

# Revisions of the King James Version of the Bible

By John Kohler

*The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever. — Psalms 12:6-7.*

The King James Version of the Bible as we have it today is not exactly the same as the King James Version of 1611 A.D. The King James Version of the Bible was revised four times, and certain printing, spelling, and textual changes were made on each of those occasions.

## **I. The Four Revisions of the King James Version**

- A. 1629 Cambridge Edition
- B. 1638 Cambridge Edition
- C. 1762 Cambridge Edition
- D. 1769 Oxford Edition

## **II. The Changes Made in the King James Version**

### **A. Printing Changes**

1. The 1611 King James Version was printed in Germanic or Gothic Type.
2. Starting in 1612 A.D., the King James Version was printed in Roman Type.

3. A Gothic "s" looks like a Roman "f," a Gothic "v" looks like a Roman "u," and a Gothic "j" looks like a Roman "i."

## **B. Spelling Changes**

1. The Modern English language came into existence in about 1500 A.D.
2. Spelling was not standardized in the Modern English language until the 18th century A.D.
3. This means that the spelling of the words found in the King James Version was not standardized until the 1769 Edition.

## **C. Textual Changes**

1. There are approximately 400 textual differences between the 1611 King James Version and the 1769 King James Version.
2. These differences came about through the correction of typographical errors.
3. In 1611 A.D. itself, two Oxford editions of the King James Version were printed by the same printers on the same printing press; yet, there were 100 textual differences between them due to typographical and italics errors.
4. It is estimated that over 70 percent of these typographical errors were corrected by the time the 1638 Edition of the King James Version was printed, and 100 percent of the typographical errors were corrected by the time of the 1769 Edition.
5. None of the textual corrections were made for the purpose of updating

the language or correcting translation errors. They were simply made for the purpose of correcting typographical and italics errors. Also, changes were made in some of the marginal references.

6. By way of comparison, there are approximately 60,000 textual differences between the 1769 King James Version and the 1979 New King James Version, and the New King James translators did not limit their changes to orthography or typography. Instead, they published an entirely new translation of the Bible based upon different underlying texts. This means that there are 150 times more changes in the New King James Version than the total number of changes in the four revisions of the King James Version of the Bible.