

VAT. 325 1475 / 1889-90 NT of most of all
Sin 340-13 1859 NT 1/2 OT
A lat 258 1878 12 Chm I 1627 OT + most NT

CHAPTER THREE

WILLIAM TYNDALE'S BIBLES--THE BREAKTHROUGH

Kindly permit me to have the Hebrew Bible, Hebrew grammar, and Hebrew dictionary, that I may pass the time in study.

--William Tyndale, writing from prison
(September 1535)

Even if the formal charges were counts of heresy, it is not much of a stretch to say that William Tyndale died for the word of God in English. That baleful execution occurred in the early days of October 1536--we do not know the precise date, but tradition places it on the 6th. He was strangled and burned at the stake. He was not the first English martyr of the Protestant movement, but he has the distinction of being the father of the modern Bible in English. For the beauty of the Bible in English, we owe the largest single debt to him.

Scholar with a Cause

Many crucial aspects of Tyndale's life and work are shrouded in uncertainty. As so often in history, this has proven fertile ground for the growth of legends and abundant speculations, some of which sprang up in the sixteenth century and many of which are incautiously presented as facts in modern treatments of Tyndale. He received a fine education at Oxford University (B.A. 4 July 1512; M.A. 2 July 1515), although the particulars of his studies are unknown. Numerous assertions to the contrary, it is most doubtful that he later belonged to a group of important Protestant thinkers at Cambridge University. At some point, he was ordained a priest. From his own writings we know that he worked as a tutor for the children of a certain John Walsh at Little Sodbury Manor in Gloucestershire; he may also have been a private chaplain at the manor. It was there that, ca. 1522-23, he

encountered, and began to accept, Luther's ideas. According to his own dramatic account (published later in the preface to his Pentateuch, 1530), he ran afoul of leading prelates in his provincial setting and formed the plan to go to London to translate the Bible. He also would have desired episcopal license to undertake the translation because the Oxford Constitutions, which, in reaction to the Wycliffite movement, outlawed the unlicensed creation of a Bible in English, were still in force.

The origin of his Protestantism is significant. He did not set out to preach justification by faith alone; nor was his primary goal abolition of indulgences; nor did he seek to foment antipapalism or anticlericalism, at least not initially. He wanted to translate the Bible into English. Moreover, the translation was to be of the new Erasmian edition of the New Testament in Greek, not the medieval Latin Bible. Most important, Tyndale wanted his translation printed and widely distributed. According to John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments of the Martyrs* (first reported in the second edition of 1570), Tyndale once said to a "learned man": "if God spare my life ere many years, I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more scripture than thou dost."

It was a big dream. He went to London in order to petition Cuthbert Tunstall, then Bishop of London, for support and permission. He prepared for his audience by translating a speech by the ancient Greek rhetorician Isocrates into English. This work is lost but this manner of preparation is telling. It marks Tyndale as an Erasmian humanist (and is even reminiscent of Erasmus's study of such classical texts as Euripides's plays as part of his preparation for the "greater task," the edition of the New Testament in Greek). In later years, Tyndale would pour vitriol on the Dutch humanist for one simple reason. Erasmus disappointed Protestants deeply when, as of 1524-25, he became an outspoken critic of Luther. But, in 1523, Tyndale was still more of an Erasmian than a Lutheran.

Although celebrated by Erasmus in the introduction to the New Testament as one of the progressive forces in the English church, Bishop Tunstall announced to Tyndale that "his house was full." Thereupon, Tyndale found support among London cloth merchants and soon went to Germany to finish his grand project. Our sources are inadequate for much confidence about his doings in Germany. He may have gone to Wittenberg, where Luther was a professor. It is certain that, by 1525, he completed a translation of the New Testament and tried to have it printed. This attempt, which failed, occurred in the city of Cologne in 1525. Johannes Cochlaeus, a priest and talented humanist scholar, got wind of the project and managed to have the work stopped in press. Older Protestant histories of the Reformation make Cochlaeus out to be an archfiend but it should be noted that he was a most capable man and one of the first Catholics to respond vigorously and effectively to the Lutheran movement. As far as the Tyndale matter goes, what else could he have done?

One precious copy of this first attempt to print an English Bible survives in the British Library. It includes an introduction based largely on Luther's preface to the Septembertestament (1522) and, most important, the text of Tyndale's translation of Matthew up to Matthew 22. We do not know if Tyndale managed to flee Cologne with other copies of the beginning. Some have speculated that he did and could have used them in another imprint. But no evidence of that has survived. What we do know is that his flight took him down the Rhine River to the city of Worms, where the first complete New Testament in English rolled off the presses in 1526. This momentous event in the history of the English language happened on German soil for a number of reasons. It was still illegal to produce an English Bible in England, and Henry VIII was, in the 1520s, one of the fiercest opponents of the Protestant movements.

Tyndale ended up finding refuge in Antwerp, where he enjoyed the supported of English merchants, in particular a certain Thomas Poyntz. Antwerp was an ideal venue because it was not only an extraordinarily wealthy free imperial city but also the most important home to the Protestant movement in the Low Countries. Tyndale would thrive there. He produced new editions of the translation of the New Testament, the most important of which was the thorough revision of 1534. He also turned to Hebrew scripture. He published the English Pentateuch (first five books of the Old Testament) in 1530 and the Book of Jonah in 1531. He wrote a few Protestant tracts that were heavily dependent on works by Luther and also engaged in a polemical exchange of pamphlets with no less a figure than Sir Thomas More. More, also a consummate scholar, conceded that Tyndale had translated scripture "right well." Nonetheless, More urged that both the translation and the translator be burned as perpetrators of heresy. This is one on the greatest blots on Thomas More's reputation. ^{although} Naturally, he was not responsible in any way for Tyndale's eventual martyrdom. More himself was executed on trumped-up charges of treason--arising from his refusal to sign Henry VIII's Act of Succession (1534)--on 5 July 1535.

In the 1530s, Tyndale worked primarily on Hebrew scripture. It is even possible, but unlikely, that he continued his efforts during the long months he spent in prison (May 1535-October 1536). There is a consensus that a Bible published in 1537 (called the "Matthew's Bible"; see below) contains much additional Tyndale material, specifically, Tyndale versions for the Old Testament from Genesis all the way through 2 Chronicles. It is likely that these materials found their way into friendly hands at the time of Tyndale's arrest.

Tyndale's demise resulted from treachery. The story is often narrated in conscious analogy to Judas's betrayal of Christ. The sponsor of the vendetta is not known, although the agent is. A certain Henry Phillips, a disgruntled and disreputable gentry, went to Antwerp to

snare Tyndale. The task was easy. After luring Tyndale into his confidence, he was able to arrange for Hapsburg officials from Brussels to kidnap and arrest him. Treachery was necessary because Tyndale could not be arrested in Antwerp, a free imperial city, without consent of the government there. Thus the archly anti-Protestant Hapsburgs were the main cause of the martyrdom. Nonetheless, considerable evidence indicates that an Englishman hired Phillips to hatch the plot. That Englishman would have been a powerful figure who was opposed to the Protestant turn in Henry's policies as of 1532-34. Tyndale's biographer J. F. Mozley has fingered the Bishop of Exeter as the culprit (a view accepted by the more recent biographer David Daniell) but there is no smoking gun among the evidence. Probably at the instigation of Cromwell, the English government apparently did protest the incarceration, but to little effect except a possible slackening in the pace of the proceedings. After all, Henry had put aside Catherine of Aragon, the aunt of the Hapsburg emperor, Charles V. We should also recall that in 1535 Catholic anxieties about Protestants spiked in the Low Countries. That was the year of the murderous Anabaptist debacle in the nearby city of Münster, an event that terrified Catholics and Lutherans alike.

Tyndale spent the final year and a half of his life in the squalor of an abysmal cell in a castle keep at Vilvorde, a suburb of Brussels. The formal case against him was built up carefully. Among his accusers, was James Latomus, a distinguished Professor of Theology at the University of Louvain. Latomus, also an Englishman, interviewed Tyndale several times and even published a carefully written account of those interviews and of Tyndale's heresy. The most precious document to survive from the lengthy imprisonment is an autograph letter (dated September 1535), requesting amelioration of the conditions in jail. The addressee of the petition is unknown; we also do not know if any of the requests were granted. After asking for some warmer clothing, Tyndale wrote: "But most of all I beg and

besech your clemency to be urgent with the commissary, that he will kindly permit me to have the Hebrew Bible, Hebrew grammar, and Hebrew dictionary, that I may pass the time in that study."¹ In his purest essence, Tyndale was a scholar with a single cause.

He was convicted of heresy in August 1536. He was immediately subjected to a public revocation of his consecration as a priest. Once that was accomplished, as was the case for notorious heretics under imperial law, he was turned over to civil jurisdiction for execution. For unknown reasons, that was delayed until the beginning of October 1536. In his famous *Acts and Monuments of the Martyrs*, John Foxe recorded his last words as "Lord, open the King of England's eyes," the phrase that appears in the woodcut rendition of Tyndale's execution.

The New Testament

Like the Wycliffite Bible, Tyndale's translation was an outlaw. It suffered confiscation and destruction; its owners were subject to criminal penalty. Consequently, even if Tyndale's words still sound forth amply in English versions today, precious few copies of the early editions have survived. The first burning of Tyndale's New Testament occurred at Paul's Cross (London) either in October or November of 1526.² There would be future burnings as well. The two earliest editions were so thoroughly suppressed that now only three copies of the Worms edition of 1526 survive, and only a single fragmentary exemplar of the interrupted Cologne printing of 1525. Thus, the early Tyndale imprints suffered a far more vigorous persecution than had the Wycliffite manuscripts.

Why? By 1525, the Lutheran movement posed a most credible threat. Several jurisdictions in Germany and in Switzerland had already taken the dire step of outlawing the Catholic Mass and initiating new church services. Against Thomas More's policy of

destroying the English New Testaments, Tyndale responded: "Saint Jerome . . . translated the Bible into his mother tongue. Why may not we also?"¹³ This line of defense is perfectly valid but also patently disingenuous, for Tyndale openly advanced Protestant positions, to varying degrees, in all of his works.

Tyndale's New Testament is an English translation of the Greek text, as it appeared in the second and third editions of Erasmus's Bible (1518-19; 1522). That does not mean that he faced the Greek text alone, without consulting other versions and aids. Tyndale clearly used Luther's German translation as well, eventually even rendering parts of Luther's German prefaces into English. He also depended on Erasmus's Latin translations of the Greek and even consulted the Vulgate version, the biblical text that would have been the textbook for all of his formal education.

The hallmark of the designs for Tyndale's early editions is accessibility. From 1525 until 1536, all of Tyndale's Bibles appeared in small formats. These would have been cheaper than large folios and also potentially easier to smuggle. The probable reason that a Tyndale New Testament finally appeared in 1536 in a grand folio format was that its publisher was seeking to meet the terms of the Henrician Injunction of 1534 that an English Bible of "the largest format" (that is folio) be set up in every church. This is also the reason for the folio-format of the Tyndale version known as the Matthew's Bible (1537).

1534 is a watershed year in the history of the English Bible. The Royal Injunction of 1534, the key legislation of Thomas Cromwell, made the Bible in English legal in England and also required that every church acquire and display one. Tyndale does not explicitly state awareness of this profound change in English policy. According to his own account, he reissued a revised New Testament in 1534 because a certain George Joye, formerly one of his assistants, had pirated the Tyndale translation. Ever the brash, colorful writer, Tyndale

writes in the preface to his 1534 Bible that, in stealing his work, Joye had "pissed in another fox's hole." After this major revision, there is a Tyndale New Testament of 1535 with slight changes and a mysterious set of three slightly different quarto printings with additional minor changes in 1536. 1536 also saw the printing of three or four octavos and even one 16mo version of Tyndale's New Testament. The Bible revolution had started.

The Five Books of Moses: Tyndale's Pentateuch

Between 1526 and 1534, Tyndale did not reissue the New Testament.⁴ He devoted his efforts to Hebrew scholarship, the first fruit of which was the appearance of the Pentateuch in 1530 (which he revised in 1534). The slender book of Jonah appeared separately in 1531, only one fragmentary copy of which has survived. By issuing the Pentateuch and Jonah separately Tyndale was following the precedent and even chronology of Luther's biblical publications.

Tyndale was the first to translate the original Hebrew into English. It was a most successful beginning, for, as all scholars agree, his became the basis of all subsequent translations in English. While no one disputes that Tyndale sought to English the Hebrew as opposed to the Latin of the Vulgate, there is considerable uncertainty about his command of Hebrew. In all likelihood, we will never know how well he mastered Hebrew, no matter how profoundly unsatisfying that ignorance is to us.

Could a scholar have translated the Pentateuch, if his command of Hebrew was less than excellent? By 1530, the answer would be yes. The humanist movement had produced several significant aids to the study of the Hebrew Bible. Most important was Johannes Reuchlin's publication, in Latin, of a Hebrew grammar and lexicon (1506), which was followed by a valuable series of works on Hebrew and the Hebrew Bible by Sebastian

Münster. Tyndale also may have used a translation of the Bible by Santi Pagnini (1528). This most unusual work puts the Hebrew Bible in Latin, but in such a way as to make the syntax of the Hebrew transparent in the Latin rendition. An aesthetic shock to a Latin stylist, Pagnini's Bible was nonetheless of profound usefulness as a crib to the Renaissance scholar with excellent Latin and little Hebrew. Tyndale also worked directly from Luther's translation of the Pentateuch (first printed in 1523), the first Renaissance vernacular Bible based on the original Hebrew scripture. Luther's example certainly inspired him to bring out a separate edition of the Pentateuch before completing the Hebrew Bible, the goal that Tyndale's martyrdom would preclude.

Internal evidence indicates incontrovertibly that Tyndale was capable of making independent decisions about the meanings of words and phrases in Hebrew. Furthermore, Tyndale felt enough confidence in his philology to boast of the compatibility of Hebrew with the English language (as opposed to Latin). In his *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, Tyndale claimed "the properties of the Hebrew tongue agreeth a thousand times more with the English than with the Latin. The manner of speaking is both one, so that in a thousand places thou needest not but to translate it into English word for word, when thou must seek a compass in the Latin."⁵

The circumstances of the publication of the Pentateuch are not clear. Most bibliographers hold to the view that the presswork was done by Johannes Hoochstraten in Antwerp and that the imprimatur of Hans Luft of Marburg is false. Hans Luft was a printer of great renown in Wittenberg who was, at that time, also manufacturing books in Marburg. It is also unusual that this imprimatur occurs only in the colophon to Genesis. Less unusual, but still noteworthy, is the fact that all five books have separate title pages and that the whole does not have a unifying title page but begins with the title page for Genesis.

The typography has similar irregularities, although its overall clarity has elicited a steady stream of praise from readers. Genesis and Numbers are set up in a bastarda font (a type of medieval black letter) that is notable for its simplicity and legibility. More significantly, the remaining three books are printed in roman, which represents a departure from the gothic style of the printed English book of the early Renaissance. The small octavo format also enhances the aura of scripture's accessibility. It is Holy Word, but one can carry this Holy Word quite conveniently—or even, as we might imagine, inconspicuously—in one's pocket.

Each book has a separate introduction, as had been the case with Luther's Pentateuch, except that the text of Genesis is preceded by two letters of introduction: "W. T. To the Reader" and "A prolog showing the use of the scripture." Tyndale's prefaces depend upon Luther's, although these two are not straight translations. "A prolog" expresses Luther's concepts of salvation and scripture. There he claims the "pope's sect" believes that "heaven came by deeds and not by Christ, and that the outward deed justified them & made them holy and not the inward spirit received by faith" ([6v]). Tyndale echoes Luther's powerful formulation of the distinction in scripture between law and the promise of salvation (as set forth in the introduction to his Septembertestament of 1522), and does so with elegant lucidity:

So now the scripture is a light and showeth us the true way, both what to do, and what to hope. . . . Seek therefore in the scripture as thou readest it first the law, what god commandeth us to do. And secondarily the promises, which god promiseth us again, namely in Christ Jesus our lord. (Pentateuch 1530, p. 5^v)

English Bible as Partisan Manifesto?

It is time to pause to reflect on the suppression of the English Bible. It is often easy for Protestants to imagine a demonic plot to keep Bibles out of the hands of the people. In reality, the major problem in the history of the English Bible was the propaganda printed in the Bibles. In the eyes of authority, this tainted those Bibles with dangerous heresies.

The Tyndale Bibles were more than just Bibles. The English government and church did claim the danger of untutored lay access to scripture, but they especially sought to end dissemination of the Bible as a Lutheran pamphlet. As long as Henry VIII remained a Roman Catholic, that would be the policy.

The partisanship of the Tyndale imprints is a persistent problem in scholarship. Tyndale has repeatedly found apologists who plead his innocence on this score. Part of the problem is that the degree of partisanship varies in his books. The first attempted New Testament of 1525 began with a Lutheran-based introduction and included a few partisan side notes. The edition of 1526 eschewed the Lutheran preface and side notes but did include a mildly Protestant afterword. Thereafter, it is impossible to mount much of a case defending Tyndale from the charge of packaging the Bible as a Lutheran polemic. But some defense is in order. The fierceness of the future imprints may be a result of the hardening of the opposition in England. In 1530, the English Protestants had their first martyr: Thomas Hitton, who was executed in Kent. Tyndale mentioned him in 1530 and connected him to Stephen, the first martyr, after Christ, in Christian history: "That all the righteous blood may fall on their heads (i.e., the bishops, etc.) ... from the blood of Stephen the first martyr to the blood of Thomas Hitton ..."⁶

The Pentateuch of 1530 is stridently militant. The fierceness of Tyndale's opposition to Catholicism has often been faulted on the grounds that it detracts from the dignity of holy scripture; it also offered justification to Catholic efforts to suppress the text. David Daniell

attempted, with only limited persuasiveness, to argue that scholars have exaggerated the amount of polemic in the Pentateuch. After all, many of the side notes are explanations of Hebrew words as well as simple admonishments to the reader to attend the meaning of passages. But even this is occasionally accomplished with a Protestant twist, as at Deuteronomy 8:18, "God's power worketh and not we." Tyndale did encourage Christians to read and ponder scripture directly, and he did express disdain for glosses that set forth allegorical meanings. At Deuteronomy 4:1, "Ye shall put nothing unto the word," Tyndale added the note, "No: nor yet corrupt it with false glosses to confirm Aristotle: but rebuke Aristotle's false learning therewith."

Unquestionably, anti-Catholic outbursts are sufficiently numerous to make a strong impression on any reader. Among the most notorious are some twenty attacks on the papacy. In the margin at Numbers 23 ("How shall I curse whom God curseth not and how shall I ^{denounce} defy whom the Lord defieth not?"), Tyndale caustically noted: "The pope can tell how." J

In the New Testaments of 1534-37, partisan notes appear and, more important, Tyndale included prefaces to the individual books of the Bible that he derived from Luther. He adapted several prefaces significantly, but they remain Luther's message, the most important of which is Luther's Preface to Romans (which runs thirty-four pages in Tyndale's New Testament of 1534). This work is, in fact, one of Luther's most beloved tracts. It would be the work that inspired John Wesley's conversion at Aldersgate on 24 May 1738.

The "Matthew's Bible"

In 1537, a grand, richly illustrated, complete Bible appeared in folio. It is a mystery, and a most important one. According to the title page, the editor was a certain Thomas

Matthew. But that is not the case and it is all but absolutely certain that John Rogers was the editor. Why the pseudonym? Why no indication of printer or place of publication? Even though the Bible was now legal, some people obviously felt caution was necessary. Moreover, "William Tyndale" was still synonymous with "notorious heretic." Henry may have rejected the papal authority, but Tyndale remained anathema to him. Indeed, Henry's policy would change again as of 1539-40, and by 1541 the Bible revolution would hit a doldrum. The greatest mystery is the text of this Bible. The New Testament is Tyndale's, as is the Pentateuch. Ezra through the Apocrypha are from Miles Coverdale's version, except that John Rogers added his own translation of the Prayer of Manasseh (derived mainly from Olivétan's French translation). Whose version is the text of Joshua through 2 Chronicles? The style points to Tyndale. There is a scholarly consensus—a rare instance of unanimity for speculation on unsigned authorship—that this is the survival of Tyndale's work on the Hebrew scripture from the last five years or so of his life. John Rogers or another kindred spirit must have gotten this material from Tyndale's rooms when he was treacherously kidnapped.

The still pestiferous name Tyndale does not appear explicitly in the book. Nonetheless, the ^{large} initials W T are placed mysteriously at the end of the Old Testament. Moreover, the Lutheran Prefaces (in Tyndale's adaptations) are also printed in this book. Even the iconography advances Protestant principles. For example, the general title page (which is repeated as the title page for the New Testament) depicts the Lutheran concept of the Law and the Gospel, an issue that Luther discussed in many places, perhaps most prominently in the preface to his Septembertestament (1522). Lucas Cranach the Elder adapted this concept into a popular form of Lutheran iconography, which was used in both painting and, with remarkable frequency, in complex woodcuts. Briefly put, the doctrine

holds that the laws of the Bible are replaced by the promise of redemption in Christ. Consequently, adherence to laws does not ensure salvation; salvation is attained through faith alone, a free gift from God. In the image, concepts of "law" are associated with damnation, while belief in Christ, as conveyed by the Word of God, is depicted as the way to salvation. The iconographic scheme of the Law and the Gospel is also a major motif on the title page of the 1535 Coverdale Bible, although there it is annexed to the specifically English concept of royal supremacy over the church.

It is ironic, nonetheless, that the "Matthew's Bible," mostly a Tyndale version, was probably the first Bible to appear with a "royal license." Although the Matthew Bible was probably printed on the Continent, it was financed and published in England by Richard Grafton and Edward Whitchurch of London. In 1537 Grafton brought a copy to England to give to Archbishop Thomas Cranmer who in turn wrote Thomas Cromwell, chief advisor to Henry VIII in all ecclesiastical affairs since 1535. Cranmer liked it "better than any other translation heretofore made" and urged Cromwell to seek the King's license. In a week, the approval was granted. The "Matthew's Bible" also formed the foundation for the Great Bible (1539, etc.) and is, thus, the major conduit for the survival of Tyndale's artistry in subsequent English versions all the way to--and including--the Authorized Version of 1611. }

The Translations

Tyndale was temperamentally well equipped to be a translator. He was a superb scholar and one who knew how to write forcefully and beautifully. Yet, like many Renaissance thinkers, he readily reformulated the ideas of others (often rather exactly and often without giving credit). Very much in the manner of Martin Luther, Tyndale completely absorbed scripture and, after having made the words of the Bible part of his being, he spoke

them in the new language, as if those words were his own. His appropriation of scripture gave his renderings conviction and also an individual stamp.

As he worked, he had Luther's German translation and Erasmus's Latin translations open on his desk. We should not think of these as cribs but rather as aids and, importantly, as models for style. Despite the language differences, Tyndale was exceedingly fortunate that these two versions were by translators who just happened to be among the greatest Continental writers of the Renaissance. He was also fortunate that their approaches were rather different. Luther was the master of a popular manner that could be both grandiloquent and colloquial. Erasmus was elegant, smooth, crisp and, like Luther, obsessed with clarity. Tyndale's masterpiece is all the brighter for the brilliance of his masters.

Of all the Renaissance English Bibles, Tyndale's are the most vernacular. After the sheer power of his fluency, the casual style may be his greatest contribution. This is not to say that his Bibles are something like "Good News for Renaissance Man." Yet, he aims for clarity, even simplicity, in English. One is reminded of Martin Luther's principle that one should translate the Bible in such a way that the reader feels it was written only yesterday. Like Luther, Tyndale makes charming descents to quite colloquial registers of language. In the prelude to the Lord's Prayer, he writes "but when ye pray babble not much." In this manner, he was certainly being true to his inner voice but also consonant with Luther's approach. Luther may have even inspired "babble" with his equally colloquial "plappern." According to Luther, the biblical translator must capture the language of the man speaking in the market and the mother speaking to children.

The English of Tyndale's Bible is so joyful, so lucid, and so memorable that it has had an enormous impact. Despite the chasm between the culture of the Renaissance and now, readers are still remarkably moved by his literary talent and his verve. His words and,

equally important, his cadences echo in the King James versions and beyond. Many of biblical aphorisms that spice our language are Tyndale coinages. The list is long. We can start it by mentioning "fruit of the vine," "give up the ghost," and "filthy lucre."⁷

Tyndale certainly felt that a translation should not be anything less than accurate. Nonetheless, he is routinely faulted for several lapses, most importantly, for ignoring the Greek connective particles in the New Testament rendering. Quite often a "for," "and," "then," "thus," "therefore" is missing in his version. But Tyndale's point is obvious. Rendering all the particles would make English stilted and the Bible sound like a translation. Naturally, English uses connecting particles but not as obsessively as Greek.

The following passage from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount give a good sense of Tyndale's style. For a number of reasons, it is illuminating to compare these passages to the renderings of the King James Versions

Tyndale 1534

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For as ye judge so shall ye be judged. And with what measure ye mete, with the same shall it be measured to you again. Why seest thou a mote in thy brother's eye, and perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? ... Give not that which is holy to dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they tread them under their feet and the other turn again and all to rent you. Ask and it shall be given you. Seek and ye shall find. Knock and it shall be opened.

King James Version, 1611

1 Judge not, that ye be not judged. 2 for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. 3 And

why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye. ... 6 Give not that which is holy unto dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent you. 7 Ask and it shall be given you. Seek and ye shall find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you.

First, one cannot help noticing that the strong phrases in the KJV—the ones that cling to us—are taken from Tyndale. Obviously, KJV shows some advancement, too, in this extract by bringing order to the second half of Matthew ⁷8:6, where Tyndale's colloquialism ("and *all* to rent you") got mushy. Overall, Tyndale's easy manner stands out in high relief. "Seest thou" did not improve when it became the high-flying "beholdest thou." Similarly, KJV observes a tight parallelism in 8:2, which, by the way, is also in the original Greek. →
Tyndale lightens the Greek rhetoric with his casual addition of "with the same," which creates an oral, conversational feel. Perhaps Tyndale was wrong to do this, but the result is undeniably pleasant -at

Similarly, Tyndale was unconcerned about translating the same Greek word with the same English word. He did this for no apparent reason other than delight in variety. Mozley conveys the feeling of this admirably: "whatever the reader of his translation may suffer, he shall not suffer monotony. ... Thus for the phrase *it came to pass* he gives us five renderings, adding also *happened, chanced, fortunèd, and followed...*"⁸ This procedure occurs in many other cases as well, causing even Tyndale's admirers to concede "waywardness."⁹ Nonetheless, those translation which have aimed at a uniform English equivalent for the Greek words have largely failed. They are stilted and pedantic, the most important example of which is the Revised Version of 1881. The Authorised Version comes down on this matter somewhere in

between Tyndale and the Revised Version; it often uses different renderings for the same word but without Tyndale's exuberance. It is worth mentioning that variety of diction was a dominant spice in Erasmian rhetoric. In his *De copia*, Erasmus offered, for example, over two hundred ways to say "I'll always remember you" (*semper dum vivam tui meminero*).

How much Tyndale survives in the King James Version? A standard high estimate is nine-tenths of the New Testament, a rough proportion that gained currency when Mozley used it.¹⁰ Obviously, the figure is not grounded in a statistical analysis and errs almost certainly in favor of Tyndale's influence. Furthermore, a difference of, say, twenty percent, is quite significant in a translation. And yet, Tyndale's provided the basis for energetic, fluent, colorful translations. Tyndale was the first to write long passages of scripture in English that did not sound like a translation. This was compelling. Moreover, the tonal and temperamental filter of his mind was ebullient. As S. L. Greenslade put it, "scripture made him happy, and there is something swift and gay in his rhythm which conveys his happiness."¹¹ Readers will feel this when they encounter Tyndale.

¹ Mozley 1937, 334.

² Mozley 1937, 117-18.

³ Daniell 1994, 229.

⁴ Mozley 1937, 347, speculates, unconvincingly, that there were a few editions of which no copies survive.

⁵ Daniell 1994, 290.

⁶ Mozley 1937, 347.

⁷ Daniell 1989, for a longer list

⁸ Mozley 1937, 101-102.

⁹ E.g., Mozley 1937, 102.

¹⁰ Mozley 1937, 108; see also Bruce 1978, 44 (quoting J. Isaacs).

¹¹ Greenslade 1963, 144.