THE PERFECT BIBLE / FREE GUIDE

Why the King James Bible Is the Preserved Word of God

A Bible-first case for confidence, with honest answers to difficult questions

SCRIPTURE / HISTORY / HARD QUESTIONS

A practical seven-day reading plan

Source references and linked studies

theperfectbible.org

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START HERE

A Bible you can receive with confidence

God has preserved His Word. The King James Bible faithfully gives that Word to English readers.

The case in three steps

First, Scripture teaches us to trust the enduring Word of God. Second, the biblical writings reached later generations through real copies, translations and the use of believing communities. Third, we receive the King James Bible as a faithful English witness to that inheritance: the Hebrew Old Testament and the received Greek New Testament.

What this booklet means by preserved

Preservation means that God's Word has not been lost to His people. Inspiration concerns God's giving of Scripture; preservation concerns its continuing availability; translation carries its meaning into another language. These belong together, but they are different claims. We do not need to treat the English translators as new apostles to value their work.

Faith and evidence belong in the same conversation

The title states the central claim plainly. Historians do not all agree that one English Bible is the preserved text. The reasons for receiving the KJB are given here, along with the places where surviving evidence raises a real difficulty. Confidence should make a reader willing to inspect a source.

Read the Bible, examine the record, and let each argument carry the weight it can actually bear.

Sources: S1 · S2. Full references on pages 11-12.

Continue with the linked study at theperfectbible.org

GOD'S PROMISE

Begin with what Scripture says

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

Isaiah 40:8 · KJV

God's Word endures

Isaiah contrasts our frailty with God's enduring word. Jesus says that His words will not pass away (Matthew 24:35). Peter connects the enduring word with the gospel preached to his readers (1 Peter 1:23-25). Taken together, these passages give a Christian a positive reason to expect continuing access to God's truth, rather than to imagine that it vanished with the original writing materials.

Scripture is given for use

Second Timothy 3:15-17 describes the holy scriptures Timothy had known from childhood and their ability to make him wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. Scripture equips God's servant for doctrine, correction and good works. Our first response should therefore be to read, believe and obey it, not merely to argue about editions.

The step that still needs an argument

These verses do not name the English language, the year 1611 or a particular printed edition. The promise of preservation is our starting conviction; identifying the KJB as its faithful English expression also requires an argument about transmission and translation. Quoting a preservation promise does not, by itself, settle every disputed reading.

A promise of enduring Scripture supports confidence. It is not a shortcut around textual questions.

Sources: S1. Full references on pages 11-12.

Continue with the linked study at theperfectbible.org

A RECEIVED INHERITANCE

The Word did not begin in 1611

The King James Bible belongs to a long history of receiving, copying, translating and reading Scripture.

The Old Testament

The KJB Old Testament stands principally in the traditional Hebrew textual stream commonly called the Masoretic Text. 'Masoretic' refers to a tradition of preserving and annotating the Hebrew text, including its reading. It does not mean that the biblical books were first written in the Middle Ages. Nor does it mean that every ancient Hebrew witness agrees at every point.

The New Testament

The KJB New Testament stands in the early printed Greek tradition later called the Textus Receptus, or received text. That tradition has strong connections with the later Greek manuscript tradition, but the TR and the manuscript majority are not identical. Its printed editions also differ. A defense of the KJB should be precise about the particular reading under discussion.

Why reception matters to us

We take the continuing use of Scripture among believers seriously. It is reasonable within a providential view of history to value a text received in worship, preaching and translation. Yet long use alone cannot prove that every reading is original. Our case joins that history of reception to the biblical promise and to a considered judgment about the text.

The KJB carries an inherited text. Neither 'oldest copy' nor 'most copies' settles every reading automatically.

Sources: S2 · S3 · S4. Full references on pages 11-12.

Continue with the linked study at theperfectbible.org

FAITHFUL ENGLISH

A translation worth knowing well

Receiving the KJB means putting a stable, carefully worked English Bible to use in ordinary Christian life.

Continuity with earlier English Bibles

The 1611 translators described their task as improving an existing English inheritance. They worked from the biblical languages while consulting earlier translations. Their own preface is an essential primary source: it explains their aims, their use of other versions and the value they placed on giving readers Scripture in a language they understood.

Clarity through patient reading

The KJB's established wording supports shared reading, memorization and close comparison across passages. Some of its language needs explanation today. 'Thou' and 'thee' address one person; 'ye' and 'you' can mark a plural address. Context and a good historical dictionary help with words whose meanings have changed. Difficulty is a reason to teach carefully, not to pretend every reader already understands.

Honor the translators by reading them accurately

Their preface does not claim that their translation team received new prophetic inspiration. It recognizes the value of other translations and of marginal alternatives where a passage is uncertain. Confidence in the KJB need not attribute to the translators a claim they did not make.

A Bible is most fruitful when it is read, understood, remembered and obeyed.

Sources: S2. Full references on pages 11-12.

Continue with the linked study at theperfectbible.org

CASE STUDIES · ANCIENT WITNESSES

Mark's ending and Philip's question

Mark 16:9-20

The KJB includes the longer ending of Mark. Irenaeus, writing in the second century, explicitly attributes the wording of Mark 16:19 to Mark near the close of his Gospel (Against Heresies 3.10.5). That is substantial evidence that this ending was known early. It was not invented by the English translators. The surviving manuscripts still disagree, and modern editions flag the absence of verses 9-20 from some early witnesses. Early attestation supports the defense; it does not remove the disagreement.

Acts 8:37

The KJB records the Ethiopian's confession of faith before baptism. Irenaeus also recounts his confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Against Heresies 3.12.8). This is early evidence for that confession in the story. It does not establish every word of the complete KJB verse, including Philip's opening response. Modern editions note that many early manuscripts lack the verse.

What the evidence contributes

These passages show why a reading should not be dismissed simply because some modern editions bracket it or place it in a note. There is a history to investigate. They also show why each case needs its own argument: a clear quotation of Mark's ending and a witness to the Ethiopian's confession are different kinds of evidence.

Ancient use is real evidence. State exactly which words the ancient witness actually supports.

Sources: S5 · S6 · S7 · S8. Full references on pages 11-12.

Continue with the linked study at theperfectbible.org

CASE STUDY · 1 JOHN 5:7-8

The Heavenly Witnesses

The KJB names the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost. Its longer wording has an ancient Latin history and a difficult Greek history.

The historical defense

Cyprian applies the unity of the three to Father, Son and Holy Spirit in On the Unity of the Church, section 6. Whether he had the expanded wording in his Bible or interpreted the shorter verse in a Trinitarian way is disputed. A full Latin form is unmistakable in later ancient testimony. The African confession associated with AD 484 is a witness to public Latin Christian use, more than a thousand years before the KJB.

The strongest objection

The longer wording lacks the early Greek support we would like to have. Ancient Latin use establishes reception in Latin Christianity; it does not independently establish what John originally wrote in Greek. The surviving record therefore gives a strong objection to originality. The possibility of a lost early source is not the same as evidence that such a source existed.

Our conclusion

We retain the passage within the received text on a providential and theological understanding of preservation. We also acknowledge that the surviving early Greek evidence is a serious difficulty for that position. The doctrine of the Trinity has a broader scriptural basis, including Matthew 28:19 and John 1:1; it does not stand or fall with one disputed passage.

Defend the received reading without claiming that Cyprian quoted the complete KJB verse or that AD 484 proves the Greek autograph.

Sources: S9 · S10 · S11. Full references on pages 11-12.

Continue with the linked study at theperfectbible.org

CASE STUDIES · CONTEXT AND TRANSMISSION

Two more passages to examine

John 7:53-8:11

The account of the woman taken in adultery is received in the KJB and has a long history of Christian use. Augustine discusses its removal by some readers who feared it encouraged sin (On Adulterous Marriages 2.6-7). That is testimony to an ancient explanation, not proof that every omission had that cause. Early manuscripts lack the passage, and some later copies place it elsewhere. Those facts create a substantial difficulty for its original location in John's Gospel.

Matthew 18:11

The KJB says, 'For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.' Modern editions often place this verse in a footnote, citing the manuscript difference. A closely related saying appears in Luke 19:10. Its omission from the main text of Matthew in a modern edition does not by itself show an attempt to remove the teaching that Christ saves the lost. The question is where the saying belonged in Matthew's transmitted text.

Reading with conviction and care

We continue to read these passages as part of the received Bible. A complete argument should nevertheless acknowledge the best evidence on the other side. The meaningful distinction is between our theological reason for retaining a reading and the historical evidence available for that reading. Neither is improved by guessing at an opponent's motives.

Read the full passage and the edition's notes before making a whole-version accusation.

Sources: S12 · S13 · S14. Full references on pages 11-12.

Continue with the linked study at theperfectbible.org

QUESTIONS PEOPLE ACTUALLY ASK

Straight answers to hard questions

Where was God's Word before 1611?

In the biblical writings transmitted through Hebrew and Greek copies, translations and Christian use. The claim is preservation through history, not the sudden arrival of Scripture in seventeenth-century English.

Did the KJB ever change?

Printed editions have spelling, punctuation, typographical and some wording differences. Distinguish a translation's textual identity from every printer's execution of it. When a particular edition is challenged, inspect that edition and the exact difference; do not answer every question with the slogan 'only spelling changed.'

Does preservation require English for everyone?

No. The biblical message is for every nation. Our recommendation to English readers is the KJB. That recommendation does not make English a sacred language or erase the need for faithful translation into other languages.

Does a numerical pattern prove inspiration?

A pattern may be interesting, but its counting rules, edition, alternative explanations and reproducibility must be examined. A striking result is not a substitute for a textual argument. Likewise, the identification of one forged manuscript does not prove that unrelated manuscripts are forged.

Can someone disagree and still be a Christian?

Yes. A disagreement over textual history is not, by itself, a verdict on someone's salvation or honesty. Explain the preservation case clearly and treat the person fairly. The aim is confidence in Scripture and faithfulness to Christ.

A strong conviction does not require a weak description of someone else's position.

Sources: S2 · S15 · S16. Full references on pages 11-12.

Continue with the linked study at theperfectbible.org

PUT THE CASE TO WORK

Seven days with your Bible open

Days 1 and 2 · Promise and purpose

Read Isaiah 40:1-11 and 1 Peter 1:18-25. What is enduring, and how is it connected to the gospel? Then read 2 Timothy 3:14-17. List what Scripture equips a believer to do. Write your answer before reading another person's explanation.

Days 3 and 4 · Translation and testimony

Read the 1611 translators' preface, especially its explanation of translation and its account of their work. Then compare Mark 16 in the KJB with the notes in another named edition. Read Irenaeus 3.10.5. Separate what the quotation establishes from what remains disputed.

Days 5 and 6 · Follow the difficult cases

Read Acts 8:26-40 and 1 John 5:1-13. For each case, make three short notes: the received reading, its strongest supporting witness, and the strongest objection. Use the linked studies for John 7:53-8:11 and Matthew 18:11 to repeat the exercise.

Day 7 · Write your own conclusion

Finish these sentences: 'I trust God's Word because...'; 'I receive the KJB because...'; 'The question I still need to investigate is...'. Keep theological conviction, observed evidence and unresolved questions distinct. Then choose a book of the Bible to read steadily. Preservation is a reason to open the book.

Our invitation: receive the King James Bible with confidence, examine its history honestly, and live by the Scripture you read.

Sources: S1 · S2 · S5. Full references on pages 11-12.

Continue with the linked study at theperfectbible.org

CHECK THE RECORD

Sources & further reading

Source labels in the booklet point here. Titles are clickable. Scripture references use the King James Version; sources may hold different conclusions.

S1 · Bible passages in the King James Version

Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 24:35; 1 Peter 1:23-25; 2 Timothy 3:15-17. Read the surrounding chapters.

S2 · The Translators to the Reader (1611)

Primary preface, modernized spelling. See Translation Necessary; An Answer to the Imputations; Reasons Moving Us; A Satisfaction to Our Brethren.

S3 · Codex Sinaiticus Project: About the Codex

Institutional description of a surviving fourth-century Greek Bible.

S4 · F. H. A. Scrivener, The New Testament in the Original Greek (1894)

Preface explains the reconstruction of the Greek text underlying the English Authorized Version and its differences from Beza.

S5 · Irenaeus, Against Heresies 3.10.5

Ancient author explicitly attributes Mark 16:19 to Mark. English translation of the surviving text.

S6 · ESV publisher's text: Mark 16

Inspect the editorial notice and notes concerning verses 9-20.

S7 · Irenaeus, Against Heresies 3.12.8

Ancient witness to the Ethiopian's confession; distinguish it from the complete Acts 8:37 verse.

S8 · ESV publisher's text: Acts 8

Inspect the note to verse 37 and read the baptism account in context.

CHECK THE RECORD

Keep following the evidence

Source labels in the booklet point here. Titles are clickable. Scripture references use the King James Version; sources may hold different conclusions.

S9 · Cyprian, On the Unity of the Church, section 6

Primary text behind the disputed Cyprian argument for 1 John 5:7.

S10 · Galiza and Reeve (2018), The Johannine Comma

Andrews University Seminary Studies 56(1), 63-89. Historical research and references for the Greek and Latin evidence, including AD 484.

S11 · H. J. de Jonge (1980), Erasmus and the Comma Johanneum

Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses 56, 381-389. Investigates the frequently repeated Erasmus promise story.

S12 · Jennifer Knust and Tommy Wasserman, To Cast the First Stone (2019)

Research introduction, citing Augustine, On Adulterous Marriages 2.7.6, and examining the story's transmission.

S13 · ESV publisher's text: John 7:53-8:11

Read its notice and footnote on manuscript absence and alternate locations.

S14 · ESV publisher's text: Matthew 18

Inspect the verse 11 footnote; compare Luke 19:10.

S15 · David Norton, A Textual History of the King James Bible (2005)

Cambridge University Press research volume on manuscript work, printing and editorial changes.

S16 · University of Chicago: Archaic Mark investigation

Institutional account of the examination that identified manuscript 2427 as a modern forgery.

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An independent Christian study resource from The Perfect Bible. This guide presents a preservation conviction and distinguishes it from disputed historical conclusions.