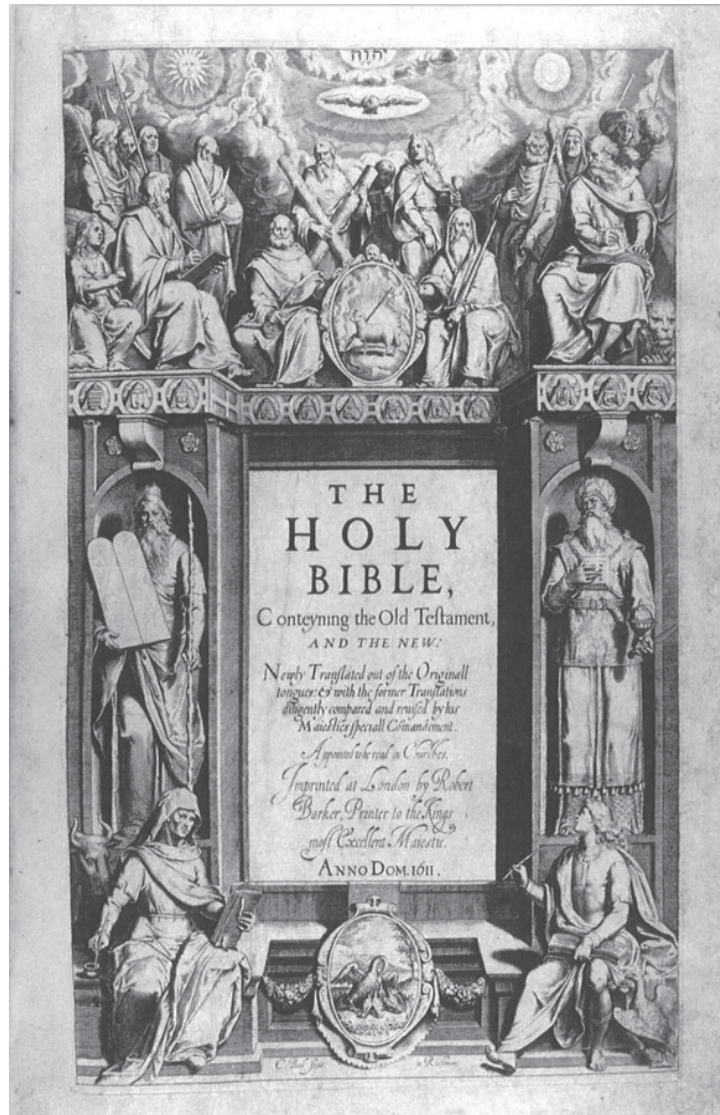




THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF  
**STATIONERS AND NEWSPAPER MAKERS**



**400th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION  
OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE  
AT  
ST BRIDE'S CHURCH  
FLEET STREET LONDON EC4**

Wednesday 25th May 2011



# Welcome

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The King James Bible has been described as “The noblest monument to English Prose” but why is this marked out as being so significant, why are we celebrating the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its publication, and what makes the text so special that it is deserving of all the praise heaped upon it?

To explore this question further, we need to go back 400 years. The ascension of James I to the English throne was a moment of Renaissance within the British Isles. Artists like Rubens were painting, William Byrd was composing motets for use in both Anglican and Catholic liturgy and Shakespeare was adding the finishing touches to his final play. Decadent masks and balls were held at Hampton Court Palace throughout the cold winter of 1603 where King James and his court had settled in order to escape the plague which was running rife through the streets of London.

It was to Hampton Court that James called the greatest Churchmen of his day in January 1604. He called them in response to the Millenary Petition which had been submitted to him by the Puritanical wing of the Church. However, James, perhaps the most scholarly monarch ever to inhabit the throne, did not budge an inch, aware that without the hierarchy of the Church of England, his authority as King would be severely threatened. But from his conference emerged the idea of a new translation of the Bible; it was really just an afterthought. A member of the Puritan faction appealed for one Bible to be read by all. James saw his chance. He declared that there should be a new translation, without the anti-monarchist footnotes which were to be found in the Geneva translation; a translation which would at once unite the Church and bolster the position of the divinely appointed monarch. This was the version that was published seven years later and became known as The Authorised Version or The King James Bible.

It was translated by some of the top scholars in the land. The translators met at Stationers’ Hall in 1609-10 where they read aloud their work to each other and corrected it, to produce a final version. The majority of the translators were churchmen and were rewarded for their labours with stipends and promotions within the Church of England. They worked from a variety of different sources: from the English translations, The Bishops Bible, the Geneva Bible. Tyndale’s text played a huge part in this translation and even traces of the Catholic Rheims New Testament can be found within its pages.

Their work became the book we know today. Their words are ingrained in our collective mind. David Crystal has recently assessed the text and found



257 phrases that come to us from the King James Bible and are used in our speech. For three hundred years this was the only Bible that was heard in our Churches and for many it was the only book to be kept in the home.

And even more modern translations use this as their basis. So ingrained is the King James Bible that we read it in our literature and hear it in our music, often subconsciously. From Henry Purcell's 'Hear my Prayer, O Lord' through to Handel's 'Every Valley shall be Exalted' to the Stone Roses 'I am the Resurrection and I am the Life', the King James Bible comes to us in a variety of settings, and not always where you expect to read it. Open an Elizabeth Gaskell, a Toni Morrison or a Dan Brown, and there you find the King James Bible. Listen to the speeches of Martin Luther King and they are peppered with phrases lifted directly from the Authorised Version. It has been used to fight for human rights and to defend slavery. It has been used by believers and atheists alike. It has been used to defend and propagate Christian belief and also to criticise the Church and her leaders.

So what exactly are we celebrating this year? We are celebrating a body of writing which finds its origins 3,000 years ago in the Ancient Near East and still speaks to us strongly today. It has been moulded and shaped through history to speak to different audiences and situations. The King James Bible has stood the test of time; it is the translation which was spread across the globe and which has become ingrained in our mindset. But it is the universality of the King James Bible that makes it worthy of such celebration. The translation originally intended to unite two factions in the Church of England now unites Protestants and Catholics; believers and atheists; artists and musicians; authors and critics. It is a translation that speaks to us all, even when we least expect it. This is a celebration of our global community, our global culture.

The King James Bible is not a monument, nor is it something as prim as a piece of prose. It is a living and breathing organism, which takes on a new life every time it is heard. It touches the deepest parts of human nature and engages with our collective psyche in a way that no other work can. This is what we are celebrating in 2011 and this is what we will continue to celebrate each time we experience this remarkable work.



# Order of Service

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## INTROIT

Alleluia, I Heard A Voice – Weelkes (Revelation 5: 12-13)

## BIDDING PRAYER

We meet today to give thanks for the work of those scholars who, four hundred years ago, produced what we know today as the King James Bible. We celebrate the felicity of their translation, the stately and elegant prose of the Authorised Version which has inspired, strengthened, soothed and comforted men and women for centuries, and which continues to touch a chord in our hearts today.

We celebrate, too, the links between this church and the Worshipful Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers, in whose Hall the translators met to produce the final version of the King James Bible.

This service also inaugurates a period of public readings from Scripture, as a copy of the King James Bible travels around the City churches within the Square Mile – a procession which will reach its climax at a service of celebration in St Paul's Cathedral in October.

We pray that as this translation of Scripture has challenged, nurtured and inspired previous generations, so may the Holy Bible in all its translations continue to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path, piercing the heart, and illuminating the understanding of men and women everywhere.

We salute tonight a supreme monument of the English language, the King James Bible, as we celebrate its 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

AMEN.



## PROCESSIONAL HYMN

*(during which a copy of the first edition of the King James Bible, lent by Norwich Cathedral, is processed to the altar)*

All my hope on God is founded;  
He doth still my trust renew,  
Me through change and chance he guideth,  
Only good and only true.  
God unknown,  
He alone  
Calls my heart to be his own.

Pride of man and earthly glory,  
Sword and crown betray his trust;  
What with care and toil he buildeth,  
Tower and temple fall to dust.  
But God's power,  
Hour by hour,  
Is my temple and my tower.

God's great goodness aye endureth,  
Deep his wisdom, passing thought:  
Splendour, light and life attend him,  
Beauty springeth out of naught.  
Evermore  
From his store  
New-born worlds rise and adore.

Still from man to God eternal  
Sacrifice of praise be done,  
High above all praises praising  
For the gift of Christ, his Son.  
Christ doth call  
One and all:  
Ye who follow shall not fall.





# FIRST READING

Genesis 1: 1-8, 24-28, 31

# ANTHEM

Rejoice In The Lord – Redford (Philippians 4: 4-7)

# SECOND READING

John 1: 1-14





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## HYMN

Thou, whose almighty word  
Chaos and darkness heard,  
And took their flight;  
Hear us, we humbly pray,  
And, where the Gospel day  
Sheds not its glorious ray,  
Let there be light!

Thou who didst come to bring  
On thy redeeming wing  
Healing and sight,  
Health to the sick in mind,  
Sight to the inly blind,  
O now to all mankind,  
Let there be light!

Spirit of truth and love,  
Life-giving holy Dove,  
Speed forth thy flight!  
Move o'er the waters' face  
Bearing the lamp of grace,  
And, in earth's darkest place,  
Let there be light!

Holy and blessèd Three,  
Glorious Trinity,  
Wisdom, Love, Might;  
Boundless as ocean's tide,  
Rolling in fullest pride,  
Through the world far and wide,  
Let there be light!



## ADDRESS

The Rt Revd and Rt Hon Richard Chartres,  
Lord Bishop of London

## ANTHEM

Set Me As A Seal – Walton (Song of Solomon 8: 6-7)

## THIRD READING

I Corinthians 15: 51-57

## THE PRAYERS







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## HYMN

Ye holy angels bright,  
Who wait at God's right hand,  
Or through the realms of light  
Fly at your Lord's command,  
    Assist our song,  
    For else the theme  
    Too high doth seem  
    For mortal tongue.

Ye blessèd souls at rest,  
Who ran this earthly race,  
And now, from sin released,  
Behold the Saviour's face,  
    God's praises sound,  
    As in his sight  
    With sweet delight  
    Ye do abound.

Ye saints, who toil below,  
Adore your heavenly King,  
And onward as ye go  
Some joyful anthem sing;  
    Take what he gives  
    And praise him still,  
    Through good or ill,  
    Who ever lives!

My soul, bear thou thy part,  
Triumph in God above:  
And with a well-tuned heart  
Sing thou the songs of love!  
    Let all thy days  
    Till life shall end,  
    Whate'er he send,  
    Be filled with praise.



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## BLESSING

## ANTHEM

The Lord Bless You And Keep You – Rutter (Numbers 6: 24-26)

*The texts a culture teaches its children shape their landscape of literacy, their horizons of aspiration. People who can quote the Bible walk tall. They carry with them a treasure no one can take away from them. They sing with the tongues of poets, walk with the wisdom of Solomon, find solace in the soul music of the Psalms, and hope in the blazing visions of the prophets. In an age of blogs and tweets, the King James translation remains the Beethoven of the soul, the imperishable music of spiritual grandeur.*

(Lord Sacks, Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth)

Service conducted by the Venerable David Meara,  
Rector of St Bride's and Archdeacon of London  
Director of Music: Robert Jones  
Organist: Matthew Morley



King James I



## The iij. booke of the kyniges.

## The xxij. Chap.

saide: Have these no lord: Let every one turne home agayne in peace. Then sayde yf kynge of Israel vnto Josaphat: Tolve not I yf that he wolde prophecye me no good, but euell:

**D** He sayde: Heare now therfore the worde of the LORDE: \* I sawe the LORDE syt vpon his seate, and all the hoost of heaven stödinge by him at his righte hande z at his lefte. And the LORDE saide: Who wil disceauē Achab to go vp, z fall at Ramoth in Gilead. And one sayde this, another that. Then wete there forth a spiete, z stode before the LORDE, and sayde: I wyl disceauē him. The LORDE sayde vnto him: Wherwith? He sayde vnto him: I wyl go forth, and be a false spiete in the mouth of all his prophetes. He saide: Thou shalt disceauē him, and shalt be able: go forth and do so. Beholde now, \* the LORDE hath geuē a false spiete in yf mouth of all these yf prophetes, and the LORDE hath spoken euell ouer the. Then stepte forth Sedechias the sonne of Cnaena, and smote Micheas vpon the cheke, and sayde: What, is the spiete of the LORDE departed fro me, to speake with the? Micheas sayde: Beholde, thou shalt se it in yf daye, whan thou shalt go fro one chamber to another to hyde the.

**Eze. 14. b** The kynge of Israel sayde: Take Micheas, and let him remayne with Amon the ruler of the cite, and with Joas the kynges sonne, and saye: Thus sayeth the kynge: put this man in prison, and fede him with bred and water of trouble, tyll I come agayne in peace. Micheas sayde: Yf thou comest agayne in peace, then hath not the LORDE spoken thorow me. And he sayde: herken to all ye people.

**E** So the kynge of Israel and Josaphat yf kynge of Juda wente vp vnto Ramoth in Gilead. And the kynge of Israel sayde vnto Josaphat: Chaunge thy clothes, and come in to yf battayll in thine araic. The kynge of Israel chaunged his clothes also, and wete in to the battayll. But the kynge of Siria commaunded the rulers of his charettes (of whom there were two and thirtie) and saide: Ye shal fight nether agaynst small ner greater, but onely agaynst the kynge of Israel. And whan the rulers of the charettes sawe Josaphat, they thought it had bene the kynge of Israel, and fell vpon him with fightinge. But Josaphat cried. So whan the rulers of the charettes sawe that it was not yf kynge of Israel, they turned back fro him.

**S** A certayne man bended his bowe harde, and shotte the kynge of Israel betwene the

mawe and yf longes. And he sayde vnto his charetman: Turne thine hāde, and cary me out of the hoost, for I am wounded. And yf battayll was sore the same daie. And the kynge stode vpo his charet, agaynst the Syriās and dyed in the eueninge, and the bloude ranne from the wounde in to the myddes of the charet. And whan the Sonne wente downe there was a proclamacion made in the hoost, and sayde: Every one gett him in to his cite, and to his countre. Thus the kynge dyed, and was broughte vnto Samaria, and they buryed him in Samaria. And whan they wasshed the charett in the pole of Samaria, \* yf dogges licked his bloude (but the harlottes wasshed him) acordinge to the worde of yf LORDE which he spake.

What more there is to saye of Achab, z all yf he dyd, and of the Query house which he buylded, beholde, it is wrytten in the Cronicles of the kynges of Israel. So Achab slepte with his fathers, and his sonne Ahasia was kynge in his steade.

\* And Josaphat the sonne of Asa was kynge ouer Juda in the fourth yeare of Achab kynge of Israel, and was fyue and thirtie yeare olde whan he was made kynge and raigned fyue and twentye yeare at Jerusalem. His mothers name was Asuba yf doughter of Silhi, and he walked in all the waye of his father Asa, z departed not there from. And he dyd that which was right in yf sighte of the LORDE, yet put he not awaye yf hie places, and yf people offred and brent incēse yet vpon the hie places, and he had peace with the kynge of Israel.

What more there is to saye of Josaphat and the mighte that he exercised, and how he fought, beholde, it is wrytten in the Cronicles of the kynges of Juda. \* He put out of the londe also the whoremongers that yet were lefte, which remayned ouer in the tyme of his father Asa. And at that tyme there were no kynges in Edom. And Josaphat had caused to make shippes vpon the See, which shulde go to fetch golde in Ophir, but they wente not: for they were broken at Ezeon Gaber. At that tyme sayde Ahasia the sonne of Achab vnto Josaphat: Let my seruauntes passe with thy seruauntes in the shippes. But Josaphat wolde not. And Josaphat slepte with his fathers, and was buried in yf cite of David. And Joram his sonne was kynge in his steade.

The ende of the thirde booke of the kyniges.

2. Pa. 18. c

Eze. 14. b

3. Reg. 21. c

G  
2. Par. 20. c

3. Reg. 15. l