

The History of The English Bible

The English word, 'BIBLE' (meaning books or scrolls) was first used in the 14th century and it comes from the Greek word, 'biblios' which is the name of the papyrus plant they made paper from.

The Originals (Autographs)

Original, handwritten scrolls written by the prophets & apostles themselves. These were originally written upon papyrus or vellum (skins of clean animals such as a calf). Today, none remain in existence.

Ancient Manuscripts

This is a 'handwritten' copy of the originals in the original languages. **It is not a translation into another language.** This enormous undertaking was accomplished by priestly scribes. The O.T. (Old Testament) originals were first copied by those who were part of the Aaronic priesthood and then later on by Jewish scholars known as the Masorites.

Great care was taken when copying these original documents, knowing the judgments and warnings that God gave concerning the adding, deleting or altering His words in any fashion.

There are approximately between 5,200 and 5,300 manuscripts of the Bible (in whole or in part) in existence today. This compares to 500 ancient manuscripts of Homer's Iliad!

Manuscripts

These are hand copied originals of the scriptures in whole or part, produced from the early church fathers. Some of these church fathers include:

Chrysostom; Polycarp; Clement of Rome; Irenaeus, etc.

There are more than 86,000 citations from the Scriptures written by the church fathers that we have in existence today.

Versions

A version (ancient or modern) is any translation made directly from the original languages into another language.

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<u>Name of Bible</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Facts & Characteristics of the Bible</u>
Wycliffe	1380-84	John Wycliffe , known as the 'Morning Star' of the reformation was an English scholar who produced the first handwritten English translator of the Bible based upon the Latin Vulgate. He first translated the New Testament about 1380. Exactly how much more he completed before his death in 1384 is uncertain. His followers continued the work.
Tyndale's Bible	1526	William Tyndale , a courage reformer once said, " I will cause the boy who driveth the plough, to know more of the scriptures than they (speaking of the Roman Catholic priests) ". Tyndale, gave us the first English Bible, translated right from the original Greek & Hebrew Languages (although not fully completed). He was burned at the stake in 1536.
Coverdale Bible	1535	Miles Coverdale produced the first complete English Bible. His translation relied heavily upon both Tyndale and Luther's Bible.
Matthews Bible	1537	It is called the Matthew's Bible, but its authorship is generally credited to John Rogers, a friend and companion to William Tyndale. This is the first Bible in the English language that was issued with a King's license. The Matthew's Bible was mostly based upon the work of Tyndale and Cloverdale.
The Great Bible	1539	This English Bible was a large print edition, chained to the pulpits in churches where people flocked to hear the reading of the Word of God. It was mostly taken from the works of Tyndale, Coverdale and Rogers (the Matthew Bible).

Charting the Generations of Our English Bibles

The Geneva Bible	1560	<p>This was the Bible of the Pilgrims and the one they used when they landed in Plymouth, Massachusetts (1620). Many Protestant believers fled Great Britain, including Protestant reformer, John Knox because of the fierce persecution initiated under the English reign of Mary Tudor (Bloody Mary).</p> <p>A number of these Scholars gathered in Geneva, Switzerland (John Knox and Miles Coverdale were included). After six years they produced the Geneva Bible, which was the first English Bible with its entire translation from the original languages. It was a scholarly version and a very popular one in England.</p> <p>It also became the first to feature number verses and italics.</p>
King James Version (Authorized)	1611	<p>The product of an enormous undertaking, being dedicated to King James I, who authorized the 47 scholars to produce this translation. In this translation the Hebrew and Greek texts were studied and the other previous English versions were considered in order to obtain the best possible results.</p> <p>The King James version has undergone several revisions since the original 1611 edition, but only so far as the English language is concerned and not with regards to a re-translation of the words from the original Greek & Hebrew texts that were used.</p> <p>This Translation has endured a first place position among the English speaking people for nearly 400 years!</p>
The Revised Version	1881	<p>This version is primarily the result of the work of B.F. Wescott & F.J. Hort (confessed evolutionists, universalists and sympathizers toward Roman Church and Mariology). These translators (revisionists) chose to produce an English translation of the Bible based upon other manuscripts known as the 'Minority Text' for the first time.</p> <p>The Minority Text (made up from manuscripts which came from the Vatican and from Alexandria, Egypt) was purposely rejected by the early English translators, concluding that they were corrupted, thus making them inferior to those manuscripts which made up the 'Majority Text'.</p>

The Revised Version 1881
(continued)

The reason being was because of the Roman Catholic influence upon those copies contained in the Vatican (**codex Vaticanus**) and the corrupting influence of the Egyptians, affecting the texts from their region (**Codex Sinaiticus**). The Vaticanus and Sinaiticus Texts disagree with each other in more than 3,000 places within the Gospel alone.

All of the earlier English translations which were taken from the Greek were based upon the Majority Text, known as the '**Textus Receptus**' or the received Text.

Even though the Minority Text is older and in much better condition, (because they were not used, except by the Roman Catholics) there are nearly 6,000 differences when compared to the Textus Receptus.

In order to produce their '**new and improved**' Greek Text, Wescott & Hort changed the Greek text of the Textus Receptus in more than 5,000 places and more than 36,000 changes appeared in the Revised Version produced by Wescott & Hort! Since then, nearly all modern English versions are largely based upon the work of revisionists, Wescott & Hort, in whole or at least in part. Some of these English versions that have followed within the last hundred years or so includes:

The American Revised; The Amplified Version; The Jerusalem Bible; New English Bible; New American Standard; The Living Bible; The Good News Bible; The Message Bible; New International Version, etc.

*** Many of these versions have a good number of verses greatly altered or totally eliminated when compared with the King James Version and earlier English versions.**

The **NIV** is one of the most popular of the modern English versions used among Protestants and Evangelicals today. Yet, there are hundreds of omissions and modifications that have been made to the text. In many instances entire verses have been eliminated!

Matt. 18:11; Matt.9:13; Acts 8:37; Col. 1:14; I John 5:7,13; Eph. 4:6, etc.

Recommended Book: If the Foundations Be Destroyed by Chick Salliby