

## Lesson Six

# HOW WE GOT OUR BIBLE

## (Continued)

### **A. FIRST AUTHORIZED VERSION OF THE BIBLE:**

Thomas Cromwell induced Henry VIII to grant a license for the issue of the Bible in English. This was done by John Rogers and was known as “Matthews Bible.” It was unpopular because of comments in the margin against the Roman Catholic Church.

In 1539 Coverdale and others brought a reprint without the marginal comments. The King gave his approval and this became the Authorized Version. It was ordered to be in every parish church and chained to the pulpit where the people flocked to hear the Word of God read.

### **B. THE GENEVA BIBLE:**

In 1553, Queen Mary came to the throne and was queen for 4 1/2 bloody years. The printing, importation and circulation of Bible were prohibited. During her reign Ridley, Cranmer, Latimer and over three hundred Bible loving men were burnt at the stake.

In 1558, Queen Elizabeth came to the throne at the age of twenty-five. She inaugurated her reign by pressing to her lips and to her heart a copy of the Bible. This brought about a great change that caused everyone to rejoice.

In 1560 appeared a very important edition of the Bible known as the “Geneva Bible.” It was called the Geneva Bible because a number of reformers had fled to Geneva during the persecution under Queen Mary. While in Geneva, they translated this new Bible directly from the original Hebrew and Greek.

The Geneva Bible was smaller in size and became popular. It was the Bible used by Shakespeare, Cromwell and John Bunyon. It was this Bible that was brought to America by the Pilgrims.

The Geneva Bible was a very important Bible for the following reasons:

- It used the more easily read Roman type.
- It used the first whole Bible that was divided into verses.
- It was the first whole Bible to use italics for those words the translators added for the sake of English idiom and which were not in the original text.
- It was the first to omit the apocryphal books since their introduction into the Septuagint.

#### C. **THE BISHOP'S BIBLE:**

In 1568, a committee of bishops brought out the Bishop's Bible. It was a very expensive edition, a poor translation and never became popular. It was used only a short time.

#### D. **THE DOUAY BIBLE:**

In 1582, Roman Catholics translated the New Testament at Rheims. In 1610, they translated the Old Testament at Douay. This Bible includes the Apocrypha. It was translated from the Latin Vulgate and contains gross errors that cannot be supported by the original Hebrew and Greek.

#### E. **THE APOCRYPHA:**

The Apocrypha is fourteen books included in the Roman Catholic Bible and are not in the Protestant Bible. "Apocrypha" means "hidden" or "secret." These books are not included in the Protestant Bible because:

- The Scriptures are self contained and absolutely complete with nothing lacking.
- There is no reference to the Apocrypha in the New Testament.
- There are three solemn warnings against adding to the Bible:
  - Moses: *"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you"* (Deuteronomy 4:2).
  - Solomon: *"Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee and thou be found a liar"* (Proverbs 30:6).
  - John: *"If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life..."* (Revelation 22:18-19).
- Orthodox Jews or the Christian Church does not acknowledge the Apocrypha as being inspired.
- The Apocrypha contains a great deal of legendary nonsense and some gross historical errors.

#### F. **KING JAMES VERSION:**

The King James Version appeared in 1611. This is the translation now used by most English-speaking people. Forty-seven scholars authorized by King James made an exhaustive study of earlier versions. Ancient Hebrew and Greek texts were studied in order to obtain the best results. It has held first place for over three hundred and fifty years.

The forty-seven translators were divided into groups whom were given certain sections of the Bible to translate. Their work was then submitted for the approval from all the others. The whole Bible was then given to a committee of six whom worked nine months examining the complete text.

The English language has changed somewhat in the last three hundred and seventy-five years. The earliest printing had many words spelled much different and this was modified about one hundred years later.

Here are two verses from the 1611 printing: *“Yea though I walke through the valley of the shadowe of death, I will feare no evill: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staffe, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me, in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oyle, my cuppe runneth over” (Psalm 23:4-5).*

#### **G. REVISED VERSION:**

In 1870 nearly one hundred men from different denominations met at Westminster and for over ten years worked at revising the Authorized Version.

In 1881 the Revised New Testament was published. The demand for this version was so great that two million copies were ordered before it was published. Every word from the beginning of Matthew to the end of Romans was telegraphed from New York to Chicago. This was the longest telegraphic message ever sent up to that time.

In 1885 the Revised Version of the whole Bible was issued. The Old Testament was also revised at Westminster but it took fifteen years to accomplish.

In this version paragraphs were introduced.

#### **H. AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION:**

This version was issued in 1905. It also took fifteen years to accomplish and divide the Bible into paragraphs.

## **I. REVISED STANDARD VERSION:**

In 1929 the copyright of the American Standard Version was transferred to the International Council of Religious Education, a body related to 40 major Protestant denominations. This council appointed a committee to revise the Standard Version.

The Revised Standard Version of the New Testament was published in 1962 and the complete Bible was issued in 1952.

This version reflects liberal theology. We see this in the translation of the word “virgin” etc.

## **J. OTHER TRANSLATIONS:**

There are other translations into modern English that may be used: Moffat, Weymouth, Amplified, etc. These help in the study of the Bible and may be used as a source of reference. However, it is wise to keep to the Authorized King James Version as the main text of the Word of God as this is the version that God has used above all others in the salvation of souls.

## **K. LOVE FOR THE BIBLE:**

When we realize the long hours of toil that have been invested into the translations, and that many men gave their lives in order that we might have the Bible, how we should devoutly love our Bibles.

Above all this, it is God’s Word and for this reason alone, we should ever cherish it and hide it away in our hearts.

