

David Rolph Seely, “Words ‘Fitly Spoken’: Tyndale’s English Translation of the Bible,” in *Prelude to the Restoration: From Apostasy to the Restored Church* (Provo, UT and Salt Lake City: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University and Deseret Book, 2004), 212–227.

Words “Fitly Spoken”: Tyndale’s English Translation of the Bible

David Rolph Seely

David Rolph Seely is a professor of ancient scripture at Brigham Young University. David Rolph Seely

William Tyndale (1494–1536), reformer and translator, is the true father of the English Bible. His English translations of the Bible printed in 1526, 1530, and 1534 provided the basis for the King James Translation, and through his translations, Tyndale became one of the founders of the modern English language. In the process of translating the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into English, Tyndale coined several new English words—transforming older English words or in some cases inventing unique and striking new English words—that have since become central terms in religious discourse. From a study of just a few of these words, we can better understand Tyndale’s genius for language, his methodology, and his theology, and we can gain insight into the complexity of translation. Most important, we can better appreciate the gift Tyndale gave to English speakers: the word of God in our own language. Truly, for Tyndale and for us, “a word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver” (Proverbs 25:11).

Born in Gloucestershire, England, William Tyndale studied at Oxford and possibly Cambridge. He joined the reform movement there, and in 1524 he moved to Hamburg, Germany, never to return to his native country. The reformers all recognized the Bible as the authoritative voice of God that superseded the traditions of the Catholic Church. Foxe records Tyndale’s early passion for the Bible. He recounts that Master Tyndale happened to be in the company of a learned man, and in communing and disputing with the learned man about the issue of the Bible and the Catholic Church, the learned man said: “We were better without God’s law than the pope’s. Maister Tyndall hearing that, answered him, I defy the Pope and all his laws, and said, if God spare my life ere many years, I will cause a boy that driveth the plough, shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost.”^[1]

In 1522, Tyndale, following the belief of the Reformers that it was necessary to make the scriptures available to people in their own language (a cause that was also championed by Martin Luther, his contemporary), conceived the plan of translating the Bible into English.

His translation was not the first. There is actually a long history of the translation of the word of God into English, beginning with a cowherd from Whitby named Caedmon who paraphrased some biblical passages into Old English in A.D. 670. Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, translated the Psalter from the Vulgate into Anglo-Saxon in about A.D. 700, and the Venerable Bede (673–735) translated portions of the Vulgate into Old English. He died while translating the Gospel of John. King Alfred the Great (871–901) translated parts of Exodus and Acts into Old English, and the Lindisfarne Gospels (ca. 687) had an interlinear Anglo-Saxon translation between the Vulgate Latin lines. John Wycliffe was the first to translate the whole of the Bible into Middle English in 1380, a work that predated the printing press and was thus disseminated in manuscript form.^[2]

But whereas Wycliffe’s translation of the Bible was made from the Vulgate into Middle English, Tyndale was the first to translate the New Testament into Modern English from the original languages of Hebrew and Greek. He was a trailblazing pioneer among English translators because there was no model translation from Hebrew or Greek to

follow.^[3] Because of increasing hostility against him and the other reformers, Tyndale realized it was impossible to do the translation in England, and thus he moved to the mainland of Europe. While working in Cologne, Worms, and Antwerp, he published his English translation of the New Testament in 1526 and his translation of the Pentateuch and the book of Jonah in 1530. He then published a revised version of his original New Testament translation and the

Pentateuch in 1534, and he left behind a manuscript copy of his translation of Joshua through Chronicles.^[4] Because he was wanted by the Catholic Church for his heretical views and his publication of the Bible into English, he was betrayed by an associate, kidnapped by authorities of the Church in Antwerp, and taken to Vilvorde (near Brussels), where he

was tried for heresy and executed in 1536. His last words were, “Lord open the King of England’s eyes.”^[5] Little did he know that just before his death King Henry VIII—as a part of his break with the Catholic Church—had granted permission for the circulation of the English Bible. The Bible that was circulated was produced by Matthew Coverdale and was largely based on Tyndale’s work.

Because of the printing press, public demand, and financial incentive to publish his work, the Tyndale Bible was widely disseminated and had great impact on English speakers and the Bible itself. In 1604 the King James translators were commissioned to produce a new translation. It was to be based on previous translations and of all of the translations, Tyndale's was by far the most influential. For centuries the King James Bible has been rightfully praised as a "literary masterpiece," as the prime exemplar of the English language, and as a text that has shaped modern English. But in the last half of the twentieth century, scholars have discovered that much of the genius of the language of the King James Version was, in fact, originally the work of William Tyndale. The recent and definitive study by Jon Nielson and Royal Skousen has determined that a huge percentage of the familiar language of the King James Version comes from Tyndale. According to their study, about 76 percent of the Old Testament and 84 percent of the New Testament text of the King James Version are the retained words of Tyndale.^[6] The translation of the word of God into the modern spoken language of English, from the original languages of Hebrew and Greek, was an extraordinary achievement in the sixteenth century, not because scholars did not know Hebrew and Greek, but because English had not established itself as a language for serious matters. The educated elite—those trained in the classical languages of Greek and Latin—considered English a barbaric language without the complex grammatical nuances necessary to properly express the word of God. In fact, a debate was held in 1401 at Oxford between a man named Richard Ullerston and his critics as to whether English was an appropriate language for the translation of the Bible. The decision rendered by Thomas Arundel, the archbishop of Canterbury, effectively banned the English language from any aspect of English church life: "We therefore legislate and ordain that nobody shall from this day forth translate any text of the Holy Scriptures on his own authority into the English."^[7] In addition, at the time of Tyndale the shift from Middle to Modern English had just begun. Tyndale's translation, along with Shakespeare and the King James Version, would establish Modern English as we know it today.

It is said that Tyndale was a master of seven foreign languages,^[8] but most importantly, he was a master of his native language, English. Translators of the Bible before Tyndale relied on the Latin Vulgate (the official version of the Bible for the Catholic Church), but Tyndale believed that the original Hebrew and Greek of the scriptures were languages more suitably rendered into English than Latin: "Saint Jerome also translated the Bible into his mother tongue [i.e., the Latin Vulgate]: why may not we also? They will say it cannot be translated into our tongue, it is so rude. It is not so rude as they are false liars. For the Greek tongue agreeth more with the English than with the Latin. And the properties of the Hebrew tongue agreeth a thousand more times with the English than with the Latin."^[9] In the case of Hebrew, scholars have noted that Tyndale was right in sensing the superiority of English to Latin in matters of rendering Hebrew syntax. One scholar has noted that Hebrew and English have similar word orders and that in his English translation Tyndale masterfully rendered the syntax of the original Hebrew into a fluid and rhythmical English prose that in turn influenced English writers.^[10]

Tyndale's Words "Fitly Spoken"

In the process of his translation, Tyndale bequeathed much of the memorable English phraseology that we associate with the sacredness of the word of God. Consider the familiar cadences of the following phrases created by Tyndale: "let there be light, and there was light," "male and female created he them," "who told thee that thou wast naked?" "my brother's keeper," "the Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make his face shine upon thee," "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul and with all thy might," "the salt of the earth," "the powers that be," "a law unto themselves," "filthy lucre," and "fight the good fight." These phrases have become impressed in the English language both in religious discourse and proverbial expressions. One scholar thus assesses Tyndale's contribution to language: "It would be hard to overpraise the literary merits of what he had done. Much of his rendering would later be incorporated into the Authorized or King James Version, and the rhythmical beauty of his prose, skillful use of synonyms for freshness, variety, and point, and 'magical simplicity of phrase' imposed itself on all later versions, down to the present day."^[11]

Tyndale faced a great challenge in rendering Hebrew and Greek words into his native English. Words are powerful instruments in the transfer of meaning, and thus the translation of words is very tricky. Within a language words develop complex semantic fields—that is, sets of meanings depending on context and usage. Thus any specific word is often very difficult, if not impossible, to accurately translate into another language since a corresponding term with the same semantic fields may not be found. As the old Italian proverb goes, *traduttore traditore*—"a translator is a

traitor.” Any rendering of a text from one language to another inevitably involves interpretation and the changing of meaning.

The choice of words can also be theologically loaded. Since Tyndale was a Protestant, his translation was carefully phrased in order to state the viewpoints of the reformers. In several notable cases, Tyndale deliberately chose to render words that had a long legacy among Catholicism with new terms that Catholics found offensive. For example, he used “congregation” instead of “church,” “elder” instead of “priest,” “repentance” instead of “do penance,” and “love” instead of “charity.” Tyndale’s English translations of these words were in many cases probably more accurate translations of the Greek terms, but they differed from the familiar Vulgate upon which much Christian theology had been based. These terms are loaded: “do penance” had sacramental implications rejected by many reformers—whereas “repentance” more closely reflected an act that could be done by an individual before God without the need of the church. And Tyndale preferred the term “love” as being more allusive to the Protestant understanding of grace and the term “charity” to be more in tune with the Catholic emphasis on works. These changes were offensive to Catholics and

were heavily criticized by many, including Tyndale’s countryman, Thomas More.^[12] Interestingly enough, the King James translators chose to retain the traditional terms “church,” “priest,” and “charity,” but nowhere does one find the word “penance” in the King James Version.

Like most translators, Tyndale sought to render the biblical text into plain and literal English and tried to capture the sense of each word in its original language and context. In many cases, particularly in the Old Testament, Tyndale came upon ancient words and phrases that did not have precise English counterparts. Tyndale studied the original Hebrew and/or Greek of the biblical text and then looked at the ancient translations in Greek and Latin—the Septuagint and the Vulgate—for help. He could also consult Wycliffe’s translation—which was not very useful because it was in Middle English and rendered from the Vulgate. Tyndale apparently made great use of Luther’s German translation of

the New Testament in 1522, for its grammar, vocabulary, and theology.^[13] In several cases Tyndale solved translation problems by ingeniously coining new English words. Sometimes he simply transformed older English words, and sometimes he invented new and unique English words—some of which have become common vocabulary in religious discourse in English. Here we will look at six such “newly coined” words: *Jehovah*, *Passover*, *atonement*, *scapegoat*, *mercy seat*, and *shewbread*.

Jehovah. Perhaps the most significant of the “new” words that Tyndale bequeathed us is the name of God—*Jehovah*. Throughout the Hebrew Bible, the proper name of God is rendered with the tetragrammaton *YHWH*—which

occurs, according to one count, 6,828 times.^[14] The ancient vocalization of the four consonants of this name is not known, but scholars hypothesize that it was pronounced “Yahweh.” Because of the sanctity of this name within Judaism, a tradition developed to call God not by His name but by the designation *Lord*, or *Adonai* in Hebrew. At the end of the fifth century after Christ, the Massorettes (who first put the vowels in the Hebrew text) reflected this tradition by putting the vowels for the Hebrew word *Adonai* below the consonants of the tetragrammaton, thereby directing the reader to read *Adonai* rather than the name of God contained in the tetragrammaton. The early Greek and Latin translators followed the Jewish tradition and simply rendered the tetragrammaton as Greek *kyrios* or Latin *Dominus*. In his Middle English translation, Wycliffe rendered *YHWH* as *Adonai*, and Luther translated the word into the German *HERR* (“Lord”) using capital letters, presumably to distinguish it from the translation of the Hebrew word *Adonai* in the Bible into *Herr*.

Tyndale followed this tradition and used the English word *LORDE* throughout his translation, and apparently following Luther he put the word into capital letters. There are several times in scripture, however, when Tyndale deemed the name of God itself to be essential to the meaning of the text. For example, Tyndale rendered Exodus 6:3 as follows: “And God spake unto Moses saying unto him: I am the Lord, and I appeared unto Abraham, Isaac and Jacob an almighty God: but in my name Jehovah was I not known unto them.” Thus, Tyndale gave us the first occurrence of the word *Jehovah*—an anglicized form of the Hebrew *YHWH*—in English. The word “Jehovah” was formed by using the vowels of *Adonai* with the consonants *YHWH* producing YaHoWaH or YaHoVaH—since the Hebrew letter *w* can be pronounced as “w” or “v.” Some have given Tyndale credit for actually inventing the word *Jehovah*, but scholars have found prior attestations of this word in a Latin theological text by Petrus Galatinus dating to A.D. 1520 and suspect that

it might go back even further.^[15] Whether a similar name already existed in Latin or not, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* it was Tyndale who was responsible for coining this term in English. Tyndale also used *Jehovah* in titles such as *Jehovah Nissi* in Exodus 17:15 and *Jehovah Shalom* in Judges 6:24.

At the end of his translation of Genesis, Tyndale included a list of words explaining his translations of various

Hebrew words. In these notes Tyndale explains the name *Jehovah*: “Jehovah is God’s name, neither is any creature so called. And it is as much to say as one that is of himself, and dependeth of nothing. Moreover as oft as thou seest LORD in great letters (except there be an error in the printing) it is in Hebrew *Jehovah*, thou that art or he that is.”^[16]

The King James translators followed Tyndale and his predecessors in using the English word *Lord*, with the “L” as a full-sized capital and the “ORD” in small capital letters, to render the tetragrammaton. But in a few passages they also deemed it necessary to use the name *Jehovah*. For example, in the passage in Exodus 6:3 the King James Version follows Tyndale’s rendering. The King James Version includes *Jehovah* in four other places in the Old Testament (Genesis 22:14; Psalm 83:18; Isaiah 12:2 and 26:4). Within the Restoration, the word *Jehovah* is the accepted word in English to represent Jesus Christ as the God of the Old Testament in the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price.^[17]

Passover. Throughout the Old Testament, Tyndale was faced with many legal and religious Hebrew terms that were difficult to find English equivalents for. The custom among previous translators was simply to render the Hebrew word into some form of the translation language. Tyndale met with the first of the Jewish festivals in Exodus—Passover. The translation of the Hebrew names of the Old Testament festivals posed an interesting challenge for translators. The Greek and Latin translators, along with Wycliffe and Luther, simply rendered Hebrew *Shabbath* with some form of the Hebrew word: Greek, *Sabbata*; Latin, *Sabbata*; Wycliffe, *Sabbath*; German, *Sabbatag*. Tyndale rendered it *sabbath day*. Then there were the three Hebrew pilgrimage festivals: *Pesach*, *Shavuoth*, and *Sukkoth*. Tyndale simply translated two of these words into English: *Shavuoth* as “weeks” and *Sukkoth*, meaning *tents*, as “tabernacles.” However, there was not an English word for the Hebrew *Pesach*. Other translators simply transliterated the Hebrew letters in its place: Greek, *pesaq*; Latin as *phase* (using a different pronunciation of the Hebrew letters) or *pasqua*; Wycliffe used *Pasch*; and Luther, *Passa*.

Tyndale noted that the noun *pesach* in Hebrew was used to refer to the sacrifice itself—the paschal lamb—as well as to the festival itself. In addition, he noted that in Hebrew the noun *pesach* derived from a verb *P-S-CH* that meant “to pass over” or “jump over”—which was important in the story of the foundation of this festival in Exodus 12, where the Lord explains that the *pesach* lamb is a type of the fact that the Lord will “jump, skip, or pass” over the children of Israel and deliver them from death (Exodus 12:13). Tyndale may also have noted that Jerome, in his Latin translation, had attempted to render this same Hebrew wordplay. He used the term *transitus Domini* (“the passing over of the Lord”) to describe the paschal sacrifice (Exodus 12:11), and the verb *transeo*, “to pass over,” as it is used in Exodus 12:13 (*ac transibo vos*, “I will pass over you”). Elsewhere Jerome maintained *phase* or *pasqua* as the translation of Hebrew *pesach*.

Tyndale, determined to preserve the Hebrew wordplay in English, ingeniously invented the new English word *Passover* for the festival. Thus, in English the festival is called Passover, and the verbs of the Lord delivering Israel are “passed over.” In the first biblical occurrence of the term *passover* in Exodus 12, “and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lords passover” (v. 11), Tyndale added this pithy marginal note: “The lamb was called passover that the very name itself should put them in remembrance what it signified. For the signs that God ordained either signified the benefits done, or promises to come and were not dumb as are the signs of our dumb god the Pope.”^[18] Tyndale finishes his explanation of the Lord’s *passover*: “for I will go about in the land of Egypt. . . . I will pass over you” (Exodus 12:12–13).

Oddly enough, Tyndale did not use his newly coined word in the New Testament but preferred the term *Easter*—which Christians of his time routinely used for the Christian festival. The term *Easter*, though derived from the name of a pagan goddess of the dawn, had in Tyndale’s day become firmly attached to the Christian celebration of Passover. It is likely that by using the term by which all Christians who spoke English knew the Christian celebration of the Passover/Resurrection, Tyndale was attempting to communicate that the old festival of the law of Moses—Passover—had been fulfilled in Christ. Thus, in the Gospels Tyndale used *Easter* for the Last Supper (Matthew 26; see also Mark 14; Luke 22) and referred to the *Easter lamb* in 1 Corinthians 5:7 and Hebrews 11:28. Tyndale would likely have been amused that the King James translators would use his word *Passover* in all these Gospel passages, as well as throughout the Old Testament—using *Easter* only in Acts 12:4. Some have argued that Tyndale was influenced by Luther’s use of the German *Oestern* in Acts 12:4, but everywhere else that Tyndale rendered the word *Easter*, Luther used *Passa*. The romance languages French (*paque*), Italian (*pasqua*), and Spanish (*pascua*) adopted a form of the original Hebrew—probably from the Vulgate—and in these countries the festival is known by a variation of its original Hebrew name *Pesach*. The term *Easter* prevailed among English-speaking Christians in reference to the Christian festival. But the Jewish festival, throughout the Bible and throughout Christian and Jewish discourse (in Christian Bible

dictionaries and even in the *Encyclopedia Judaica*), is everywhere called by Tyndale’s ingenious word *Passover*.

Atonement. Leviticus 16 contains a description of the most solemn of the festivals of the law of Moses called *Yom Kippur* in Hebrew. [19] Tyndale coined three new English words in conjunction with this festival: *atonement*, *scapegoat*, and *mercy seat*. The Hebrew root behind *Kippur* is *K-P-R*, which has the sense of “to cover up” and occurs

in contexts where it means “to appease, make amends, or reconcile.” [20] Leviticus 16 contains many occurrences of this word in a verbal form describing the rituals of reconciliation between God and man. The Septuagint translates this word meaning “reconciliation” with various Greek words including *exilasmos* and *hilasterion*, which both mean “propitiation.” The Vulgate uses *expiationum*—which has the sense of satisfying or appeasing.

Tyndale went in search of the perfect word that could be used as a noun or a verb and would describe the process by which man would offer sacrifices and offerings in order to cover over, appease, make amends, or reconcile with God. The word he coined was *atonement*. While many have stated that Tyndale invented this word, the *Oxford English Dictionary* lists several variations and combinations of “at” and “one,” such as “to one,” “at one,” or “at once,” “one ment” (used by Wycliffe), and “atonement,” that were used in Tyndale’s time. But Tyndale saw that this term was a very good match for the theological context of the relationship between God and man and put the verb *atone* and the noun *atonement* into his passages in the Old and New Testaments.

Tyndale used *atonement* in his 1526 New Testament in 2 Corinthians 5:18: “preaching of the atonement” (KJV “ministry of reconciliation”). While this term has become a common theological term in religious discussions, the King James translators continued to use this word in terms of the Old Testament usage but only actually used the term *atonement* in Romans 5:11. They preferred to use the words *reconciliation* and *propitiation* in the New Testament. Nevertheless, this term has become the common designation throughout Christianity for the saving acts of Jesus Christ on behalf of the children of men and the possibility of reconciliation and “at-one-ment” offered through His sacrifice.

Scapegoat. Leviticus 16 describes the ritual of the Day of Atonement in which two goats are selected—one for sacrifice and

the other to set the sins on and to be sent out to the wilderness. The Hebrew word for this second goat is *Azazel*, a word that only occurs in this context in the Hebrew Bible. The early Greek and Latin translators presumed, probably incorrectly, that this word was made up of Hebrew ‘ez ‘ozel meaning “a goat that goes away” (in Greek, *chimaros apompaios*, “to be sent away,” and in Latin, *caper emis-sarius*). Tyndale followed the Greek and Latin and invented a new English term for this entity. Using the English word *scape*, a variant of *escape* (Tyndale’s use of *scape* in Matthew 15:18: “One tittle of the lawe shall not scape tyll all be fulfilled” [1526]) together with *goat* to get *scapegoat*.

Biblical scholars now believe that the term *Azazel* is most likely a proper name of a demon of some sort, and thus modern English translations usually render the term as *Azazel*. The term invented by Tyndale, however, is still accurate as a description of this goat that would be sent out to the wilderness bearing all of the sins of Israel, and the concept of the scapegoat has become a common proverbial expression in English.

Mercy seat. In the book of Exodus, the Lord commanded the children of Israel to construct the ark of the covenant. On the top of this ark was a covering of pure gold—in Hebrew called the *kapporeth*—cognate with *kippur*, rendered “atonement” (as discussed above). The Greek term used is *hilasterion*, and the Latin term is *propitiatorium*. Both terms refer to the function of the covering on the holy day of atonement when the high priest would come into the holy of holies and sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice on the cover. In his 1526 New Testament, Tyndale rendered this term as “the seate of grace” in Hebrews 9:5, but in his translation of the Old Testament, most likely influenced by Luther’s *Gnadenstuhle* (literally “grace” or “mercy” with “chair” or “seat”), Tyndale coined the term “merciseate” (Exodus 25:17,18). While Tyndale kept “seat of grace” in his 1524 New Testament, the King James translators used the term “mercie seat” throughout the Old and the New Testaments. The term “mercy seat” nicely links the idea of atonement implied by the Hebrew word *kapporeth* as it is linguistically linked with the host of terms dealing with repentance and forgiveness and the reconciliation offered to ancient Israel at this sacred covering. Thus, it became a common term in religious discourse. Modern translations often opt for less interpretative words. The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) kept “mercy seat,” while the New International Version (NIV) translated “atonement cover,” and the New Jewish Publication Society Translation (NJPS) simply renders “cover.”

Shewbread. In the description of the interior of the tabernacle, the Hebrew speaks of bread that is set out on a table before the Lord each week, described in Hebrew as *lechem panim*—literally “bread before the face” or “presence” of the Lord (Exodus 25:30). The Greek used *artoi enopioi* (literally “bread of the face”) and Latin used *panes propositionis* (literally “bread setting forth for public view”). Luther used *schaubrot* (literally “display bread” or “shown bread”). Tyndale, perhaps influenced by Luther, invented a new English word literally translating the Hebrew by

combining *shew* (pronounced “show”) and *bread*, apparently meaning bread shown to the Lord. While this term is still used by those who read the King James Version, most modern translations have opted for a more literal translation such as “bread of the presence” (NIV, NRSV), or “bread of display” (NJPS).

Conclusion

Some of our six sample words are significant and essential in Restoration scripture. For example, the word *Jehovah* is the accepted rendering of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and throughout Latter-day Saint religious discourse. The words *atone* and *atonement* occur throughout the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price as a description of the redemptive sacrifice of the Savior. The English word *atonement* is regularly used in explaining the nature of Christ’s redemptive sacrifice and its ability to heal, make whole, and reconcile the broken relationship between God and humans caused by the Fall and by our sins. And who can imagine singing the hymn “I Stand All Amazed” without the image of presenting oneself at the “mercy seat”?^[21]

Tyndale realized that he was breaking new ground. In a touching introduction to the 1526 New Testament he wrote: “Them that are learned Christenly, I beseeche: for as moche as I am sure, and my conscience beareth me recorde, that of a pure entent, singly and faythfully I have interpreted itt, as farre forth as god gave me the gyfte of knowledge, and understandyng: that the rudnes off the worke nowe at the fyrst tyme, offende them not: but that they con-syder howe that I had no man to counterfet, nether was holpe with englysshe of eny that had intetpreted the same, or soche lyke thinge in the scripture before tyme.”^[22]

Tyndale’s translation was carefully constructed with words “fitly spoken” (Proverbs 25:11). Throughout the ages his words, both in his translation and as they are preserved in the King James Translation, have brought and continue to bring many to Christ. Indeed, in his own words directed to the readers of his translation he invites us as follows: “Geve diligence Reder (I exhorte the) that thou come with a pure mynde, and as the scripture sayth with a syngle eye, unto the wordes of health, and of eternall lyfe: by the which (if we repent and beleve them) we are borne anewe, created afreshe, and enioye the frutes off the bloud of Christ.”^[23]

^[1] John Foxe, *Book of Martyrs*, 1877, iv, 117, as cited in David Daniell, *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2003), 142 (ref. 805 note 26).

^[2] For a succinct and readable review of English translations of the Bible before 1611, see Paul D. Wegner, *The Journey from Texts to Translations: The Origin and Development of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1999), 271-304.

^[3] See Tyndale's introduction to the New Testament in *The New Testament 1526 Translated by William Tyndale, Original Spelling Edition*, ed. W. R. Cooper (London: The British Library, 2000), 554.

^[4] The translations of Tyndale are readily available for the modern reader in three editions: *Tyndale's Old Testament, Being the Pentateuch of 1530, Joshua to 2 Chronicles of 1537, and Jonah*, ed. David Daniell (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992); *Tyndale's New Testament, Translated from the Greek by William Tyndale 1534* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989); William Tyndale, trans., *The New Testament 1526*.

^[5] As cited in Daniell, *Bible in English*, 156.

^[6] See Jon Nielson and Royal Skousen, “How Much of the King James Bible Is William Tyndale's? An Estimation Based on Sampling,” in *Reformation* 3 (1998): 49-74.

^[7] As cited in Alister E. McGrath, *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 33.

^[8] Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, French, and German. See Daniell, *Bible in English*, 142.

^[9] As cited in Daniell, *Tyndale's Old Testament*, xiv-xv.

^[10] Gerald Hammond has further noted: “Tyndale's claim for the superiority of English over Latin is, in essence, a

matter of comparative syntax, and, broadly speaking, Tyndale is right. The only major variation between Hebrew and English word order is that in Hebrew the verb normally precedes the subject—as in “and said Moses”—and that the adjective often follows the noun. In all other respects, in particular the use of and disposition of qualifying clauses, the sixteenth-century translators followed Tyndale's lead in letting their renderings be governed by the syntax of the original. The result was the fluid and rhythmical prose which marks the narrative and prophetic books of the Hebrew Bible” (*The Making of the English Bible* [Manchester: Carcanet New Press, 1982], 45).

[11] Benson Bobrick, *Wide As the Waters: The Story of the English Bible and the Revolution It Inspired* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001), 104-5.

[12] The significance of Tyndale's translation in the Reformation can be measured by the vigorous opposition mounted against him by the Catholic Church. Thomas More, the Christian humanist and defender of the faith, criticized Tyndale's translation and theology extensively in *Dialogue Concerning Heresies*—to which Tyndale responded and defended himself in *An Answer unto Sir Thomas Mores Dialogue of 1531*—and in the massive *Confutation of Tyndale's Answer*, a work that totaled almost two thousand pages (see Daniell, *Bible in English*, 149).

[13] See Gerald Hammond, “William Tyndale's Pentateuch: Its Relation to Luther's German Bible and the Hebrew Original,” in *Renaissance Quarterly* 33 (1980): 351-85.

[14] See Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann, *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, trans. Mark E. Biddle, 3 vols. (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1997), 2:524

[15] Catholic scholars have traced a Latin form of *Jehovah* back to the thirteenth century (A. J. Maus, “Jehovah,” in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 15 vols. [New York: Robert Appleton, 1909], 8:329-31).

[16] Daniell, *Tyndale's Old Testament*, 82.

[17] See 2 Nephi 22:2; Moroni 10:34; D&C 109:34, 42, 56, 68; 110:3; 128:9; Abraham 1:16.

[18] Daniell, *Tyndale's Old Testament*, 105.

[19] Yom Kippur is the common Jewish designation of the festival. The biblical name for this festival is *yom kippurim* (Leviticus 23:27; 25:9), but this designation does not occur in the description of the festival itself in Leviticus 16.

[20] William L. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1972), 163. Scholars debate the origin of the root *K-P-R*. Cognates in other Semitic language seem to be from two different roots, one meaning “to uproot, wipe away” and the other meaning “to cover, hide.”

[21] *Hymns of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), no. 193.

[22] Tyndale, trans. *New Testament 1526*, 554.

[23] Tyndale, trans. *New Testament 1526*, 553.

In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God: and the word was God. Certainly this was Tyndale's revised version of 1534. What he actually wrote in 1525, as readers will have seen in the photograph accompanying the article, was: In the begynnyng was that worde, and that worde was with god: and god was thatt worde. The article also contains a misunderstanding about purgatory. Catholics did not believe that purgatory held out hope of a remission from hell. Rather, purgatory was a long and painful process of probation preparing not-yet-worthy Christians for heaven. The Reformer Tyndale Bible - History William Tyndale (c. 1494 - 1536) was a 16th-century Protestant reformer and scholar who was influenced by the work of Erasmus and Martin Luther. Like Luther, Tyndale was convinced that the way to God was through His Word and that Scripture should be available even to common people. Facing the same opposition from the Catholic Church as Luther, Tyndale declared, "I will defy the Pope, and all his laws; and if God spares my life, I will cause the boy that drives the plow to know more of the Scriptures than the Pope himself!" The sources Tyndale used for his translation of the Pentateuch, however, are not known for sure. Tyndale Bible - Sample Verses John 1:1, 14 "In the beginning was the word and the word was with God: and the word was God." Learn about Bible translations and the execution of William Tyndale for heresy after translating the New Testament into English. A discussion of Bible translations and of William Tyndale, who was executed for heresy after translating the New Testament into English. Courtesy of Folger Shakespeare Library; CC-BY-SA 4.0 (A Britannica Publishing Partner) See all videos for this article. Biblical translation , the art and practice of rendering the Bible into languages other than those in which it was originally written. The opening page of chapter 1 of The Gospel According to John from William Tyndale's translation of the Bible, 1525-26; in the British Library. Courtesy of the Baptist College, Bristol, England. John Wycliffe. John Wycliffe. Photos.com/Thinkstock. Tyndale House Publishers and Wycliffe Bible Translators share the vision for an understandable, accurate translation of the Bible for every person in the world. Each sale of the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, benefits Wycliffe Bible Translators. Wycliffe is working with partners around the world to accomplish Vision 2025—an initiative to start a Bible translation program in every language group that needs it by the year 2025. About Tyndale House Publishers Inc. Located in Carol Stream, Illinois, Tyndale House Publishers was founded in 1962 by Dr. Kenneth N. Taylor as a means of publishing Tyndale's Words "Fityly Spoken". In the process of his translation, Tyndale bequeathed much of the memorable English phraseology that we associate with the sacredness of the word of God. Truly, for Tyndale and for us, "a word fityly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Proverbs 25:11). Tyndale sought to render the biblical text into plain and literal English and tried to capture the sense of each word in its original language and context. In many cases, particularly in the Old Testament, Tyndale came upon ancient words and phrases that did not have precise English counterparts. Tyndale studied the original Hebrew and/or Greek of the biblical text and then looked at the ancient translations in Greek and Latin—the Septuagint and the Vulgate—for help.