologians' becomes 'astrologers' (Dan. 2:27). Such changes run a fine line between changes of spelling and changes to the translators' English." (Norton 94)

- Gordon Campbell notes a printer's error at Jeremiah 34:16 in the 1638 Cambridge Bible that was carried forward into later editions:

o "In Jeremiah 34:16, for example, the 1611 text correctly printed 'whom ye had set at liberty'; the 1638 Cambridge Bible introduced the misprint 'whom he had set', which survived into editions of the KJV into the twentieth century." (Campbell, 117)

Conclusion

- Despite some of its minor deficiencies, the 1638 Cambridge text became the standard for over 100 years.

  o "The 1638 edition became the standard text for over 100 years. A 1645 Dutch edition advertised itself on its title page as printed 'according to the copy printed by Roger Daniel, printer to the University of Cambridge'; 'according to the copy' is in especially tiny type on the NT title page, making it appear that the edition itself is printed by Daniel. William Bentley, who challenged the monopoly-holders with several editions from 1646 on, printed a text 'corrected by the Cambridge Bible only.'" (Norton *A Short History*, 144)

- Harold P. Scanlin is the author of an essay titled "Revising the KJV: Seventeenth Through Nineteenth Century" in the anthology *The King James Version At 400: Assessing Its Genius as Bible Translation and Its Literary Influence.* In this essay Scanlin states the following regarding the 1638 Cambridge edition:

  o "1638 (Cambridge folio; Herbert 520) Completing the task of the 1629 project, "the authentique corrected Cambridge Bible" endeavored to make the use of italics more uniform". They also made some translational-exegetical changes, for example, "Is not this the sonne of David' for "is this . . ." in Matt 12:23; they added "of God" to "Hath not the Sonne . . ." in I John 5:12; "whom ye may appoint" for "whom we may appoint" in Acts 6:3." (Scanlin, 142-143)

- Gordon Campbell offers the following summation regarding the 1638 Cambridge folio edition:

  o "The Cambridge edition of 1638 remained influential unto the late eighteenth century, when an Oxford edition displaced it and established the modern text." (Campbell, 117)

- A.S. Herbert editor of the *Historical Catalogue of Printed Editions of the English Bible 1525-1961* summarized the influence of the 1638 Cambridge folio as follows:

  o "This remained the standard text until the publication of Dr. Paris' Cambridge edition of 1762." (Herbert, 176)
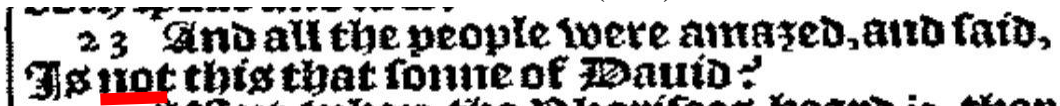
Work Cited

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Scanlin, Harold P. "Revising the KJV: Seventeenth Through Nineteenth Century" in *The King James Version at 400: Assessing Its Genius as Bible Translation and Its Literary Influence*. Society of Biblical Literature: Atlanta Georgia, 2013.
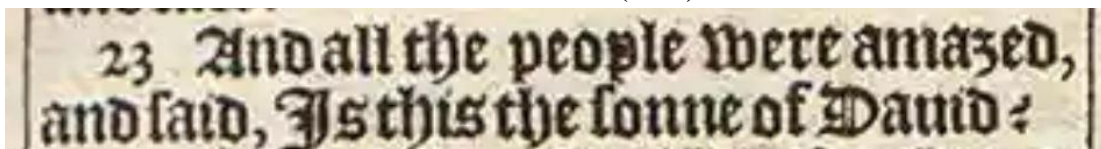
Appendix A
Other Examples of Edits to the 1638 Cambridge Folio Edition

Matthew 12:23 (1602)
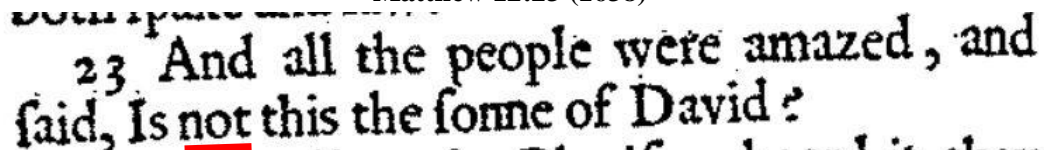
Matthew 12:23 (1611)

"not" is missing from the verse.

Matthew 12:23 (1638)

"not" is reinserted into the verse.

- In the case of Matthew 12:23, the Greek particle μήτι (mēti) corresponding to the word "not" is in the text. None of the lesser Cambridge editions for the 1630s add the word "not" back into the verse. All the pre-1611 English Bibles read "not" in this verse. There is no evidence of emendation recorded for the word "not" in Bod 1602 (Bodleian Library Arch. A b.18).

I John 5:12 (1602)

12 He that hath the Sonne, hath life : and he that hath not the Sonne of God, hath not life.

I John 5:12 (1611)

12 Hee that hath the Sonne, hath life; and hee that hath not the Sonne, hath not life.

"of God" is missing from the verse.

I John 5:12 (1638)

12 He that hath the Sonne, hath life; *and* he that hath not the Sonne of God, hath not life.

"of God" is added back into the verse.

- All the following lesser Cambridge editions from the 1630s contain the reading "Son of God" along with one Edinburgh edition from 1633. Once again, this is case where scholars did not give accurate information because they only collated the large Cambridge folio editions from 1629 and 1638.

    o 1630 Cambridge Quarto in Roman Font (H432)
    o 1631 Cambridge Quarto in Black Letter (H438)
    o 1633 Cambridge Quarto in Black Letter (H474)
    o 1633 Edinburgh Octavo in Roman Font (H475)
    o 1635 Cambridge Folio in Roman Font Reprint
    o 1637 Cambridge Quarto in Roman Font (H513)
    o 1637 Cambridge Quarto in Black Letter (H514)

- The Textus Receptus has the word θεός (*theos*) in the text. All pre-1611 English Bibles including the 1602 Bishops Bible that served as the base text for the AV contain the phrase "of God" in I John 5:12. Therefore, the evidence points in the direction of a printer's error in terms of its omission from the 1611.