

Sunday, February 8, 2026—Grace Life School of Theology—*From This Generation For Ever*  
 Lesson 277 Assessing the Printed History of the King James Text (*A Century PCE*)

## **Introduction**

- In [Lesson 276](#), we examined the claim that a Pure Cambridge Edition (PCE) of the King James Bible emerged “circa 1900” and represented the final, providentially purified form of the text. Our study revealed that this claim rests not on identifiable historical evidence but on theological interpretation, selective use of historical categories, and later reconstruction.
- First, we demonstrated that the PCE framework depends heavily on a prophetic-numerological narrative—particularly the “seven purifications” scheme tied to Psalm 12:6–7. This narrative requires a “circa 1900” edition to exist, not because such an edition can be historically documented, but because it fits the eschatological structure needed for the argument. When actual bibliographic evidence is considered—such as Cambridge’s own printed history and Herbert’s *Historical Catalogue*—no concrete edition can be identified as the first printing of the PCE, and the supposed early-20th-century origins collapse under scrutiny.
- Second, Lesson 276 showed that the PCE position introduces significant internal contradictions. While it claims the pure text existed historically, it simultaneously asserts that no edition before the early 2000s perfectly expressed it. Even Cambridge University Press has stated that they have no record of any distinct revision process or any identifiable “Pure Cambridge Edition” in their history. Instead, they describe standard editorial practice, in which printers simply used the best available pattern text. This sharply contrasts with the PCE claim of a unique, divinely orchestrated final edition.
- Finally, the lesson highlighted the most consequential admission in the *Guide to the Pure Cambridge Edition*: that no printed Bible in history embodied the exact PCE text. Instead, the PCE as we know it today was reconstructed electronically by Matthew Verschuur and Victory Faith Centre in 2006. Thus, the *first definitive PCE* was not printed in 1900—it was created in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This makes the PCE not a rediscovered historical Bible, but a modern editorial reconstruction retroactively projected onto the past—a textbook case of historical “presentism.” (Wilson, 102, 104)
- Having established the theological, historical, logical, and methodological issues that undermine the claim of an earlier PCE, we are now prepared to analyze Verschuur’s more recent arguments and publications. Thus far we have largely limited our analysis of the PCE position to the 6<sup>th</sup> and most recent edition of Verschuur’s *Guide to the PCE* (2013), which I take to be the flagship enunciation of the position. Beginning with this Lesson we will evaluate how these newer writings further develop and/or modify—the PCE narrative.
- Unless otherwise noted, all of the citations are taken from Bible Protector’s 2024 PDF titled [A Century of the Pure Cambridge Edition: And the Future of the King James Bible](#).

- *Disclaimer:* if the PCE position was just a personal preference/belief that the circa 1900 Cambridge text was/is the most accurately printed text of the KJB, I would not have a problem with it. Unfortunately, however, the PCE position, as enunciated by Matthew Verschuur, is much more than mere editorial preference; it is an exclusive KJB edition advocacy position that is built upon layers of doctrinal, philosophical, theological, and historical strata that need to be unpacked and understood. This is borne out by his written works, YouTube videos, and comments on the Textus Receptus Academy Facebook page. My decision to include extended coverage of the PCE position in this class is consistent with the overall theme of the class to enunciate a position on the King James Bible that begins with faith-based presuppositions and does not deny the facts of history or break the laws of logic. Our survey of the printed history of the text has been a prolonged case study in why *verbatim identicity* of wording is not a tenable position.

### **A Century PCE**

- In August of 2024 Verschuur published a PDF document on the [BibleProtector](#) website titled [A Century of the Pure Cambridge Edition: And the Future of the King James Bible \(A Century PCE\)](#). While the purpose of the *Guide* was to define, justify, and technically defend the PCE as the correct edition of the KJB, it functions like a handbook, explaining: what the PCE is, how it differs from other KJB editions, why certain spellings, capitalizations, and readings are correct, how to test and identify a PCE, and why every component (capitalization, italics, punctuation) matters among other related subjects.
- In contrast, *A Century PCE* seeks to document and celebrate the historical development and survival of the PCE from c. 1900–2000. It functions like a historical narrative focusing on: history of Cambridge printing, the editorial evolution leading to the PCE, physical traits of PCE printings, the printing cultures of Cambridge, Collins, and other publishers, testimonies of how the PCE spread, and the providential story of its preservation. The style is more historical, narrative, archival, and descriptive, though still strongly doctrinal.

### *Comparisons Between Guide to the PCE 6<sup>th</sup> Edition (2013) & A Century PCE (2024)*

- Matthew Verschuur's two works defend the PCE with the same conclusion but notably different argumentation. The 2013 *Guide to the PCE* makes a doctrinal, prescriptive case that a single, perfect, divinely preserved KJB edition must exist and identifies the PCE by a 12-point test, treating non-PCE variants as corruptions (especially “Spirit/spirit” cases) and leaning heavily on Pentecostal, historicist, and providential theology. By contrast, the 2024 *A Century PCE* offers a historical, documentary case tracing how a family of 20th-century Cambridge printings converged on a recognizable PCE profile, openly acknowledging small variations among those printings, and positioning Verschuur's electronic PCE as a reconstructed, standardized text distilled from multiple witnesses rather than a reprint of a single perfect historical copy. In short, 2013 argues from theological necessity to a perfect edition; 2024 argues from physical evidence to a historical tradition that Verschuur then standardizes.

- The following points consider principal differences in argumentation between the two works.
  - From Theological Necessity (2013) → To Historical-Evidential Reconstruction (2024)—the 2024 book argues from physical evidence and print history, not from the prior premise that a single perfect edition “must” exist. It openly concedes the lack of a known, first, official PCE edition and treats the PCE as a historically emergent phenomenon across many printings.
    - “It is not known what year exactly or which people precisely made the first edition (‘editio princeps’) of the Pure Cambridge Edition.” (10)
    - “As there is no known identifiable “first edition” of the Pure Cambridge Edition, and since its appearance is wholly quiet, unlike other major Editions of the King James Bible, it stands that this Edition is very different, in fact, it is the last great Edition and conclusion of the editing process.

The Pure Cambridge Edition is not known because of some concerted editorial initiative, or public announcement but rather because of a myriad of Bibles exhibiting the same particular editorial idiosyncrasies were being published by Cambridge between the 1920s and the 1990s.” (46)

- From a Single Perfect Specimen (2013) → To a Family Profile With Documented Variation (2024)—the 2024 work explicitly acknowledges that 20th-century Cambridge “PCE-era” printings were not identical; they share a profile (the “key criteria”) but contain minute differences among themselves.
  - “Multiple decades of printed editions of the Pure Cambridge Edition exist as a matter of record and fact, and though there are some very minute places where some variation might be detected outside of a list of key criteria, as long as the text matches these key criteria, and is a faithful representative also, then it is deemed acceptable.” (11)
  - The “list... to identify the Pure Cambridge Edition” (the list of twelve PCE readings) is presented as an identification test, not as an exhaustive set of differences or a claim that every historical copy matches in every micro-detail. (11) The 12-reading list is “a test only” that can be used to determine whether a copy is a representative of the Pure Cambridge Edition.” (p. 15)
    - Recall from [Lesson 273](#) that six of the twelve identifying “PCE test” readings specifically revolve around the capitalization (case) of the letter “s” in “spirit/Spirit” (including the phrase “Spirit of God” vs “spirit of God”). All six occur in *A Century PCE*’s 12-point identification list. Like the *Guide* before it, *A Century PCE* clearly teaches that 1 John 5:8 is the single most important textual marker of the PCE. The lowercase “spirit”

is a deliberate, theologically correct reading. The PCE is defined by preserving this reading. Cambridge's 1985 change was a catastrophic departure from purity. This verse became the central test for identifying a true PCE Bible.

- “It should be very obvious that exactness of words, letters and punctuation is required for exactness of meaning. Such distinctions in words and letters are lost and cause interference on the exactness of information if there is no regard or no effort in line with Divine Providence to ensure that exact precision is maintained.” (20)
  - *A Century PCE* teaches that “exact words, letters, and punctuation” are essential because exact meaning depends on precise textual form. The book argues that even the smallest details—such as capitalization, individual letters, and punctuation marks—carry doctrinal significance, and losing these distinctions distorts meaning. It claims that Divine Providence has preserved this exactness in the PCE, including preventing erroneous changes for decades. The author emphasizes that microscopic variations, such as missing ink or altered letter forms, must be corrected to maintain a perfectly pure master text. In this framework, the PCE uniquely preserves the fully exact wording, lettering, and punctuation that Scripture requires for doctrinal accuracy.
- From “the PCE Already Exists in Perfect Form” (2013) → To A Reconstructed, Standardized Master Text (2024)—Verschuur now describes his role (post-2000) as constructing a standard electronic text by collating multiple PCE witnesses and resolving their differences—i.e., a reconstruction and standardization, not a reprint of one flawless historical copy.
  - “With the looming dangers of various revisions, updates, alterations and Americanisations on the wording of the King James Bible by the hands of deliberate editors, publishers, money spinning printers and careless website typographers, it was apparent and needful that a standard, proper, exact and typographically pure edition of the King James Bible **be made** which settled and stabilised the pinnacle of 20th century editorial work.” (9)
  - “That is why the critical edition, so to speak, of the Pure Cambridge Edition of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as produced by Matthew Verschuur in Australia, stands as the actual representative of the text of this Edition. He made no innovation but to select from the documentary record what should or should not stand, as based on what had actually been printed by Cambridge University Press, and secondarily what was witnessed to it by the Collins publishers of Scotland.” (10)

- “When Matthew Verschuur created what might be called a critical or standard electronic text of the Pure Cambridge Edition, he was able to draw on a number of representative editions from Cambridge which had this editorial text. The representatives used in the process from Cambridge included a 1938 Cameo, two 1950s Pitt Minoins, some Ruby-Amethysts, a Brevier and a broken Sapphire. Further representatives from Collins were a Popular (Clear Type), a Fontana, a Gen and a Brevier.

In the process of comparing various electronic text together, and crosschecking constantly with reference to these printed Bibles, he became aware of some variations within the printed history of the Pure Cambridge Edition. The making of an exact editorial text [required] having to resolve these variations.” (47–48)

- “The real labour (by God’s help) was in the copyediting work of Matthew Verschuur to ensure scrupulous correctness in an electronic text file format so that any variation, as might have slipped by in any traditional printing of the Pure Cambridge Edition, could always be corrected against a master which had no missing ink on a dot, wrong letter or any other such microscopic variation that was even to be found in the best made Cambridge printings.” (14)
  - This was the goal of an error-checked master surpassing press imperfections that appear even in the best printings. These statements from 2024 make the following clear, there is no one historical Cambridge Bible that equals this final electronic text in every detail. The text that Verschuur and the elders of Victory Faith Center are the “guardians” of did not exist in every detail until it was created in the early 2000s.
- “One could well argue that this is providential, for though the evidence of the editorial work is exhibited in this production throughout, **it reinforces that the Pure Cambridge Edition is not based on the authority of some singular copy** by some unknown editor during (or before) the First World War.” (41)
- From Zero-Tolerance Purity (2013) → To Qualified Acceptance + Pastoral “Grace” For Imperfect PCE Printings (2024)—while the 2013 *Guide* pushes an absolutist purity standard, the 2024 book repeatedly advocates forbearance toward older PCE copies that include minor anomalies (e.g., the “Hammath” forms), arguing they remain “fairly the Word of God.” (50-51)
  - “It has been a fault and danger of some to be so utterly zealous in demanding purity, that they seem almost willing to commit to the fire Pure Cambridge Edition King James Bibles for the slight of having “Hammath” instead of “Hemath”. However, notwithstanding that in hindsight there is a pure standard to apply, there is a level of grace and also the fact of God's power overcoming any such minor matters, so that such copies have been used, are still used, and can

still be used for some time into the future, and rightly so, as being fairly the Word of God despite this exceedingly minor issue.” (51)

- The electronic PCE is the stabilized ‘master’; historical PCE printings are acceptable representatives if they meet the profile, even if not every micro-detail aligns. (11, 14, 47–51)
- *A Century PCE* teaches that non-exact PCE copies may still be used without condemnation, emphasizing that many older or near-PCE editions—such as those containing minor variations like “Hammath” instead of “Hemath”—remain “fairly the Word of God” and have “been used, are still used, and can still be used... rightly so” despite these exceedingly small issues. (51) The book stresses that whole churches using such imperfect forms “are not to be condemned,” while still maintaining that “ultimately, everyone should adhere to the exact standard” of the PCE. (51) Earlier, it clarified that editions matching the key criteria—especially the twelve identifying tests—are “deemed acceptable” even if minor microscopic variations exist. (11) The author also allows temporary reliance on non-exact editions through annotation or hand-correction when necessary, affirming that such patched copies are better than abandoning a Bible entirely. (83) Overall, the book rejects hyper-scrupulous attitudes toward slight deviations yet upholds the fully exact PCE as the proper final standard.
- From Asserting Cambridge’s Conscious “PCE” (2013) → To Documenting Cambridge’s Unconscious Convergence (2024)— The 2024 narrative shows that Cambridge did not roll out a public, named “PCE” project; rather, over decades—and amid changing technology, plates, and editors, Cambridge’s printings converged toward what we now recognize as the PCE profile.
  - “The Pure Cambridge Edition is not known because of some concerted editorial initiative, or public announcement, but rather because of a myriad of Bibles exhibiting the same particular editorial idiosyncrasies were being published by Cambridge between the 1920s and the 1990s.

It is providential that the Pure Cambridge Edition was present for the heyday of traditional Bible printing (and the classical heyday of Christian personal Bible participation where every child could have at least one of their own Bibles) which can be approximately dated between circa 1922 and 1967, after which there was a decline due to falling Church attendance and modern version proliferation.” (46)

- *A Century PCE* details plate alterations (e.g., “Gaba” → “Geba” at Ezra 2:26) and ties many changes to time-stamped production contexts

(WWI/WWII plate losses, Monotype, Morison/Lewis era), reinforcing an evidentiary rather than declarative origin story (36–45, 38 on plate alteration; 43–45 on interwar typesetting revival). Verschuur asserts in *A Century PCE* that Cambridge printing plates were destroyed or melted down during World War I and World War II — but he provides no documentary evidence, citations, archival references, printer records, or Cambridge University Press documentation to support these claims. Everything he says about wartime plate destruction is presented only as narrative speculation or deduction, not as verifiable historical documentation.

- From Mostly Theological Proof-Texts (2013) → To tables, Specimens, and Printer Timelines (2024)—*A Century PCE* devotes major space to tabular comparisons, specimen photos, dating heuristics (printers' names, box designs, coats of arms, product codes), and variant catalogues. This reflects a shift from polemical theology to documentary demonstration. Examples include the 12-point identification on p. 11, multi-page variant tables and colour keys (e.g., 39–41, 48–50), and extensive printer/edition surveys (Cp. 3–8).
- The 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Guide* from 2013 argues from theological necessity to a single perfect edition. In contrast, *A Century PCE* from 2024 argues from physical evidence that the PCE is a historical tradition across many Cambridge printings—and then justifies Verschuur's role in producing the first fully standardized, error-checked electronic PCE by collating and resolving those witnesses.

#### *When Was the PCE First Printed?*

- Another major difference between the *Guide* (2013) and *A Century PCE* (2024) is when the first historical PCE editions are said to have originated. In the *Guide*, Verschuur repeatedly states that the PCE originated “circa 1900” (See Lessons 271-276 for multiple citations from the *Guide* corroborating this.). So, in 2013, Verschuur places the PCE's origin around the year 1900, and treats it as the product of a definitive editorial event occurring at or near the turn of the century (See [Lesson 276](#) for more information). In the 2024 book, Verschuur moves the origin of the PCE forward in time to the 1920s, and describes it not as a single event, but as a gradual emergence across many Cambridge printings. He states in *A Century PCE* that the PCE arose from a process beginning around World War I, not 1900.
  - “It is not known what year exactly or which people precisely made the first edition (“editio princeps”) of the Pure Cambridge Edition. In fact, examination of Cambridge King James Bibles that have come to hand from that cap show something of a process around the First World War. That is why the critical edition, so to speak, of the Pure Cambridge Edition of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as produced by Matthew Verschuur in Australia, stands as the actual representative of the text of this Edition. He made no innovation but to select from the documentary record what should or should not stand, as based on what

had actually been printed by Cambridge University Press, and secondarily what was witnessed to it by the Collins publishers of Scotland.” (10)

- He explicitly locates the era of PCE printings “between the 1920s and the 1990s” (46), “The Pure Cambridge Edition is not known because of some concerted editorial initiative, or public announcement, but rather because of a myriad of Bibles exhibiting the same particular editorial idiosyncrasies were being published by Cambridge between the 1920s and the 1990s.” (46)
- Even the earliest solid examples he identifies are from the 1920s era forward, such as: “Ever since the Bible Protector website was made, some people have wrongly dated the Pure Cambridge Edition as “1900” rather than the actual stated “circa 1900.” In fact, the best evidence is that it appeared silently and progressively from somewhere around the start of the First World War, with known examples from the 1920s.” (45)
- Thus, *A Century PCE* does not place the PCE around 1900 but rather positions it as emerging silently and progressively from ca. 1915–1920, with the first consistent representatives appearing in the 1920s.

#### *Acknowledgement That Historic PCE Editions Differ*

- In 2013, Verschuur’s *Guide* defined the PCE as perfect, exact, and fully fixed. At which time he made the following claims regarding the PCE position:
  - A single final purified edition exists (“circa 1900”).
  - It is the exact, perfect, final form of the KJV.
  - Any deviation — even a letter, punctuation, or capitalization — is a corruption.
  - The PCE is the product of divine preservation, not historical process.
  - The *Guide* (2013) treats the PCE as a single, perfect, fixed specimen with no tolerable variation.
- *A Century PCE*, openly acknowledges that historical PCE printings differ from each other. This is the major shift — and it directly contradicts the earlier *Guide*’s requirement of exactness. Verschuur admits that historical PCE-era printings contain small differences, “Multiple decades of printed editions of the Pure Cambridge Edition exist as a matter of record and fact, and though there are some very minute places where some variation might be detected outside of a list of key criteria, as long as the text matches these key criteria, and is a faithful representative also, then it is deemed acceptable.” (11) This cannot be reconciled with the 2013 doctrine that every jot and tittle must match exactly or it is not pure.

- *A Century PCE* redefines the PCE as a “profile” rather than a perfect specimen. This completely changes what “PCE” means. Verschuur states the following, “The Pure Cambridge Edition is not known because of some concerted editorial initiative, or public announcement, but rather because of a myriad of Bibles exhibiting the same particular editorial idiosyncrasies were being published by Cambridge between the 1920s and the 1990s.” (46) This stands in stark contrast to the *Guide*’s claim that the PCE is a final, exact, single, perfect, fixed edition originating “circa 1900.” In contrast, in *A Century PCE*, the PCE is not a specific printing, not one typesetting, not a single perfect artifact, but a category, a “type,” a family resemblance. This is incompatible with the *Guide*’s requirements for perfection.
- Matthew Verschuur’s treatment of the PCE exhibits the *moving-the-goalpost* fallacy because he changes the standard for what counts as a “pure” PCE when confronted with evidence that contradicts his earlier definition. In his 2013 *Guide*, he presents the PCE as a single, exact, letter-perfect edition produced “circa 1900” and insists that even the smallest deviation disqualifies a Bible from being the true PCE, framing purity in absolute terms. However, in *A Century PCE* (2024) he openly acknowledges that historical PCE-era Cambridge printings contain “minute... variation” yet are still “deemed acceptable” as long as they match certain key criteria. (11) He further admits that “the Pure Cambridge Edition is not based on the authority of some singular copy” (41) and that creating an exact text required “resolving these variations” across multiple non-identical witnesses. (47–48) To reconcile these inconsistencies, he introduces a new tolerance by saying older PCE copies deserve “grace... despite this exceedingly minor issue.” (51) Since his original criteria required exact identically (*verbatim identically*), but his later criteria allows differences once those differences are shown to exist, Verschuur effectively moves the goalpost to preserve the claim that all these editions are PCE—even though they no longer meet his earlier, stricter standard.
- At minimum there is an internal tension and, arguably, a contradiction in the logic presented in *A Century PCE*. The book affirms a strict theory that “exactness of words, letters and punctuation is required for exactness of meaning” (20) and treats the PCE as a providentially “settled” final standard against which disputed places are judged. (13) Yet it simultaneously grants permission and pastoral leniency to “non-exact” PCE-family copies—stating that believers and churches using older or slightly variant PCE printings “are not to be condemned,” and that such copies “have been used, are still used, and can still be used... rightly so, as being fairly the Word of God,” even while insisting that “ultimately, everyone should adhere to the exact standard.” (51) This produces a double standard: deviations within the PCE lineage are treated as tolerable and not spiritually blameworthy, while non-PCE King James editions that fail the test of the twelve identifying criteria are implicitly disapproved as not meeting the “exact” providential standard. (11, 51)

*Verschuur Edited & Created The PCE Text That He Is A Guardian Of*

- In short, no single historical edition matches what Verschuur now defines as the PCE: he concedes there was “no... singular copy” that authoritatively embodied it (41), and that

20th-century Cambridge printings contained “very minute... variation” yet were still “deemed acceptable” if they met certain key criteria. (11) He further admits the origins are unclear—“It is not known what year exactly or which people precisely made the first edition (‘editio princeps’) of the Pure Cambridge Edition.” (10)—and explains that producing today’s exact PCE required collating non-identical witnesses and “resolving these variations” to create a “critical or standard electronic text.” (47–48) His aim was a master with “no missing ink... [or] wrong letter... [or] microscopic variation,” surpassing even the best historical printings. (14) Taken together, these statements show the PCE as he defines it now did not exist in an identical, letter-perfect form before his early-2000s electronic reconstruction.

- Below is a complete, citation-supported list of every change or editorial intervention Matthew Verschuur made (or claims to have made) in producing his electronic PCE, based entirely on the text of *A Century PCE*. This list includes:
  - Actual changes Verschuur introduced.
  - Variants he “resolved” when witnesses disagreed.
  - His unique contribution to typography.
  - His stated editorial philosophy.
- Verschuur created a new, unified, “exact editorial text” by resolving differences among non-identical PCE printings. This is the core change: Verschuur standardized a single text out of many differing Cambridge and Collins PCEs, which themselves were not identical. See the quote above from pages 47-48 of *A Century PCE*. He chose one reading whenever:
  - Cambridge printings differed from one another.
  - Collins printings differed from Cambridge.
  - Earlier and later PCE printings diverged.
  - PCE printings differed from 1611 or 1769 traditions.
  - Thus, he created a text with a single answer for each variation, something no historical copy ever had.
- He corrected “microscopic” typographical issues that appear even in the best Cambridge PCE printings. Verschuur produced the first version free from all typographical defects, even those Cambridge could not avoid.

- “The real labour (by God’s help) was in the copyediting work of Matthew Verschuur to ensure scrupulous correctness in an electronic text file format so that any variation, as might have slipped by in any traditional printing of the Pure Cambridge Edition, could always be corrected against a master which had no missing ink on a dot, wrong letter or any other such microscopic variation that was even to be found in the best made Cambridge printings. Therefore, having the right Edition in a form or setting without any press errors or editorial variation is a great accomplishment for all posterity.” (14)
  - He removed all historical printing defects, meaning his electronic edition is cleaner and more exact than any paper PCE ever printed. This is editorial innovation because Cambridge never produced a specimen that coheres exactly with Bible Protector’s.
- Bible Protector selected specific readings at every disputed variant between PCE printings Whenever Cambridge or Collins PCEs disagreed, Verschuur picked a single reading.
- Examples Verschuur documents include:
  - Ezra 2:26 — “Geba” vs. “Gaba” (38–39)
  - 1 Chr 2:55; 13:5; Amos 6:14 — “Hemath” / “Hammath” / “Hamath” (50–51)
  - 2 Kings 19:26 — “house tops” vs. “housetops” (39, 81)
  - Song 6:12 — “Amminadib” vs. “Ammi-nadib” (49)
  - Matt. 27:46 — “Eli” vs. “ELI” (39–40)
  - 1 Cor. 4:15 — “instructors” vs. “instructers” (39–40)
- He provides a table documenting all places where printed PCEs disagreed and where Verschuur therefore had to choose one reading.
  - “The following table lists the editorial choices that go against 1611, or places where variations exist in the Cambridge printed representatives (and Collins printed representatives). This information builds on the previous table some pages back, though not all places are variations within printed Pure Cambridge Editions, as several other passages of interest have been added for additional information.” (48)
- Practical changes made: Verschuur picked one reading in cases where PCE printings diverged. This means the electronic PCE includes editorial decisions made by Verschuur himself, not just content copied from any single historical printing.

- Verschuur restored readings he believed were correct when later PCE printings departed from them. Certain later PCE printings introduced changes (e.g., Hammath). Verschuur specifically undid some of those. For example, he removed Hammath/Hamath variants, “The removal of the spelling ‘Hemath’ entirely... is not to be considered a ‘deal breaker’... [but] ultimately, everyone should adhere to the exact standard.” (50–51) Practically, he restored “Hemath” where Cambridge had adopted “Hammath” or “Hamath” in the 1940s–50s.
- Bible Protector enforced the PCE “key criteria” in cases where historical PCE printings occasionally violated them. Historical PCEs sometimes contained “spirit” where he requires “Spirit” or “betrayeth” where he requires “bewrayeth.” But Verschuur’s electronic text enforces the 12-point test absolutely. Whenever a printed PCE disagreed with the twelve tests even once, he fixed that reading in the electronic text.
- Verschuur introduced one unique typographical convention: “LORD’s” using small-cap “s” This is the only explicit new change he acknowledges making himself.
  - “Thus, the Pure Cambridge Edition is no late invention, though Matthew Verschuur did one new thing in line with actual English usage, which was to put the possessive letter “s” in lower case after an apostrophe when a word with small capitals is used, because it is a contraction for the word “his” (the old usage of “his” can be seen with the King James Bible translators). Thus, “LORD’s” rather than the 1611 era "LORDS" or commonly later “LORD’S” (though it is not always readily discernible in many historical printings whether a small capital “s” is being used anyway).” (10)
- He notes it aligns with modern convention and that he does not insist it is mandatory—but it is included in his electronic text. Therefore, Verschuur created a distinctive PCE-only typographic form (“LORD’s”) not consistently found in historic PCE printings.
- In summation, Verschuur made all the following changes in the electronic copy of the PCE that he edited.
  - Reconstruction-Level Changes
    - Resolved all disagreements among printed PCE witnesses. (47–48)
    - Chose one reading where Cambridge/Collins printings diverged. (39–50)
    - Eliminated all typographical imperfections. (14)
  - Text-Level Changes
    - Restored readings he believed were the correct PCE form when later PCEs deviated (e.g., “Hemath”). (50–51)

- Enforced the 12-point identification readings even when some historical PCEs contained exceptions. (11–12)
- Typography-Level Changes
  - Introduced a new small-cap possessive (“LORD’s”) not consistently present in historical printings. (p. 10)
- The electronic PCE created by Matthew Verschuur is not simply a typed copy of any historical Cambridge edition. It is:
  - A reconstructed composite.
  - Created by choosing between historically divergent readings.
  - Correcting all historical typographical imperfections.
  - Introducing at least one new stylistic change.
  - And enforcing strict textual criteria not always met by earlier PCE printings
- In short, Verschuur’s electronic PCE is a new, standardized edition built from historical materials—not the reproduction of any one historical Bible.

## Conclusion

- In *A Century PCE*, Verschuur describes the PCE as the providentially guided and historically unveiled “revelation of the pure presentation of the Word of God,” meaning that God, through centuries of editorial refinement and preservation, has now brought to light the fully exact form of the King James Bible. (104) This “revelation” is not new inspiration or mystical experience but the final recognition of the correct words, letters, spellings, and punctuation that Providence has “settled” in the PCE. (13) The book treats this unveiling as the culmination of the long historical development of the KJB text.
- Verschuur’s case in *A Century PCE* is vulnerable on historical and methodological grounds because he openly concedes that no one can identify the “editio princeps” [first printed edition of a book] of the PCE—“it is not known what year exactly or which people precisely made the first edition”—and he reiterates that there is “no known identifiable ‘first edition’” because the PCE emerged “wholly quiet” across many printings rather than by a single documented revision event. (10, 46) This matters because his strongest claim—that the PCE is the final and pure form—rests on establishing a stable endpoint in the historical record. Yet, lacking a datable first PCE printing or clear institutional documentation of its creation, he shifts the burden to his own reconstruction, asserting that his 21st-century “critical edition… stands as the actual representative” of the PCE text, built by “select[ing] from the documentary record” and by copyediting an electronic master

with “scrupulous correctness” to remove microscopic errors. (10, 14) At the same time, he insists on a maximal standard of textual precision—“exactness of words, letters and punctuation is required for exactness of meaning”—which heightens the tension between his rhetoric of “exactness” and the practical reality that the historical PCE cannot be pinned to a single fixed archetype. (20)

- That tension deepens because the book also acknowledges multiple “PCE vs. PCE” differences across Cambridge and Collins printings, forcing him to redefine the PCE operationally as a family of acceptable representatives rather than one unvarying text. He states that while decades of PCE printings exist, “some very minute... variation might be detected,” and “as long as the text matches [the] key criteria... then it is deemed acceptable,” formalizing this with a 12-test identification list. (11) He then documents specific internal drifts—most notably the later “Hemath/Hammath/Hamath” shifts and other variants appearing in some PCE printings but not others—while explicitly classing at least some of these as “not... a ‘deal breaker,’” warning against overzealous rejection of imperfect copies. (41, 49–51) Likewise, he describes publisher-specific divergences in Collins “PCE” Bibles (e.g., a telltale capitalization at 1 Chronicles 14:10 and other variants), reinforcing that “PCE” in practice includes multiple streams rather than a single uniform artifact. (64–67) Finally, he concedes at least one explicit modernization in his own representative text—his “one new thing,” preferring “LORD’s” over historical forms—making it easier to argue that his edition does not perfectly match any single historical setting even as he presents it as the authoritative standard. (10)
- In *A Century PCE*, Verschuur’s certainty that the PCE is the “final” and “pure” form of the King James Bible is difficult to substantiate without effectively importing an extra-biblical certainty functionally equivalent to special revelation. He repeatedly concedes that the foundational historical anchor is missing—“it is not known what year exactly” or who produced the first PCE (“editio princeps”), and he admits there is “no known identifiable ‘first edition’” because the PCE emerged quietly across many printings rather than as a clearly documented revision event. (10, 46) At the same time, he acknowledges internal variation among so-called PCE witnesses and solves this by redefining “PCE” operationally: if a Bible meets selected “key criteria” (his twelve tests), it is “deemed acceptable,” even though other differences may persist. (11) This move undercuts the rhetoric that purity consists in “exactness of words, letters and punctuation,” because the “exact” standard becomes a curated subset of readings rather than a demonstrably fixed historical text. (20) The epistemic gap is then bridged by theological assertion: “Providence” is said to have “settled” the PCE such that when variants are examined “the rightness of the Pure Cambridge Edition is vindicated,” which functions less like a historically verifiable conclusion and more like a certifying premise that guarantees the result in advance. (13) Finally, Verschuur’s admission that he did “one new thing” in his own representative text (e.g., the “LORD’s” convention) further blurs the claim that his edition simply matches historical Cambridge printings, reinforcing the concern that “Providence” is being used rhetorically to supply certainty where the documentary record is underdetermined. (10)
- In *A Century PCE*, “providence” is used as a stand-in for special revelation because it supplies certainty about a specific, disputed editorial outcome—that the PCE is the final, pure, exact

form—at exactly the points where the historical evidence cannot deliver that certainty. Verschuur admits he cannot identify the PCE’s “editio princeps” (the first printed PCE) and even says there is “no known identifiable ‘first edition,’” which means there is no single datable artifact that could function as an objective historical anchor for his “final form” claim. He also concedes that “minute” differences exist among so-called PCE printings and therefore redefines “PCE” as whatever passes his selected “key criteria” tests rather than as one fixed, perfectly attested text. Yet instead of treating that underdetermination as a limit on what can be known, he declares that “Providence” has already “settled” the PCE and that when variants are examined, the PCE will be “vindicated,” which functions as an epistemic guarantee—i.e., a theological assertion that tells you in advance which readings must be correct. In other words, providence is not merely “God governed history”; it becomes the mechanism that identifies God’s preferred edition and certifies the editor’s selection as definitively right, filling the same role that special revelation would fill: giving knowledge of God’s specific intent about an extra-biblical editorial question that the documentary record (as he himself describes it) cannot conclusively answer.

- In conclusion, *A Century PCE* represents a major recalibration of the PCE narrative: Verschuur now concedes that no identifiable “first edition” of the PCE exists, and that the PCE emerged quietly across many Cambridge printings that share a recognizable profile yet contain “very minute” differences among themselves. This shift is significant because it relocates the PCE from a single perfect historical specimen to a reconstructed tradition that required “resolving... variations” through collation and editorial standardization in an electronic master text. Yet the central claim remains unchanged: that the PCE is the “final” and “pure” form of the King James Bible, a conclusion the book secures not by demonstrable bibliographic certainty but by invoking “Divine Providence” as the principle that “settles” the PCE and guarantees its vindication. Therefore, the decisive issue before us is not whether Cambridge produced excellent Bibles—few would deny that—but whether a historically underdetermined cluster of printings can legitimately be elevated into an exclusive, doctrinally binding final standard without collapsing into a functional substitute for special revelation.
- In the next Lesson we will look at Verschuur’s most recent publication *Vintage Bibles*.

### Works Cited

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