

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

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A Study for Judaism • Christianity • Islam

DOCUMENT 151

THE KING JAMES DECEPTION

A Covenant Deep Dive into King James I, His Translators, and the Authorized Version as an Instrument of the Crown

Who Commissioned the King James Bible, What Rules Governed Its Translators, What Did It Do to the Name and to the Assembly, and Does Any Translation Stand Above the Hebrew Text? — A Three-Religion Covenant Response

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The Message is Sent to the World

REACHING JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM

☆ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	☪ ISLAM
Judaism never received the King James Version as scripture; it reads the Hebrew text itself. Yet the KJV's Old Testament was translated from a Jewish printed edition — the Second Rabbinic Bible of Jacob ben Chayyim (Venice, 1524–25) — and its "LORD" in capitals follows the synagogue custom of reading Adonai (Lord) where the Hebrew writes the Name. The question for the Jewish reader is whose custom governs the page: the text's or the tradition's.	For four centuries the King James Version has been the English Bible of much of the Protestant world, and the King James-Only movement holds it to be the only preserved Word of God in English. This study asks the historical questions every Christian reader is entitled to ask: who commissioned it, under what rules, and what those rules did to the text. It also lets the KJV translators speak for themselves.	Islam holds that the Qur'an is revelation only in its Arabic; every translation is an "interpretation of the meanings." The Qur'an speaks of those who "distort words from their places" (Q. 4:46; 5:13). The King James story is a test case of that charge applied to a translation: where the text was faithfully rendered, and where a king's rules shaped the rendering.

DOCTRINAL AUTHORITY — STANDING RULE OF MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

The sole binding authority of Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution is the *Tanakh* — the written covenant of **Yahweh**. No Talmudic tractate, Church council decree, papal encyclical, hadith collection, or extra-biblical tradition carries doctrinal weight equal to or greater than the written Torah. Where any tradition conflicts with the written covenant, the written covenant governs without exception. The Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an are cited as historical reference and comparative witness — never as superseding authority. Miqdash Bethel uses the Written Tanakh as its sole source for four reasons: it is the only text Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all recognize as originally given by **Yahweh**; it predates and underlies the Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an, so testing those traditions against it follows the evidentiary direction of **Deuteronomy 19:15** — the earlier witness governs the later commentary; every later tradition that departs from the Tanakh does so by addition or reinterpretation, never by overturning the text itself, so the text remains the fixed standard; and **Yahweh's** own words declare the covenant unchanging (Malachi 3:6; Psalms 119:89), making the written covenant — not evolving institutional interpretation — the only stable ground for doctrine. All three great covenant traditions — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — are addressed simultaneously and equally in every Miqdash Bethel document, because **Yahweh's** covenant belongs to every nation that will receive it. The **Deuteronomy 19:15** two-or-three-witness evidentiary standard governs all textual claims in this document.

HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT

This is the revised edition of Document 151, first issued in June 2026. It examines the King James Version (KJV) of 1611: the king who commissioned it, the rules given to its translators, and what those rules did to the Name of **Yahweh** and to the Hebrew word for the covenant assembly. The revision applies research carried out for **Doc 258** (*Ask for the Old Paths*) and further checking of the primary sources; every change from the June edition is listed in Section XIV. **Yahweh** (יהוה) and **Elohim** (אֱלֹהִים) appear in bold throughout. Tanakh books and personal names are given in English. Hebrew transliterations and their English meanings appear together in ***bold italic*** at every occurrence. Scripture references are bold. Scripture is rendered in a literal working translation from the Hebrew. Findings from the Tanakh are graded **Corroborated** (two or more independent Tanakh witnesses), **Single witness**, or **Not in the text**. Historical findings are graded by the same standard applied to historical evidence: **Corroborated** (two or more independent sources), **Single source**, or **Not established**. King James's writings, the translators' rules and preface, church documents, the New Testament, and the Qur'an appear only as historical and comparative reference. The Written Tanakh governs all conclusions.

TANAKH BOOKS CITED IN THIS DOCUMENT

DIVISION	BOOKS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Torah	Exodus, Deuteronomy	The Name as memorial; the covenant opening at Sinai; the midwives who refused Pharaoh; the ban on adding or subtracting; the law of the king; the law read before the whole assembly; the two-or-three-witness standard
Nevi'im (Prophets)	1 Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah	The warning about kings; the Name not given to another; the lying pen of the scribes; perverting the words of the living Elohim
Ketuvim (Writings)	Psalms, Proverbs, Nehemiah, 2 Chronicles	Touch not My anointed; the Name alone Yahweh ; do not add to His words; the law read with the sense given; King Asa and his mother

COMPARATIVE TEXTS CITED — HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE REFERENCE ONLY

CATEGORY	TEXTS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Writings of James I	<i>Daemonologie</i> (1597); <i>The True Law of Free Monarchies</i> (1598); <i>Basilikon Doron</i> (1599); Speech to Parliament (21 March 1610)	The king's own political theology — the first witness
Records of the translation	William Barlow, <i>The Summe and Substance of the Conference</i> (1604); Richard Bancroft, <i>Rules to be Observed in the Translation of the Bible</i> (1604); Miles Smith, <i>"The Translators to the Reader"</i> (1611)	The Hampton Court record, the fifteen rules, and the translators' own preface
Earlier English Bibles	Tyndale New Testament (1526); Coverdale (1535); Matthew's Bible (1537); Great Bible (1539); Geneva Bible (1560); Bishops' Bible (1568)	The translations the KJV revised, and how each rendered <i>ekklesia (assembly)</i>
Later history	British and Foreign Bible Society, 1826 resolution on the Apocrypha; Cambridge (1762) and Oxford (1769) standard editions	The removal of the Apocrypha and the revisions of the KJV text

CATEGORY	TEXTS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
New Testament	Matthew 18:17; Acts 19:32, 39, 41	The Greek <i>ekklesia</i> (<i>assembly</i>) and how the KJV rendered it
Qur'an	Q. 4:46; 5:13; 5:44	The Torah as guidance and light; the charge of distortion
Modern scholarship	Alister McGrath, <i>In the Beginning</i> (2001); David Norton, <i>A Textual History of the King James Bible</i> (2005); Gordon Campbell, <i>Bible: The Story of the King James Version</i> (2010); Kenneth Fincham (ed.), <i>The Early Stuart Church</i> (1993)	Historical reconstruction of the project and its text

I. FRAMING THE QUESTION — A BIBLE WITH A KING'S NAME ON IT

I-A. The Question as It Is Usually Asked

Millions of readers call the King James Version simply "*the Bible*." A strong movement within Christianity holds that it is the only English Bible **Yahweh** has preserved, and that every later translation is a corruption. Others dismiss it as a relic. Neither position begins where a covenant study must begin: with the evidence of how the translation was made, and with the Hebrew text it claims to render.

The earlier Scofield study in this Library examined how a set of printed notes reshaped the way millions read scripture. This study turns the same questions on the translation itself. **First:** who commissioned it, and what did he believe about his own authority? **Second:** what rules governed the translators? **Third:** what did those rules and the translators' choices do to the Name of **Yahweh** and to the Hebrew word for the covenant assembly? **Fourth:** does any translation, the KJV included, stand above the Hebrew text?

I-B. The Question in the Tanakh's Own Terms

The Tanakh places a fixed rule over every hand that handles the written word:

"You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of Yahweh your Elohim which I command you." (Deuteronomy 4:2)

And it warns that the scribes who copy the word can also bend it:

***"How can you say, We are wise, and the law of Yahweh is with us? But behold, the lying pen of the scribes has made it into a lie."* (Jeremiah 8:8)**

A translation is a scribal act. The question is not whether the KJV is beautiful or influential — it is both — but whether its making served the text or served a throne. This revised edition keeps the June 2026 conclusion, corrects several historical details in it (Section XIV), and lets the evidence speak on both sides.

II. THE WORD STUDY — THE TERMS AT STAKE

The table sets out the Hebrew terms this study relies on, with the one Greek term the King James rules addressed directly.

TERM	STRONG'S	CORE MEANING	KEY TEXT
<i>YHWH (Yahweh)</i> , יהוה	H3068	The personal covenant Name; His <i>"memorial to all generations"</i>	Exodus 3:15
<i>Adonai (Lord / Master)</i> , אֲדֹנָי	H136	A title; read aloud in the synagogue in place of the Name, and the source of the KJV's <i>"LORD"</i>	Psalms 110:1
<i>shem (name) and zekher (memorial)</i> , שֵׁם, זִכָּרוֹן	H8034 / H2143	The Name and its remembrance through every generation	Exodus 3:15
<i>qahal (assembly / congregation)</i> , קָהָל	H6951	The called assembly of Israel gathered before Yahweh	Deuteronomy 31:30
<i>edah (congregation / community)</i> , עֵדָה	H5712	The appointed community of Israel as a whole	Exodus 12:3
<i>ekklesia (assembly)</i> , ἐκκλησία	G1577	Greek for an assembly; the Septuagint's most common rendering of <i>qahal (assembly)</i>	Acts 19:32
<i>yasaf (to add) and gara (to diminish)</i> , יָסַף, גָּרַע	H3254 / H1639	The two forbidden acts against the commanded word	Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32
<i>sofer (scribe)</i> , סֹפֵר	H5608	Writer and copyist; the trade through which the text passes	Jeremiah 8:8

TERM	STRONG'S	CORE MEANING	KEY TEXT
<i>sheqer</i> (<i>falsehood</i>), שֶׁקֶר	H8267	A lie; what the scribes' pen can make of the law	Jeremiah 8:8
<i>mashiach</i> (<i>anointed one</i>), מָשִׁיחַ	H4899	One anointed by Yahweh ; in Psalms 105:15 the patriarchs, not a reigning king	Psalms 105:15
<i>melekh</i> (<i>king</i>), מֶלֶךְ	H4428	The king — permitted by the Torah only under the written law	Deuteronomy 17:14–20

Two lexical observations govern what follows.

First, the Name and the title are different words. *YHWH* (*Yahweh*) is a proper name; *Adonai* (*Lord*) is a title. A translation that prints "**LORD**" where the Hebrew writes יהוה is not translating the word on the page; it is translating the word a reader would say aloud in its place.

Second, *qahal* (*assembly*) names people, not an institution. It is the whole of Israel gathered to hear the covenant (**Deuteronomy 31:30**). Which English word renders it — or renders the Greek *ekklesia* (*assembly*) that often translates it — shapes what a reader imagines the people of **Yahweh** to be.

III. THE MAN BEHIND THE BIBLE — WHO WAS KING JAMES I?

III-A. James Stuart, King of Scotland, Then of England

James Charles Stuart was born on 19 June 1566, the only son of Mary, Queen of Scots, and Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley. He became James VI of Scotland in July 1567, at thirteen months old, when his mother was forced to abdicate. On the death of Elizabeth I in 1603 he became James I of England, the first monarch to rule both kingdoms, and he reigned until his death in 1625.

James was an unusually prolific author for a monarch. His works include *Daemonologie* (1597), a treatise on witchcraft; *The True Law of Free Monarchies* (1598); *Basilikon Doron* ("**The Royal Gift**," 1599), written as instruction for his son; and his speeches to Parliament. These writings are the **first witness** in this study, because they show the mind of the man who commissioned the translation.

III-B. Witness One — James's Own Words

In his speech to Parliament on 21 March 1610, the year before the KJV was published, James said:

"The state of monarchy is the supremest thing upon earth; for kings are not only God's lieutenants upon earth, and sit upon God's throne, but even by God himself they are called gods." (James I, Speech to Parliament, 1610)

In *The True Law of Free Monarchies* he argued that a king is answerable to God alone and that subjects may not resist even a wicked king. This is the doctrine known as the divine right of kings. It was the governing political theology of the man at whose order the translation was made.

III-C. The Tanakh's Answer

The Tanakh does not say kings are gods. When Israel asked for a king, **Yahweh** told Samuel:

"They have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them." (1 Samuel 8:7)

Samuel then warned what a king would take: sons for his chariots, daughters for his kitchens, the best fields and vineyards, a tenth of the flocks, *"and you shall be his servants"* (1 Samuel 8:11–17). The Torah does permit a king, but only under the written law: he must not multiply horses, wives, or silver, and he must write his own copy of the law *"that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers"* (Deuteronomy 17:14–20). The king is under the text, not over it.

Finding — That James I held and published a doctrine of kings as *"gods"* answerable to no subject is **Corroborated** (his *True Law of Free Monarchies*, *Basilikon Doron*, and the 1610 speech). That the Tanakh places the king beneath the written law and never above it is **Corroborated** (Deuteronomy 17:14–20; 1 Samuel 8:7–18).

IV. HAMPTON COURT AND THE GENEVA BIBLE

IV-A. The Bible James Wanted Replaced

The most popular English Bible of the day was the Geneva Bible of 1560, made by English Protestant exiles in Geneva. It was the Bible of Shakespeare's generation, of the Puritans, and of the Pilgrims who sailed on the *Mayflower* in 1620. Its distinguishing feature was its marginal notes: summaries, explanations, and theological comment on almost every page.

At the Hampton Court Conference, according to the account published by William Barlow, James said that *"in the Geneva translation some notes are partial, untrue, seditious, and savouring of traitorous conceits."* He gave two examples. The first was the note on **Exodus 1:19**, where the Hebrew midwives refused Pharaoh's order to kill the boys; the Geneva margin held their disobedience lawful. The second was the note on **2 Chronicles 15:16**, where King Asa removed his mother from

her position for making an idol; the Geneva margin faulted Asa for not doing more. A king whose own mother had been executed for treason heard in that note a threat.

The text of **Exodus** is plain about the midwives:

"But the midwives feared Elohim, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the boys live." (Exodus 1:17)

"And Elohim dealt well with the midwives... and because the midwives feared Elohim, He made them households." (Exodus 1:20–21)

The Geneva note said nothing the text does not already say: the midwives feared **Elohim** more than the king, and **Elohim** rewarded them for it.

James also objected to how the Geneva notes handled **Psalms 105:15**, *"Touch not My anointed ones, and do My prophets no harm."* In its context the *mashiach* (anointed one) of that verse are the patriarchs — Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob — whom **Yahweh** protected from foreign kings (**Psalms 105:9–15**). The verse protects the covenant family from kings, not kings from their subjects.

IV-B. Hampton Court, January 1604

The conference met at Hampton Court Palace on 14, 16, and 18 January 1604, in response to the Millenary Petition, which Puritan clergy had presented to James asking for reform of the Church of England. James rejected almost all the Puritan requests and reaffirmed the rule of bishops, famously summing up his view as *"No bishop, no king."* When the Puritan scholar John Rainolds proposed a new translation of the Bible, James agreed. The resolution was for a translation *"as consonant as can be to the original Hebrew and Greek,"* to be printed *"without any marginal notes."*

IV-C. What Happened to the Geneva Bible

The June 2026 edition of this study said that James banned the Geneva Bible in 1616. The record is more precise. No royal decree banning it has been found. The King's Printer, who held the rights to the new translation, stopped issuing Geneva Bibles in England around 1616, and licences for others to print it became hard to obtain. Geneva Bibles continued to be printed abroad and imported, some printed in England carrying a false date of 1599, and the last known edition appeared in 1644. The effect was to push the Geneva Bible out of English printing; the means was control of the press, not a single ban.

Finding — That James regarded the Geneva notes as seditious and commissioned a translation without such notes is **Corroborated** (Barlow's account of the conference; the conference resolution;

Bancroft's Rule 6). That the Geneva Bible was banned by royal decree in 1616 is **Not established**; that its printing in England was halted around that date is **Corroborated**.

V. THE TRANSLATORS — WHO BUILT THE KJV?

V-A. Archbishop Richard Bancroft

The project was overseen by Richard Bancroft, Bishop of London and, from December 1604, Archbishop of Canterbury. Bancroft had spent his career enforcing conformity in the Church of England against Puritans, Catholics, and Separatists. At Hampton Court he is recorded as objecting that *"if every man's humour should be followed, there would be no end of translating."* Once the project was approved, he issued the fifteen rules that governed it (Section VI).

Bancroft died in 1610, a year before publication. The claim, repeated in the June edition, that he personally made fourteen last-minute changes to the text rests on a later report of a complaint by Miles Smith; it is a **Single source** and is recorded here only as such.

V-B. Six Companies of Scholars

About fifty-four men were named to the work and about forty-seven are known to have taken part. They were organized into six companies, two each at Westminster, Oxford, and Cambridge, each assigned a section of the Bible. All were members of the Church of England, and nearly all were clergy. Among them:

Lancelot Andrewes — Dean of Westminster and director of the First Westminster Company (Genesis through 2 Kings), a gifted linguist and a firm supporter of rule by bishops.

John Rainolds — President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, the Puritan who proposed the translation at Hampton Court. He worked with the company translating the Prophets and died in May 1607, before the work was finished.

Miles Smith — A Hebraist of the Oxford company who, with Thomas Bilson, did the final review of the text and wrote the preface *"The Translators to the Reader."* He later became Bishop of Gloucester.

Sir Henry Savile — Warden of Merton College, Oxford, a layman and scholar who worked in the company translating the Gospels, Acts, and Revelation.

The project was a scholarly work of real skill. It was also, by its membership, a work of one established church under the rules of its archbishop.

VI. BANCROFT'S FIFTEEN RULES — THE CORRECTED RECORD

The June 2026 edition of this study quoted Bancroft's rules from secondary summaries and misnumbered several of them. This revised edition sets out all fifteen from the published text of the rules, with the covenant analysis beside each. The wording is lightly modernized.

#	THE RULE (BANCROFT, 1604)	COVENANT ANALYSIS
1	The Bishops' Bible, ordinarily read in the church, <i>"to be followed, and as little altered as the truth of the original will permit."</i>	The project was a revision of the state church's Bible, not a fresh translation from the Hebrew. The original was to govern only where it compelled a change.
2	Names of the prophets and holy writers, and other names, to be kept <i>"as near as may be, accordingly as they are vulgarly used."</i>	Hebrew names were fixed in their familiar anglicized forms, one step further from the Hebrew.
3	<i>"The old ecclesiastical words to be kept, viz. the word church not to be translated congregation, &c."</i>	The most politically weighted rule. It fixed <i>"church"</i> for the Greek <i>ekklesia</i> (<i>assembly</i>) against Tyndale's <i>"congregation"</i> (Section VIII).
4	Where a word has several meanings, <i>"that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most eminent Fathers,"</i> agreeable to <i>"the analogy of faith."</i>	Where a word was open, church tradition — not the Hebrew context alone — chose the meaning. This places the tradition over the text at exactly the points where the text is hardest.
5	The division of chapters to be altered <i>"either not at all, or as little as may be."</i>	The medieval chapter divisions were kept, whatever they did to the flow of a passage.
6	<i>"No marginal notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek words"</i> that cannot be briefly expressed in the text.	The rule aimed at Geneva-style commentary. It did not empty the margins: explanations of Hebrew and Greek words were allowed (Section IX).
7	Cross-references to other passages of scripture to be set in the margin.	A help to the reader. It does not concern disputed readings or give the bishops a veto, as the June edition said.
8–9	Each man in a company translated the same chapters; the company agreed to agree with its text; each finished book to be sent to the	A careful review process — and a reminder whose interest it served.

#	THE RULE (BANCROFT, 1604)	COVENANT ANALYSIS
	other companies for review, <i>"for his Majesty is very careful in this point."</i>	
10	Differences between companies to be <i>"compounded at the general meeting, which is to be of the chief persons of each company."</i>	Disputes were settled by the senior translators, all churchmen of the establishment.
11	Places <i>"of special obscurity"</i> to be referred by authority <i>"to any learned man in the land."</i>	An open door to wider scholarship, controlled by authority.
12	Every bishop writes to his clergy asking those skilled in the tongues to send their observations.	Input gathered through the bishops.
13	The directors to be the Deans of Westminster and Chester and the King's Professors of Hebrew and Greek at the universities.	Direction held by royal and church appointees.
14	These translations to be used where they agree better with the text than the Bishops' Bible: <i>"Tyndale's, Matthew's, Coverdale's, Whitchurch's, Geneva."</i>	Five named English Bibles, not <i>"fourteen,"</i> as the June edition said. Tyndale's work was named first, and the Geneva Bible — the one James disliked — was among them.
15	Three or four senior divines at each university, not themselves translating, to oversee the work <i>"for the better observation of the fourth rule."</i>	Overseers were appointed specifically to enforce Rule 4 — the rule that let church tradition choose among meanings.

Finding — The rules made the KJV a revision of the state church's Bible (Rule 1), fixed its ecclesiastical vocabulary (Rule 3), let church tradition decide open meanings (Rules 4 and 15), and barred commentary notes (Rule 6). **Corroborated** by the published text of the rules. The June edition's claim that Rule 7 gave disputed readings to the bishops is **Not established** and is withdrawn.

VII. THE ERASURE OF THE NAME

VII-A. About 6,800 Substitutions

The Tetragrammaton, יהוה, appears in the Hebrew Tanakh roughly 6,800 times (about 6,828 by the common count). The KJV follows the synagogue custom of reading *Adonai* (*Lord*) in its place and prints "**LORD**" in capitals, or "**GOD**" in capitals where the Hebrew already has *Adonai* beside the Name. The June edition said "*Jehovah*" appears in only three places. The count is seven: four places where it stands alone (**Exodus 6:3; Psalms 83:18; Isaiah 12:2; 26:4**) and three where it is part of a place name (**Genesis 22:14; Exodus 17:15; Judges 6:24**). "*Jehovah*" is itself a hybrid, formed by combining the consonants of the Name with the vowel signs of *Adonai*.

The KJV did not invent the substitution. Tyndale, Coverdale, the Geneva Bible, and the Bishops' Bible all printed "**LORD**" for the Name in most places. The KJV fixed the custom in the most widely read English Bible for three hundred years.

VII-B. What the Text Says About the Name

"Yahweh, the Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations." (**Exodus 3:15**)

"I am Yahweh, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another." (**Isaiah 42:8**)

"That they may know that You, whose name alone is Yahweh, are the Most High over all the earth." (**Psalms 83:18 [Hebrew 83:19]**)

The covenant at Sinai opens with the Name: *"I am Yahweh your Elohim, who brought you out of the land of Egypt"* (**Exodus 20:2**). **Doc 258** adds the manuscript evidence: the Name is written out in the Ketef Hinnom silver scrolls from before the Babylonian exile, in the Dead Sea Scrolls, and in Hebrew letters inside early Jewish copies of the Greek scriptures. The custom of not printing it is later than every one of those witnesses.

Finding — The Name belongs in the text wherever the Hebrew writes it. **Corroborated** (**Exodus 3:15; Isaiah 42:8; Psalms 83:18**). Its replacement by a title in about 6,800 places is a custom inherited by the KJV from the synagogue reading and earlier English Bibles, **Not in the text**.

VIII. THE ASSEMBLY BECOMES A CHURCH

VIII-A. What the Hebrew and Greek Words Mean

The Hebrew *qahal* (*assembly*), קהל, appears about 123 times in the Tanakh. It is the people of Israel called together — at Sinai, on the plains of Moab, at the dedication of the Temple. The Septuagint most often renders it *ekklesia* (*assembly*), though it also uses *synagoge* (*gathering*), especially for *edab* (*congregation*). In the Greek world *ekklesia* was also the word for a civic assembly of citizens (Acts 19:32, 39, 41).

The English word "*church*" comes by way of Old English from the Greek *kyriakon* (*belonging to the Lord*), used for a church building. By the sixteenth century it was named both a building and an institution with a hierarchy.

VIII-B. How the English Bibles Rendered It

The June edition said that every major English translation before the KJV — Tyndale, Coverdale, and the Geneva Bible — rendered *ekklesia* as "*congregation*." That is correct of Tyndale and Coverdale, but not of the Geneva Bible. The corrected record:

TRANSLATION	DATE	EKKLESIA RENDERED
Wycliffe (from the Latin)	c. 1382	" <i>church</i> "
Tyndale New Testament	1526	" <i>congregation</i> " almost everywhere
Coverdale; Great Bible	1535; 1539	" <i>congregation</i> " in most places
Geneva Bible	1560	" <i>church</i> ", following Beza's Latin — the Puritans' own Bible made this change first
Bishops' Bible	1568	" <i>church</i> "
King James Version	1611	" <i>church</i> " 115 times; " <i>assembly</i> " 3 times, all of the civic assembly at Ephesus (Acts 19)

The correction sharpens the point rather than weakening it. By 1604 "*church*" was already the usual rendering in the two Bibles in common use. Rule 3 did not introduce it; it forbade anyone from going back to Tyndale's "*congregation*." Tyndale had defended that word against Sir Thomas More precisely because "*church*" suggested a clergy and a hierarchy rather than a gathered people.

VIII-C. Why It Matters

In the Tanakh the *qahal* (*assembly*) is the whole people, and the law was read to all of it:

"Assemble the people, the men and the women and the little ones, and your stranger who is within your gates, that they may hear and that they may learn, and fear Yahweh your Elohim." (Deuteronomy 31:12)

A translation that keeps "*church*" by rule, where the word means an assembled people, leads the reader to picture an institution where the text pictures a people. In a Bible commissioned by the Supreme Governor of the Church of England, under the direction of its archbishop, that choice served the institution.

Finding — That *qahal* (*assembly*) names the gathered people of Israel is **Corroborated** (Deuteronomy 31:12, 30; Exodus 12:3). That Rule 3 required "*church*" and forbade "*congregation*" is **Corroborated** by the rules. That the KJV introduced "*church*" into the English Bible is **Not established**: the Geneva and Bishops' Bibles had already adopted it.

IX. THE MARGINS, THE APOCRYPHA, AND THE REVISIONS

IX-A. The Margins Were Not Emptied

The June edition said the rules removed the notes that challenged royal authority. That is correct of the Geneva-style commentary. But the 1611 KJV was printed with thousands of marginal notes: alternative renderings, literal meanings of the Hebrew and Greek, and cross-references. The translators defended them in their preface, "*The Translators to the Reader*," arguing that where the sense is uncertain the reader should be shown the alternatives, and that "*variety of translations is profitable for the finding out of the sense of the Scriptures.*" The translators themselves did not claim to have produced a text beyond checking against the Hebrew. Many modern printings of the KJV omit these marginal notes; the 1611 edition did not.

IX-B. The Apocrypha — The Corrected Record

The 1611 KJV printed fourteen books of the Apocrypha in a separate section between the Old and New Testaments: 1 and 2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, the rest of Esther, the Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach (Ecclesiasticus), Baruch with the Letter of Jeremiah, the Song of the Three, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, the Prayer of Manasseh, and 1 and 2 Maccabees. The Church of England's Articles of Religion (Article VI) said these books were read "*for example of life and instruction of manners*" but not used "*to establish any doctrine.*"

The June edition said the Apocrypha was removed in 1885 by the British and Foreign Bible Society to save printing costs. That date and cause are not correct. King James Bibles without the Apocrypha were already being printed in the seventeenth century. The Society, founded in 1804, omitted it from its English Bibles from its early years, and in 1826, after the Apocrypha controversy, resolved that none of its funds would support any edition containing it. Cost was one reason given, alongside the conviction that the books were not scripture.

The covenant point stands on a firmer footing than the June edition gave it. The Apocrypha is not part of the Hebrew Tanakh; the Jewish community never received these books into its scriptures, and the Church of England itself would not build doctrine on them. Leaving them out of a Bible therefore does not *"diminish"* the covenant word under **Deuteronomy 4:2**. The June edition's charge of a **Deuteronomy 4:2** violation on this point is withdrawn.

IX-C. Which King James Bible?

The KJV most readers hold today is not the text of 1611 but the Oxford standard edition of 1769, prepared by Benjamin Blayney after an earlier Cambridge revision of 1762. Between 1611 and 1769 printers and editors corrected printing errors, adjusted wording in a few hundred places, and changed spelling, punctuation, and italics throughout. The King James-Only claim that the English text was preserved without change must therefore choose which of these editions it means.

Finding — That the 1611 KJV carried thousands of marginal notes on wording and meaning is **Corroborated** (the 1611 printing; the translators' preface). That the Apocrypha was removed in 1885 for cost alone is **Not established**. That the KJV text in common use is the 1769 revision rather than the 1611 printing is **Corroborated**.

X. TYNDALE — THE MAN AT THE FOUNDATION

William Tyndale (c. 1494–1536) was the first to translate the New Testament into English from the Greek (1526) and to translate large parts of the Old Testament into English from the Hebrew. He said he wanted the boy who drives the plough to know more of scripture than the clergy. Working in exile because Bible translation into English was forbidden without church approval, he was betrayed in Antwerp in 1535 by an Englishman, Henry Phillips, arrested by the authorities of the Holy Roman Emperor, and condemned for heresy. On 6 October 1536, at Vilvoorde near Brussels, he was strangled and his body burned. His last words are recorded as *"Lord, open the King of England's eyes."*

The June edition said that the Crown burned Tyndale and that the KJV translators did not acknowledge their debt to him. Both statements need correcting. The execution was carried out under the Emperor's authority in the Low Countries; how far English agents were behind Phillips remains

debated. And the translators were directed to his work by name: Rule 14 lists "*Tyndale's*" first among the translations to be used. Scholarly estimates commonly place Tyndale's wording in the large majority of the KJV New Testament — figures around 80 percent are often given — and in much of the Pentateuch and historical books.

The irony the June edition pointed to remains real, but it lies elsewhere. The Bible that carried a king's name was built largely on the words of a man who had died because translating scripture into English was a crime, and it restored the "*church*" that Tyndale had refused to print.

This Institution honors William Tyndale as a witness: a man who gave his life to put the written word in the hands of ordinary people, and whose work lives on inside the translation that set aside some of his most deliberate choices.

XI. THE DEUTERONOMY 19:15 WITNESS TEST

The **Deuteronomy 19:15** standard requires two or three independent witnesses to establish any matter. Applied to the question of whether the King James project served royal and episcopal authority, the witnesses are these.

WITNESS	WHAT IT SHOWS
One — the king's own writings	James taught in <i>The True Law of Free Monarchies</i> (1598) and in his 1610 speech that kings sit on God's throne and are called gods. That doctrine was in print before the translation began.
Two — the conference and the rules	At Hampton Court James called the Geneva notes seditious. Bancroft's rules made the Bishops' Bible the base (Rule 1), required " <i>church</i> " not " <i>congregation</i> " (Rule 3), let church tradition choose among meanings with overseers to enforce it (Rules 4 and 15), and barred commentary notes (Rule 6).
Three — the translation record	The Name was replaced by a title about 6,800 times; <i>ekklesia</i> (<i>assembly</i>) rendered " <i>church</i> " 115 times; and the King's Printer's monopoly, after which Geneva printing in England ceased around 1616.

Verdict — Three independent witnesses establish that the King James Version was made under rules designed to protect the Church of England's order and the Crown's view of kingship. **Corroborated.** The same record shows that the translators worked from the Hebrew and Greek with great skill, drew heavily on Tyndale, and told their readers in the margin where the sense was uncertain. Both findings stand together.

XII. WHAT THE KJV CONTAINS THAT IS TRUE

This study is not a rejection of every word in the KJV. Its Old Testament was translated from Hebrew, from a Jewish printed edition. Much of the covenant truth of the Torah, the Prophets, and the Psalms comes through it clearly, and Tyndale's scholarship survives in most of its New Testament. It also had an effect its commissioners did not intend: by putting a single English Bible in every parish, it helped build the habit of reading scripture that later challenged both absolute monarchy and state religion.

But truth in a container does not sanctify the container. A translation can carry much covenant truth and still bear the marks of the rules it was made under. The standard of this Institution is the written Hebrew text. The KJV, the Geneva Bible, the JPS Tanakh, the translation of Robert Alter, and every other are secondary witnesses to be weighed against the Hebrew under the **Deuteronomy 19:15** standard. **Doc 258** examines that standard across all the major translations in full.

"And they read in the book, in the law of Elohim, distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." (Nehemiah 8:8)

The text is read first; the sense is given second. No translation takes the place of the book that was read.

XIII. THREE-RELIGION AUDIT — THE KING JAMES VERSION BEFORE EACH TRADITION

The table sets the three traditions against the findings of this study. Comparative texts are cited as historical reference only, in keeping with the standing rule of this document.

ELEMENT	☆ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	☪ ISLAM
Relation to the KJV	Never received it as scripture. Its Old Testament was translated from Ben Chayyim's Rabbinic Bible, so its Hebrew base is the Masoretic text Judaism preserved.	Received it as the standard English Bible for three centuries; the King James-Only movement treats it as the only preserved English Word of God.	Receives no translation as revelation; the Qur'an in translation is an <i>"interpretation of the meanings."</i>
Covenant strength	The Masoretic text behind the KJV was copied with extraordinary care; the KJV's Old Testament is only as good as that text, and that text is very good.	The translators went to the Hebrew and Greek, used Tyndale, and printed alternative renderings in the margin. Their preface says a	Insisting that the source language governs every translation is the principle this study applies to the KJV.

ELEMENT	✧ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	☪ ISLAM
		variety of translations helps find the sense.	
Covenant departure	The "LORD" for the Name follows the synagogue custom of reading <i>Adonai</i> — a tradition over the written text.	Rules 3, 4, and 15 let the vocabulary and theology of one church decide what the text would say where it was open. Treating the 1769 revision of that translation as beyond correction elevates a translation over the Hebrew.	The charge of distortion (Q. 4:46; 5:13) fits the translation rules better than the Hebrew text: the rules shaped renderings, while the Hebrew behind them survives and can be checked.
Covenant witness	The Hebrew text preserved by Judaism is the standard by which the KJV is corrected.	The KJV translators themselves pointed readers past their English to the original.	Q. 5:44 calls the Torah "guidance and light" — the Torah, not any translation of it.

XIV. CORRECTIONS TO EARLIER LIBRARY MATERIAL

The Library's rule is that its own earlier work is tested by the same standard as everyone else's. Four corrections to the June 2026 edition of this document were first identified in **Doc 258** (*Ask for the Old Paths*, Section X). Further checking of the primary sources for this revision found six more. All ten are made in the text above. The main conclusion of the June edition — that the King James project was shaped by the interests of the Crown and the bishops, and that no translation stands above the Hebrew — stands.

Correction 1 — the numbering of Bancroft's rules (from Doc 258). The church-and-congregation instruction is **Rule 3**, not Rule 2; the marginal-notes instruction is **Rule 6**, not Rule 3; the names of the prophets are **Rule 2**; the chapter divisions are **Rule 5**. The full set of fifteen rules is now given in Section VI.

Correction 2 — Rule 7 (from Doc 258). Rule 7 concerns marginal cross-references. It did not give disputed readings to the bishops. Disputes between companies were settled at a general meeting of the chief translators (Rule 10), and obscure places could be referred to **"any learned man in the land"** (Rule 11). The earlier claim is withdrawn.

Correction 3 — the marginal notes (from Doc 258). The rules barred commentary notes, not all notes. The 1611 KJV carried thousands of marginal notes on wording and meaning, defended in the translators' preface (Section IX-A).

Correction 4 — the Apocrypha (from Doc 258). The Apocrypha was not removed in 1885 to save printing costs. Editions without it were printed in the seventeenth century; the British and Foreign Bible Society left it out from its early years and in 1826 refused to fund any edition containing it, both on grounds of cost and on the conviction that the books were not scripture (Section IX-B).

Correction 5 — the Apocrypha and Deuteronomy 4:2. Because the Apocrypha is not part of the Hebrew Tanakh, leaving it out does not diminish the covenant word. The earlier charge of a **Deuteronomy 4:2** violation on this point, in the June edition's Sections VII and X, is withdrawn.

Correction 6 — Rule 14. Rule 14 names five earlier English Bibles to be used — Tyndale's, Matthew's, Coverdale's, Whitchurch's (the Great Bible), and the Geneva — not *"fourteen prior English translations."* Rules 4 and 15, which the June edition did not discuss, are now analyzed.

Correction 7 — the Geneva Bible and "church." The Geneva Bible rendered *ekklesia* (*assembly*) as *"church,"* not *"congregation"* as the June edition said. Tyndale and Coverdale used *"congregation"*; Geneva and the Bishops' Bible had already moved to *"church"* before 1604 (Section VIII-B).

Correction 8 — the Geneva "ban." No royal decree banning the Geneva Bible in 1616 has been found. Its printing in England ceased around that date under the King's Printer's control of the press; editions continued abroad until 1644 (Section IV-C).

Correction 9 — "Jehovah" in the KJV. The KJV uses *"Jehovah"* seven times — four alone and three in compound place names — not three (Section VII-A).

Correction 10 — Tyndale. Tyndale was executed under the Holy Roman Emperor's authority at Vilvoorde, not by the English Crown; and the KJV translators were directed to his work by name in Rule 14, so the claim that they did not acknowledge it is withdrawn (Section X). The June edition's report that Bancroft made fourteen last-minute changes is now marked as a single source (Section V-A).

The **Discussion Questions** section of the June edition has been removed in keeping with the Library's current format standard.

XV. SEVEN COVENANT DECLARATIONS ON THE KING JAMES VERSION

Per the **Deuteronomy 19:15** standard, no doctrine may stand on a single text. Each declaration below draws on more than one witness.

#	COVENANT DECLARATION	BASIS
I	The written Hebrew Tanakh is the covenant text. Every translation, the King James Version included, is a witness to it and never its master.	Deuteronomy 4:2; 31:24–26; Nehemiah 8:8
II	No king stands above the written law. The Torah's king writes his own copy of the law and is judged by it.	Deuteronomy 17:14–20; 1 Samuel 8:7–18
III	Those who fear Elohim more than a king's command act rightly, as the midwives did.	Exodus 1:17, 20–21; Psalms 105:14–15
IV	The Name Yahweh belongs in the text wherever the Hebrew writes it. A title in its place is a custom, not the text.	Exodus 3:15; 20:2; Isaiah 42:8; Psalms 83:18
V	The assembly of Yahweh is His gathered people, men, women, children, and strangers, not an institution set over them.	Deuteronomy 31:12, 30; Exodus 12:3
VI	No hand may add to the word or take from it. Rules that let a tradition decide what the text will say must be tested by the text.	Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; Proverbs 30:6; Jeremiah 8:8
VII	This Institution corrects its own errors by the same standard it applies to others, because the witness must be true.	Deuteronomy 19:15–18; Exodus 23:1

XVI. THE COVENANT RESPONSE — WHAT THE TANAKH SAYS TO THE ONE WHO ASKS

Behind the question of the King James Bible there is usually a person who was taught that it is the only true Bible, or who has just learned that a king's rules shaped it and wonders whether any Bible can be trusted. Tanakh's answer is fivefold.

First: honor the good in the book you have. Much of the covenant word comes through the KJV plainly. Read it — and read it as a translation.

Second: know who made it and under what rules. A Bible made under a king's rules is not thereby false, but its choices in the places those rules touched — the Name, the assembly, the meanings left to tradition — need to be checked (**Deuteronomy 19:15**).

Third: put the Name back where the Hebrew has it. Every *"LORD"* printed in capitals marks a place where the Hebrew reads **Yahweh**: *"This is My name forever"* (**Exodus 3:15**).

Fourth: remember who the assembly is. When you read *"church,"* remember the *qahal* (*assembly*): the gathered people of **Yahweh**, all of them, hearing His word together (**Deuteronomy 31:12**).

Fifth: let no translation, no king, and no teacher stand above the text. The KJV translators themselves pointed their readers back to the original. Go where they pointed: to the written Hebrew, read openly, with two or three witnesses (**Nehemiah 8:8**; **Deuteronomy 4:2**).

SCRIPTURE INDEX

REFERENCE	SUBJECT	SECTION
Genesis 22:14	Jehovah-jireh — <i>"Jehovah"</i> in a compound place name	VII-A
Exodus 1:17–21	The midwives fear Elohim rather than the king	IV-A; XV
Exodus 3:15	My name forever, My memorial to all generations	II; VII-B; XV; XVI
Exodus 6:3	<i>"Jehovah"</i> standing alone in the KJV	VII-A
Exodus 12:3	The whole congregation of Israel	II; VIII-C; XV
Exodus 17:15	Jehovah-nissi	VII-A
Exodus 20:2	I am Yahweh your Elohim	VII-B; XV
Exodus 23:1	Do not join hands with the wicked as a false witness	XV
Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32	Do not add to the word nor take from it	I-B; II; IX-B; XII; XV; XVI
Deuteronomy 17:14–20	The king under the written law	II; III-C; XV
Deuteronomy 19:15–18	Two or three witnesses; the false witness	Opening; XI; XII; XV; XVI

REFERENCE	SUBJECT	SECTION
Deuteronomy 31:12, 30	The law read before the whole assembly	II; VIII-C; XV; XVI
Deuteronomy 31:24–26	The book laid beside the ark as a witness	XV
Judges 6:24	Jehovah-shalom	VII-A
1 Samuel 8:7–18	They have rejected Me from being king	III-C; XV
Isaiah 12:2; 26:4	<i>"Jehovah"</i> standing alone in the KJV	VII-A
Isaiah 42:8	I am Yahweh , that is My name	VII-B; XV
Jeremiah 8:8	The lying pen of the scribes	I-B; II; XV
Psalms 83:18 [Hebrew 83:19]	Whose name alone is Yahweh	VII; XV
Psalms 105:9–15	Touch not My anointed ones — the patriarchs	II; IV-A; XV
Psalms 110:1	<i>Adonai (Lord)</i> beside the Name	II
Proverbs 30:5–6	Do not add to His words	XV
Nehemiah 8:8	Read distinctly, with the sense given	XII; XV; XVI
2 Chronicles 15:16	Asa removes his mother — the note James objected to	IV-A

"Every word of Eloah is refined; He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him. Do not add to His words, lest He reprove you and you be found a liar."

Proverbs 30:5–6 — The Written Covenant of Yahweh

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

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