

FROM MANUSCRIPT TO FINISHED TEXT

This volume contains all the biblical text that was written on the manuscripts of Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible (the Joseph Smith Translation, or JST), including those verses that were written on the manuscripts but in which he made no changes.¹ The New Translation text is presented opposite the corresponding verses of the King James Version. The sign ≈≈ in the King James Version column identifies those verses that the Prophet dictated without change. The transcription in this book presents Joseph Smith's final text but with capitalization, punctuation, and spelling standardized and with a few other small, necessary adjustments (see below). In places where he dictated only isolated words and the locations for their insertion into existing verses, the complete verses have been reconstructed with the words of the King James translation. Old Testament passages quoted (often partially paraphrased) by New Testament authors are cited in footnotes.

1. The verses without changes in wording are included because they are part of the record of the New Translation, having been dictated by Joseph Smith and written by his scribes on the manuscripts, and also because they are often part of continuing sentences or quotations with other verses in which the Prophet made changes in the wording.

THE TEXT

Joseph Smith's Bible revision was recorded on sheets of paper approximately sixteen by thirteen inches in dimension, folded in half and gathered into booklets with pages measuring about eight by thirteen inches. The original manuscripts are housed in the Library-Archives of the Community of Christ in Independence, Missouri. Using archival resources there and in the Church History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, researchers were able to reconstruct the history behind the creation of the manuscripts. And with the advantage of high-resolution photography and scanning, they were able to identify the words on the manuscripts with precision not possible in earlier generations. The research resulted in the publication of a complete print transcription in 2004, which was then reissued electronically in 2011 and subsequently published online as part of the Joseph Smith Papers Project.² That transcription is an as-is text, preserving the rough original writing as it appears on the manuscript pages with original spelling and the many strike-outs and insertions. The text in this volume comes from that transcription but is an edited, finished text in keeping with Joseph Smith's intent for the publication of his revised Bible.

Our transcription comes from the Old and New Testament manuscripts that Joseph Smith and his assistants prepared for publication, labeled by archivists as Old Testament Manuscript 2 (OT2) and New Testament Manuscript 2 (NT2).³ The first fifty-nine pages of OT2 are a copy of an earlier draft that covers about half the chapters of Genesis (OT1), and the first forty-nine pages of NT2 are a copy of an earlier draft of almost all of Matthew (NT1). After the words of OT1 and NT1 were copied onto the final manuscripts, those draft documents were retained among Joseph Smith's papers, but they were not used further in

2. Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews, eds., *Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2004); Scott H. Faulring and Kent P. Jackson, eds., *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible: Electronic Library* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 2011); and *The Joseph Smith Papers: "Old Testament Revision 1," "Old Testament Revision 2," "New Testament Revision 1," "New Testament Revision 2,"* josephsmithpapers.org.

3. For the dates and scribes of the manuscripts, see Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, *Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts*, 57–59, 63–73.

the Bible revision and are not alternative versions of it. Together the 322 pages of writing on OT2 and NT2 make up Joseph Smith's translation of the Bible. It was on those documents that the Prophet continued his translations of the Old and New Testaments and recorded additional refinements and corrections to the translation. He and his assistants then prepared the New Translation for publication by adding punctuation, correcting capitalization, and inserting chapter and verse breaks.

While our transcription comes from OT2 and NT2, there are a few places where it is apparent that scribes made unconscious errors while copying from the draft Genesis and Matthew manuscripts. In those cases, our transcription follows the reading on the draft manuscripts.⁴ In addition, after OT2 was transcribed, the Prophet added a few revisions to the OT1 manuscript. Our transcription includes those as well.

PUNCTUATION

The abundant punctuation in the King James Bible, first published in 1611, comes from its editors' intent to maximize its impact on those who heard it read from the pulpit. The punctuation was revised in every printing for the next century and a half, a process that slowed down substantially after a 1769 Oxford edition came to be viewed as the standard King James Bible. In preparing the New Translation, Joseph Smith used as its base text a King James Bible printed in the United States in 1828. As with other Bibles of that time as well as Bibles printed now, its punctuation differs in thousands of places from that of the 1611 edition, and it differs in many instances from that of the King James Bibles published today.

Joseph Smith's revision of the Bible was dictated and recorded by his scribes with very little punctuation. His assistants later inserted punctuation but did so inexpertly and inconsistently. We have provided modern punctuation and capitalization in our transcription, with the punctuation applied to best represent the text as it is in the original languages. We have also included quotation marks to identify spoken and quoted words.

4. For example, at Genesis 17:25 the transcription retains "and Ishmael his son was" (OT1) rather than "and Ishmael was" (OT2), and at Matthew 1:17 the transcription retains "all the generations . . . were" (NT1) rather than "all the generation . . . were" (NT2).

SPELLING

Spelling in the English language has evolved considerably since 1611. Bible printers after the first King James Version kept the spelling contemporary by modernizing it in every printing. Much of that process ended with the edition of 1769, but modernizations in spelling continued in some later printings. Joseph Smith's printed Bible had more instances of modern spelling than King James printings today, and it also used *a* rather than *an* before words that begin with the pronounced letter *b* (as in "a house" rather than "an house," Genesis 33:17). Joseph Smith and his scribes were not consistent in their spelling or usage. We present the words as they recorded them, but we have standardized the spelling.

The King James Bible represents the Hebrew divine name *Yahweh* (Jehovah) with "the LORD," with small capital letters setting the divine name apart from the common noun *lord*. Our transcription retains that usage in passages that come from the Bible. In passages with no biblical counterpart, such as the Visions of Moses, the transcription follows the form on the manuscript, "the Lord."

CHAPTERS AND VERSES

Today's chapter divisions date to the thirteenth century, although they are partly based on divisions created much earlier. A French printer invented the verses we use in Bibles today for Greek and Latin editions that he published in the mid-sixteenth century. He devised them to be approximately the size of an average sentence, but they often break up longer sentences between two or more verses. Joseph Smith clearly had a preference for longer paragraphs in the scriptures, as is seen in the original publications of the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Book of Abraham, as well as in the Joseph Smith Translation manuscripts. For his Bible revision, he and his assistants discarded the biblical verse numbers and created their own numbered paragraphs, usually approximately three times the size of traditional Bible verses.⁵ In a few places they also created new chapter divisions. Our transcription divides the text into the numbered paragraphs and chapters that they cre-

5. In many cases the new paragraph breaks correspond with the paragraph markers in the King James Bible (¶).

ated.⁶ We have noted the traditional biblical verse breaks with small superscripted numbers within the paragraphs, enabling readers to navigate Joseph Smith's revision alongside the King James text and other translations. The inclusive references at the top of the pages are to the locations in traditional Bibles.

When Joseph Smith revised only individual verses, rather than long texts, he and his associates rarely changed the verse breaks. We have transcribed those verses as separate revisions, each beginning a new block of text. The exception is if changes in consecutive verses span a sentence or are within the same quotation, in which case we have placed them in the same paragraph.

ITALICS

In order to create coherent sentences in a target language, translators often must supply words that are not represented explicitly in the original language. A good example can be seen in Genesis 23:4. Abraham said, "I am a stranger." These four English words come from only two words in Hebrew: the word for *I* and the word for *stranger*. Because "I stranger" is awkward English, the translators wisely and correctly supplied "am a" to make the phrase coherent in English. Bible printers in the sixteenth century adopted the idea that words supplied in this manner needed to be set apart visually in the translation, so they printed them in a different type font. Since 1612, italic type has been used for that purpose in the King James translation.⁷ This is the origin of the vast majority of its italics.

Early publishers of the English Bible revised the italics in every printing, sometimes deliberately and sometimes by accident. The process slowed down significantly after the Oxford edition of 1769, but changes continued to be made. In the earliest printings and in others thereafter, publishers applied the italics inconsistently, and it was never certain what the rules should be for including them. Neither of the supplied words in "I am a stranger" was set apart in the 1611 edition, and historically and

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6. In three places some verses were numbered out of sequence. These have been corrected silently in the transcription.
 7. The 1611 first edition was published in blackletter type with roman type used where italics are found now.

in current printings, only *am* has been italicized. Scholars now view the italicized words to be unjustified and unnecessary, and readers find them to be confusing.

There is much evidence that Joseph Smith and his associates did not view favorably the italicized words in the Bible.⁸ That same evidence suggests that they, like most Bible readers of their own time and now, did not fully understand their purpose. In the Joseph Smith Translation manuscripts, no words were indicated to be italicized, and no words were italicized in early printings. Therefore we include no King James italics in this edition of the Joseph Smith Translation.

GRAMMAR

The English of the King James Bible is characterized by pronouns that are different from those in use today (*thou, thee, thy, thine, and ye*) as well as by different verbal conjugations (verbs ending in *-est* and *-eth*). These were obsolete by Joseph Smith's time and were already going out of use by 1611. The first King James Bible mostly used the archaic pronouns but also used some of those we use today.⁹ Editors of later printings revised the modern forms to conform with the older usage, archaizing the grammar at the same time they were modernizing the spelling. The older grammar was not native to Joseph Smith, and in his Bible revision he dictated both the archaic forms and the modern forms. Our transcription retains the pronouns and verbs as he dictated them and as his scribes wrote them on the manuscripts, even though this has resulted in some inconsistencies.¹⁰

8. See, for example, *Evening and Morning Star* 1, no. 8 (January 1833): [58]; 2, no. 14 (July 1833): 106; and *Times and Seasons* 4, no. 20 (September 1, 1843): 318.

9. Notice both *ye* and *you* used as the second-person plural subject in the earliest editions at Deuteronomy 5:32–33: “Ye shall observe to doe therefore, as the Lord your God hath commanded you: you shall not turne aside to the right hand, or to the left. You shall walke in all the wayes which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and *that it may be* well with you, and that ye may prolong *your* dayes in the land which ye shall possesse.”

10. For examples, see Matthew 6:1; 16:3.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES WITH THE TEXT

In very few isolated places it was necessary to silently correct small irregularities that appear to be mistakes made in the dictation or in the scribal recording. These include writing a word twice, writing only part of a word, and overlooking small words.¹¹ In a few instances we restore in brackets words inadvertently left out by scribes.¹²

Sometimes Joseph Smith made changes to the wording of a passage without revising the grammar of all the surrounding text. This has caused some rare problems with case or with subject-verb agreement, and in a few places it has resulted in incomplete sentences. Our transcription retains incomplete sentences where they are recorded in the text. To correct issues with subject-verb agreement, we have made the least intrusive edit that is consistent with the revision. For example, at 1 Corinthians 1:12 Joseph Smith changed “every one of you” (singular) to “many of you” (plural) without revising the conjugation of the associated verb. Because his revision implies the change in the verb as well, we have adjusted *saiith* (singular) to *say* (plural).

The New Testament of the King James Version often spells the names of Old Testament characters in ways that are unfamiliar to most readers. In dictating text, Joseph Smith generally followed the New Testament forms of the names when he encountered them, but he occasionally dictated the more well-recognized Old Testament forms. Examples include his dictating “Isaiah” in place of “Esaias” (Mark 7:6), “Shem” in place of “Sem” (Luke 3:36), and “Hosea” in place of “Osee” (Romans 9:25). Our transcription retains the name forms as they appear in the final manuscripts, except in places that appear simply to be misspellings.¹³

Joseph Smith revised Matthew 26:1–71 and 2 Peter 3:4–6 twice, and our transcription includes both duplicate translations.¹⁴

11. For example, we corrected “all all Judah” to “and all Judah” at Jeremiah 26:19.

12. For example, “the sons of Raamah: Sheba [and] Dedan” at Genesis 10:7. See Luke 6:32–33.

13. As in “Zackarias” in Luke 1.

14. For the sake of convenience and comparison, we have inserted the NT2 verse breaks into the NT1 translation of Matthew 26.

