

Sunday, December 22, 2024—Grace Life School of Theology—*From This Generation For Ever*
Lesson 250 Assessing the Printed History of the King James Text (1743: The Work of F.S. Parris)

Introduction & Review

- In [Lesson 249](#) we began looking at the editorial work conducted by F.S. Parris for Cambridge University Press in the 1740s. Specifically, we considered his 1743 duodecimo edition. Professor David Norton views Parris’s work as exerting editorial “care for the text” for the first time since the 1638 Cambridge folio edition. (Norton, 104) Recall that Norton called the period between 1638 and 1743 “a hundred years of solitude” implying there was little textual care exerted during the period in question except for occasional spelling changes and metatextual additions/changes. (Norton, 99)
- Likewise, it was observed by Professor Gordan Campbell, who stated the following regarding F.S. Parris in his *Bible: The Story Of The King James Versions, 1611-2011*:
 - “In 1740 the Syndics of Cambridge University Press declared their intention ‘to serve the public with a more beautiful and correct edition than can easily be found’. The task was entrusted to F.S. Parris, a fellow of Sidney Sussex who would shortly become its master; he eventually became university librarian. In editing the text of the KJV, Parris concentrated on the correction of textual errors, italics, and cross-references, but also attended to changes in grammar and in the meanings of words. The new edition, which was published in 1743, established important editorial principles.” (Campbell, 132)
- In Lesson 249 we used Campbell’s narrative to frame a discussion of nine editorial changes that he attributed to the work of Parris in 1743. Norton does likewise in his book *A Textual History of the King James Bible* i.e., he ascribes all the changes noted in the previous lesson to F.S. Parris. Put another way, they originated with Parris’ work, according to Campbell & Norton.
- Recall from [Lesson 237](#) that Dr. David Norton only collated the major Cambridge folio editions of 1629 and 1638 and therefore missed changes that were made by the lesser (smaller sized) Cambridge editions in the 1630s. Consequently, Professor Norton missed textual data by limiting his collation to the main folio edition.
- Since teaching Lesson 249, my friend and fellow researcher, Christopher Yetzer, brought to my attention that some of the changes noted in Lesson 249 had been made before the work of F.S. Parris and was published in 1743. So, as we observed previously with Dr. Norton regarding the Cambridge editions during the 1630s, both Norton & Campbell have overlooked the true historical origins of some of the readings attributed to Parris. Consequently, as helpful as their work is, it is not definitive and complete. Put another way, they missed things because they did not check every edition of the AV ever printed. While some might fault them on this account, I prefer to give them grace knowing firsthand the immensity of the project. Checking every edition of the AV ever printed, assuming one had access to every printing, would be a truly daunting and time-consuming task.

- We need to revisit the list of verses that we considered in Lesson 249. By way of review, we considered the following readings in the previous Lesson.
 - Genesis 47:6
 - “if thou knowest any **man** of activity among them” (1602 Bishops, 1611, 1629 and 1638 Cambridge folios)
 - “if thou knowest any **men** of activity among them” (1743 Parris (H1063))
 - Matthew 26:75
 - “the **words** of Jesus” (1602 Bishops, 1611, 1629 and 1638 Cambridge folios)
 - “the **word** of Jesus” (1743 Parris (H1063))
 - Acts 7:35
 - “the **hands** of the Angel” (1602 Bishops, 1611 AV, 1629 and 1638 Cambridge folios)
 - “the **hand** of the angel” (1743 Parris (H1063))
 - Exodus 34:25
 - “the feast of Passover” (1602 Bishops, 1611 AV, 1629 & 1638 Cambridge folios)
 - “the feast of **the** passover” (1762 Parris Quarto)
 - Ezra 7:18
 - “the rest of the silver and gold” (1602 Bishops, 1611 AV, 1629 & 1638 Cambridge folios)
 - “the rest of the silver and **the** gold” (1743 Parris (H1063))
 - Matthew 16:16
 - “thou art Christ” (1602 Bishops, 1611 AV, 1629 and 1638 Cambridge folios)
 - “thou art **the** Christ” (1743 Parris (H1063))
 - Luke 19:9
 - “**the** sonne of Abraham” (1602 Bishops, 1611 AV, 1629 and 1638 Cambridge folios)
 - “**a** son of Abraham” (1743 Parris (H1063))
 - Luke 20:12
 - “he sent **the** third” (1602 Bishops, 1611 AV, 1629 and 1638 Cambridge folios)
 - “he sent **a** third” (1743 Parris (H1063))
 - John 15:20
 - “greater then **the** Lord” (1602 Bishops, 1611 AV, 1629 and 1638 Cambridge folios)
 - “greater than **his** Lord” (1743 Parris (H1063))

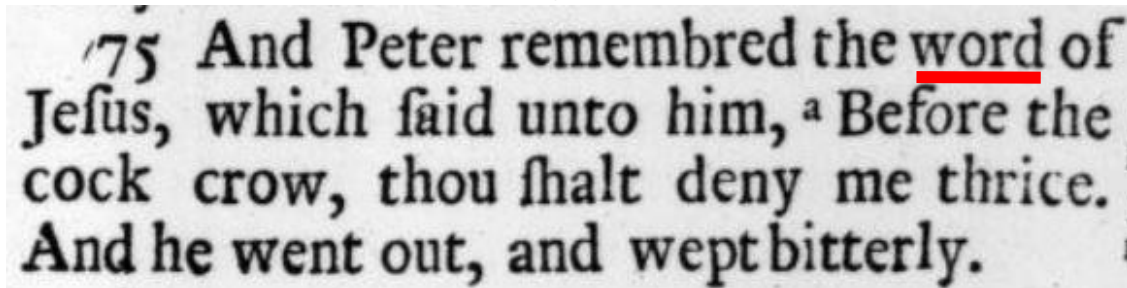
New Findings

- With the help of Brother Yetzer, I would like to present the following new findings.
- Of these nine readings that we considered in Lesson 249 (and reviewed above), there is evidence that eight of them were edited before the 1743 Cambridge duodecimo edited by F.S. Parris.

Matthew 26:75

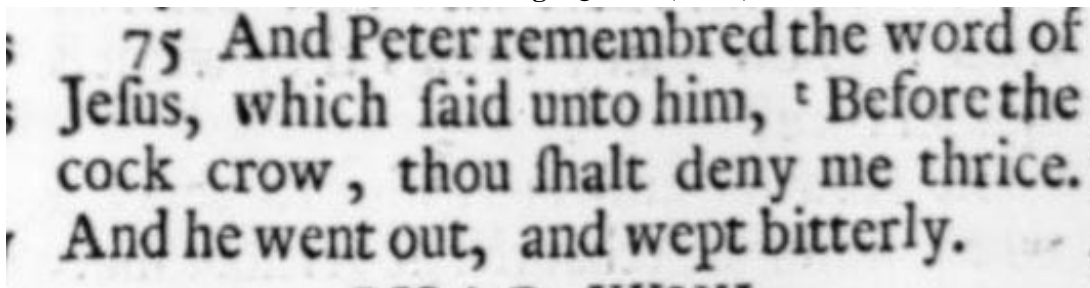
- Consider the following photographic evidence from a 1683 Cambridge quarto edition (H780) for Matthew 26:75.

Matthew 26:75
1683 Cambridge Quarto (H780)



- The change to “word” was made in a 1683 Cambridge quarto printing bearing the name of Hayes as the printer and not by F.S. Parris, as asserted by Campbell. Additional evidence from a 1677 Cambridge quarto (H736) records this change being made before 1683.

Matthew 26:75
1677 Cambridge Quarto (H736)



- Consider the additional evidence from a parallel passage in Luke 22:61. This time the base text of the 1602 Bishops read “the word Jesus” and the 1611 followed suit.

Luke 22:61
1602 Bishops

61 And the Lord turned backe, and looked vpon Peter: and Peter remembred the word of the Lord, how hee had sayd vnto him, * Before the Cocke crowe, thou shalt denie me thrise.

- Unlike the parallel passage in Matthew 26:75 which read “words”, the King James translators inherited a base text in the 1602 Bishops that read “word” in Luke 22: 61.

Luke 22:61
1611

61 And the Lord turned, and looked vpon Peter; and Peter remembred the word of the Lord, how he had said vnto him, Before the cocke crow, thou shalt deny me thrise.

- Just like our example with Matthew 26:75 the King James translators saw no reason to revise the Bishops text in Luke 22:61 and let “the word of the Lord” stand in the 1611 text. This is strong evidence that the translators viewed Matthew 26:75 and Luke 22:61 as verbally equivalent to each other despite not using the exact same words. The decision to change “words” to “word” in Matthew 26:75 could have been made to harmonize the parallel passages.

Acts 7:35

Acts 7:35
1683 Cambridge Quarto (H780)

35 This Moses, whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send *to be* a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush.

- New evidence furnished by a London duodecimo published in 1661 (H678) as well as a 1677 London edition shows this reading originating before 1683.

Acts 7:35

1661 London Duodecimo (H678)

35 This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush.

- As far as we can tell at this time, the change to “hand” was made in a 1661 London duodecimo edition for the first time and not by F.S. Parris in 1743, as asserted by Campbell.

Exodus 34:25

- In the case of Exodus 34:25 there is evidence from a London edition published in 1646 (*Catalogue* number unknown) and a Family Bible published 1762 (H1144) of the verse being edited to read “the feast of **the** passover” before the 1762 Parris quarto edition noted above and cited in the previous Lesson.

Exodus 34:25

1646 London (H???)

25 * Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven, neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the Passover be left unto the morning.

Exodus 34:25

1762 Family Bible (H1144)

25 Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the pass-over be left unto the morning.

Ezra 7:18

Ezra 7:18

1683 Cambridge Quarto (H780)

18 And whatfoever shall seem good to thee and to thy brethren to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, that do after the will of your God.

- Based upon our current understanding of the evidence, the addition of “the” to Ezra 7:18 was made in the 1683 Cambridge quarto edition, before the reading showed up in 1743 Cambridge duodecimo edited by Parris.
- Before leaving Ezra 7, we should note some additional observations pointed out to me by Christopher Yetzer. Consider Ezra 7:15-16 in the same Cambridge edition from 1683.

Ezra 7:15-16

1683 Cambridge Quarto (H780)

15 And to carry i the silver and the gold which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerufalem,
 16 And all the silver and the gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the free-will-offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which is in Jerufalem:

- In this 1683 edition the word “the” is added to verses 15 and 16 in addition to verse 18. Based on our current understanding of the extant evidence, this was the first edition to add the word “the” to Ezra 7:15-16. Consider the following earlier printings.

Ezra 7:15-16

1602 Bishops

15 And that thou shouldest take with thee siluer and gold, which the king and his counsellers offer of their owne good will vnto the God of Israel whose habitation is at Hierusalem :

16 And all the siluer and gold that thou canst finde in all the || countrey of Babylon, with it that the people offer of their owne good wil, and the Priests giue willingly for the house of their God which is at Hierusalem :

- The base text inherited by the King James translators did not have the word “the” before “gold” in Ezra 7:15-16.

Ezra 7:15-16

1611

15 And to cary the siluer and gold, which the king and his counsellors haue freely offered vnto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Hierusalem.

16 * And all the siluer and gold, that thou canst find in all the prouince of Babylon, with the free-will offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God, which is in Hierusalem :

- The translators revised much of the wording of verse 15 and added “the” before “silver and gold” but did not see fit to edit the 1602 Bishops reading “all the silver and “gold” in Ezra 7:16 despite making other changes to the verse. This implies intentionality on the part of the translators in not placing a definite article before the word “gold.”

Ezra 7:15-16
1629 Cambridge Folio

15 And to carry the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerusalem,

16 * And all the silver and gold that thou canst finde in all the province of Babylon, with the free-will-offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God, which is in Jerusalem

Ezra 7:15-16
1638 Cambridge Folio

15 And to carrie the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerusalem,

16 * And all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the free-will-offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God, which is in Jerusalem:

- Despite changes to the spelling of the word “carry,” both Cambridge folio editions from 1629 and 1638 leave the phrase “all of the silver and gold,” unchanged.

Ezra 7:15-16
1743 Parris (H1063)

15 And to carry the silver and the gold which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation *is* in Jerusalem,
16 And all the silver and the gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the free-will-offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which *is* in Jerusalem :

- The 1743 Cambridge duodecimo edited by F.S. Parris follows the early 1683 Cambridge by reading “all the silver and the gold,” in Ezra 7:15-16. So once again, Parris was not the first editor to make this change.

Ezra 7:15-16
1769 Blaney Folio

15 And to carry the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation *is* in Jerusalem,
16 And all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the freewill offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which *is* in Jerusalem :

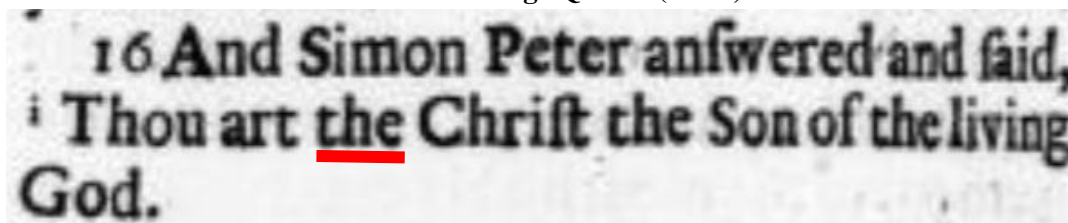
- The current text, edited by Benjamin Blaney for Oxford University Press in 1769 removes the word “the” from Ezra 7:15-16. Herein we see an example of an editorial change being undone by a later editor. If one purchased a 1683 or 1743 Cambridge Bible, did they not possess the “pure word of God” because they had extra words in Ezra 7:15-16 when compared against a 1611 or a standard 1769 text? This is absurd and highlights why the insistence upon *verbatim identity* of wording, i.e., jot and tittle preservation, as the standard for preservation is out of step with the

historical and textual facts. All of these editions of the AV are *verbally equivalent* in Ezra 7:15-16 despite not possessing *verbatim identity*.

Matthew 16:16

Matthew 16:16

1683 Cambridge Quarto (H780)



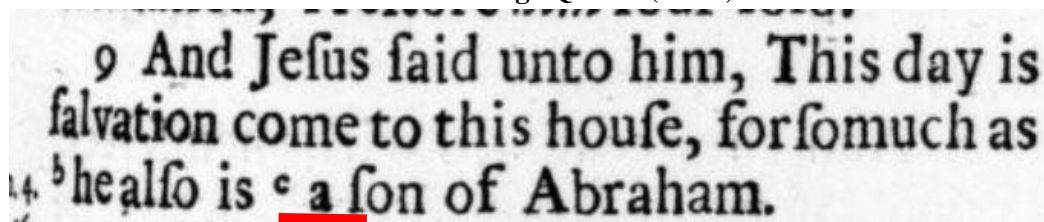
16 And Simon Peter answered and said,
Thou art the Christ the Son of the living
God.

- Based upon what can currently be proven, the addition of the definite article “the” in Matthew 16:16 was made in a 1683 Cambridge edition bearing the name of Hayes, and not by F.S. Parris, as asserted by Campbell. It could be argued that this was possibly done to harmonize Matthew 16:16 with Mark 8:29 and John 11:27.

Luke 19:9

Luke 19:9

1683 Cambridge Quarto (H780)



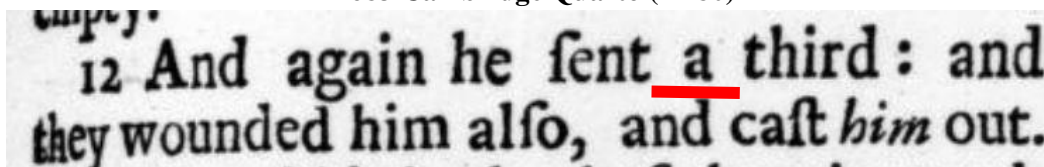
9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is
salvation come to this house, forsomuch as
he also is a son of Abraham.

- Judging based upon my current understanding of the extant evidence, the change from “the son of Abraham” to “a son of Abraham” in Luke 19:9 was made in a 1683 Cambridge edition bearing the name of Hayes, and not by F.S. Parris as asserted by Campbell.

Luke 20:12

Luke 20:12

1683 Cambridge Quarto (H780)



12 And again he sent a third: and
they wounded him also, and cast *him* out.

- Based upon what can be proven at this time, the change from “he sent the third” to “he sent a third” in Luke 20:12 was first made in a 1683 Cambridge printing, and not by F.S. Parris as asserted by Campbell.

John 15:20

John 15:20
1683 Cambridge Quarto (H780)

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, 'The servant is not greater then his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you: ' if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

- As far as can be determined at this time, the change from “greater than the lord” to “greater than his lord” in John 15:20 was first made in a 1683 Cambridge printing, and not by F.S. Parris as asserted by Campbell. Once again, it could be argued that this was possibly done to harmonize John 15:20 with John 13:16.

Acts 5:34 (Additional Example)

- In Lesson 249 we quoted pages 132-134 of Gordon Campbell’s book *Bible: The Story of the King James Version, 1611-2011* and used it to frame our discussion of Parris’ work. There was one example from these pages that we did not have time to cover. Consider the following additional example from Acts 5:34. The words of Dr. Campbell are in quotation marks. My commentary is in the bracketed section.
 - “and the description of Gamaliel as “a doctor of Law’ (Acts 5:34) is changed to ‘a doctor of the law’,”

[Consider the following evidence for Acts 5:34,

1743 Parris (H1063)

34 Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space,

1602 Bishops

34 Then stood there by one in the Councell, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctour of Law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the Apostles forth a little space,

1611

34 Then stood there by one in the Council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctour of Law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the Apostles forth a litle space,

1629 Cambridge

34 Then stood there up one in the councel, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctour of law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space,

1638 Cambridge

34 Then stood there up one in the councel, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctour of law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space,

The 1602 Bishops, 1611 AV, 1629 and 1638 Cambridge folios all read “a doctor of law” in Acts 5:34. Consider the following additional image.

1683 Cambridge Quarto (H780)

34 ¶ Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named ¶ Gamaliel, a doctour of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space,

- Judging by the available evidence, the change to “a doctor of the law” was made in the Cambridge edition from 1683 and not the 1743 Parris edition as asserted by Dr. Campbell.]
- Here is the rest of the quote from Dr. Campbell regarding Acts 5:34:
 - “presumably to avoid the suggestion that he had been awarded a degree by a university. This is, of course, only a partial solution: as ‘doctor’ meant ‘teacher’ in the seventeenth century, Parris might usefully have disposed of the word ‘doctor.’” (Campbell, 132-134)
- So, of the ten examples of Parris’ editorial work furnished by Dr. Campbell on pages 132-134 of his book, eight changes had already been made in the Cambridge quarto edition of 1683 (some earlier than that). This is yet another cautionary tale of ascribing the exact origin of a given reading in the printed history of the King James text to a specific edition. One must have checked every edition of the AV ever printed to know for sure the exact origin of a given reading.

Additional Examples From David Norton

- We have already seen Professor Norton falling victim to this error when commenting on the textual history of the AV during the 1630s. By only checking the flagship folios of Cambridge University (1629 & 1638), Norton missed additional editorial work done in the lesser Cambridge editions of that decade. See [Lesson 237](#) for more information.
- Norton makes the same error when dealing with the editorial work of F.S. Parris. Christopher Yetzer produced an Excel Spreadsheet listing all the examples of changes attributed to Parris by Norton in the main text *A Textual History of the King James Bible* (This does not include any additional examples that might be found in Appendix 8 at the back of the book.). Of the 63 examples contained in the list, 23 of them, or 36.5%, had already been edited in 1683 by Cambridge University Press in their quarto edition. In addition to the eight examples already covered in Lessons 249 and 250, please note the following additional changes found in the 1683 Cambridge quarto. Lastly, the “Other” column records editions other than the 1683 Cambridge which contain the change, although it should not be taken as definitive since not every printing was checked.

Verse	Change	Nature of Change	Other
Genesis 23:18	“gates” to “gate”	Plural to singular	Also, in 1640 Cambridge (46, 63, 65, 71, 73, 74, 76, 77, 78, 80 etc). It seems to have been a standard reading after 1640.
Deuteronomy 4:25	“shalt” to “ye shall”	Added preposition	Also, in 1677 Cambridge Quarto (H736)
Numbers 7:31	“the weight whereof <i>was</i> ”	Added words (4)	This was changed again later.
Numbers 7:55	“of the weight of”	Added words (4)	
Joshua 12:6	“Gadites” to “the Gadites”	Added definite article	1643 London
II Samuel 4:4	“feete, and was fiue yeeres” to “feet. He was five years”	Revised sentence structure	1677 Cambridge
II Samuel 11:1	removed “that”	Removed a word	
I Kings 6:1	“fourscore” to “eightieth”	Revised word choice	
I Kings 15:27	“belongeth” to “belonged”	Revised verb tense	
Psalms 107:19	“trouble: he” to “trouble, and he”	Revised punctuation	Possible harmonization with Psalms 107:6, 13, 28
Isaiah 44:20	“of ashes” to “on ashes”	Changed preposition	1643 London
Jeremiah 1:13	“was” to “is”	Revised verb tense	
Zechariah 4:2	“which were” to “which are”	Revised verb tense	
John 12:22	“told Jesus” to “tell Jesus”	Revised verb tense	1620 London, 1677 Cambridge
Acts 24:14	“the prophets” to “in the prophets”	Added preposition	
Acts 25:6	“sitting in” to “sitting on”	Revised preposition	
Romans 11:28	“sake” to “sakes”	Revised from singular to plural	1631, 1635, 1637, etc. 1677 Cambridge
I Corinthians 13:2	“have no charity” to “have not charity”	Revised part of speech	
II Corinthians 11:26	“journeying” to “journeyings”	Singular to plural	1661 London. 1677 Cambridge does not, but 1677 London does.
Revelation 17:2	“inhabiters” to “inhabitants”	Revised word	

Conclusions & Takeaways

- In conclusion, please note the following takeaways:
 - Ascribing the precise date of origin for a given reading in the printed history of the King James text is a cautionary tale unless one has looked at every edition ever printed.
 - The work of Campbell and Norton, while extremely helpful and beneficial, is not definitive and needs to be checked against other printings.

- The printed history of the King James text is not as neat and tidy as many would like it to be. The text was never printed with uniformity between 1611 and 1769. Editorial changes were made to the text despite the claims of some to the contrary. This is why demanding *verbatim identicality* of wording as the standard for preservation is an unhelpful standard and logically leads to one having to declare which edition printed everything perfectly to the exclusion of all others.
- It is not correct to think of the history of the text in terms of four monolithic revisions occurring in 1629, 1638, 1762, and 1769. The real story unfolds year by year and printing by printing. Therefore, statements such as the following are grossly incorrect:
 - “The first two revisions of the KJB occurred within 27 years of the original Oxford printing [The original printing occurred in London not Oxford.]. The 1629 and 1638 editions, both printed at Cambridge, focused on the correction of printing errors. Two of the original translators worked on the 1629 edition [No extant historical evidence corroborates this statement.]. The other two revisions of 1762 and 1769 focused more on the standardization of spelling. A case could be made that there were two editions instead of four revisions because the first two and last two were done close together and were stages of the same process.” (O’Steen, 102)
- The 1683 Cambridge quarto (H780) seems like a massively undervalued edition when assessing the printed history of the text. This is interesting given that the 1683 was the last Cambridge edition to be published until the Parris edition of 1743. Recall that the Cambridge University Press went dormant for a period, in terms of printing Bibles, in the late 17th and early 18th century. Given that more than 35% of the changes ascribed to Parris by Norton and Campbell had already been made in 1683, one wonders if Parris utilized the last Cambridge printing as the base text for his work.

Work Cited

Campbell, Gordon. *Bible: The Story of the King James Version, 1611-2011*. Oxford University Press, 2010.

O’Steen, David. *Study Notes on the King James Bible*. Hope Bible Church: Jackson, GA, 2021.

Yetzer, Christopher. Parris Spreadsheet.