

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

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Introduction

How many of us use the Topical Guide or indexes in our quadruple combination when we are asked to speak in sacrament meeting or to teach a lesson during Sunday school? How many of us utilize the Bible Dictionary, maps, Joseph Smith Translation, footnotes and chapter outlines in our research, search for enlightenment, quest for pleasure of learning and our efforts to come closer to the Lord? Have we considered the time, talent, and energy spent into bringing the quadruple combination together? The scriptures were meticulously and neatly written and preserved safely for centuries. Then the enormous task of researching, compiling and printing them in one publication required many qualified scholars and volunteer workers. Have we ever reflected on these things in order to appreciate the publication of the quadruple combination? Perhaps we have taken these things for granted.

We often hear that the publication of the Book of Mormon was the fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy. We rejoice in the blessing that the Book of Mormon has to offer. But suppose that prophecy was not fully fulfilled until recently—in 1981? Would knowing this cause us to rejoice more?

King James Version of the Bible

After the fall of Jerusalem in 587 B.C., the Prophet Ezekiel ceased speaking of God's judgments on his contemporaries and began teaching Israel's redemption in the last days. He turned Israel's heart to the future and to the source of hope in the Lord. Of Ezekiel's twelve recorded visions, seven were given after the fall of Jerusalem.¹ In one of these twelve visions, Ezekiel wrote: "the word of the Lord came again unto me, saying... take thee one stick, and write upon it, for Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions."² In ancient Israel the records were written on tablets of scrolls rolled upon sticks. The stick of Judah, of course, is understood to be the Bible.



Ezekiel prophesied concerning the Stick of Judah and the Stick of Joseph becoming one in our hands.

The King James Version of the Bible is an English translation of the Christian Bible by the Church of England begun in 1604 and first published in 1611. The New Testament was translated from the Textus Receptus (Received Text) edition of the Greek texts, so called because most extant texts of the time were in agreement with it. The Old Testament was translated from the Masoretic Hebrew text, while the Apocrypha was translated from the Greek Septuagint (LXX).

The King James Version was translated by 47 scholars working in six committees, two based in each of the University of Oxford, the University of Cambridge, and Westminster respectively.⁴ They worked on their assigned parts separately; then the drafts produced by each committee were compared and revised for consistency with each other. The scholars were not paid for their translation work but were required to support themselves. In the dedicatory epistle, which is at the very beginning of the Bible, written by one of the translators of the Bible, he expressed:

Among all our joys, there was no one that more filled our hearts, than the blessed continuance of the Preaching of God's sacred words among us; which is that inestimable treasure, which excelleth all the riches of the earth; because the fruit thereof extendeth

itself, not only to the time spent in this transitory world, but directeth and disposeth men unto that eternal happiness which is above in heaven.⁵

However, despite increasing excitement, the Bible still did not contain the fullness of the truth. There was a lack of authenticity in the translations of the Bible, and there was an absence of priesthood holders to interpret the scriptures through revelation, which caused confusion among many Christians. Moreover, it was not quickly accepted by the general public.

The Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “Religious denomination relied entirely on the dead letter of the Bible for their authority... Their interpretations of scripture without divine guidance led them into division, subdivision, and multiplication of churches, each going its own way blindly and in confusion.”⁶

Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ

We know from the records that people have divided themselves among different denomination by 1800's.⁷ With his incredible foreknowledge, the Lord knew that the confusion would come about concerning the critical doctrines of the gospel depending only on the stick of Judah. However, we know from the scriptures that the Lord always prepares the way. We learn that the Lord is fully “able to do [his] ... work”⁸ and bring all his purposes. In the vision in Ezekiel chapter 37, the Lord also said: “Then take another stick, and write upon it, for Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions.”⁹ Because of his perfect love and mercy, the Lord prepared a way to restore truth by bringing forth the stick of Ephraim, which we now have as the Book of Mormon, Another Testament of Jesus Christ.

The first edition of the Book of Mormon was printed by the Egbert B. Grandin Company in the village of Palmyra, New York, in March of 1831. Martin Harris mortgaged his farm, providing funding for the first 5,000 copies of the Book of Mormon.¹⁰ However, when the book first was advertised for sale, it met such a bitter and destructive response that it did not sell, and Martin Harris lost his farm. An epoch of scriptural history then began. Currently we have more than 52,000 young men and women devote 18 to 24 months of their lives to proclaim this book to be another testament of Jesus Christ. Millions of others also join with missionaries to testify of the book's veracity. Since that humble beginning in March of 1830, more than 120 million copies of the Book of Mormon have been printed, and it is available in 106 different languages¹¹. On the other hand, there are others, moved by a different spirit, who would to this day revile against that book. Though the publication of the Book of Mormon seemed so inconsequential in 1831, the adversary knew exactly what this event signified, hence his disproportionate efforts to destroy the Book of Mormon. Today, numerous publications and false accusations attempt to destroy the authenticity of the Book of Mormon.

The LDS Edition of the King James Bible

God also knew that this would happen. He knew that many would not accept the Book of Mormon because people would allow themselves to be blinded by the cunning craftiness of men.¹² The Lord provided a means whereby we can hold the Bible and the Book of Mormon and proclaim that they are both his words. Said he to Ezekiel: “And join them [the stick Judah and the stick of Ephraim] one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand.”¹³

The project traces its roots all the way back to October 27, 1972, when President Spencer W. Kimball sent a letter addressed to Robert C. Patch, who was the Dean of Religious Instruction at Brigham Young University at the time, and to Ellis T. Rasmussen, who also later became the Dean of Religious Instruction at Brigham Young University, giving them a task “to prepare a King James Bible... to assist in improving doctrinal scholarship throughout the church.” With Elders Thomas S. Monson, Boyd K. Packer and Marvin J. Ashton (who was later replaced by Bruce R. McConkie) on the committee, the work was launched with a basic charge to “help people understand the Bible”¹⁴.

Printing

In 1977, 148 years after the Book of Mormon was published and 366 years after the first King James Bible was published, a step was taken to bring these two sticks together. Rasmussen and James Mortimer, an experienced scripture publisher, met with the director of the religious publication Roger Coleman at the Cambridge University Press in England. Coleman and his executives were skeptical at first; some even thought it was impossible. At long length they discussed the publication of a most unusual edition of the King James Bible. They had never been asked to do anything like this before.

They were told to keep the text exactly the same, but the chapter heading, indexes, footnotes, cross-references and so on, were to be replaced. This was not all; this new edition would be cross-referenced with three other books of scriptures: the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price-- books the printers had barely heard of. During the Renaissance, many of the vernacular translations were said to contain "heretical" translations and notes and were thus banned by the Protestant church.¹⁵ Mortimer reminisces about the moment that he the meeting with Coleman: "With a great deal of trepidation, I... began explaining what it was we needed and heard myself saying things in ways that I felt were beyond my normal capabilities. When I was finished, everyone was quiet; then their chief executive simply said, 'How can we be of assistance?'"¹⁶

The work of printing was extremely complicated. The committee soon encountered many problems. One of the problems was that printers had to recollect editorial skills that they had not used for many years, because they rarely have to set a new Bible for a completely new version. Another problem was simply the size of the project. About eight and a half million pieces of letter metal were set in hot metal monotype-- each letter and each character separate within a line so that a single comma could be changed without requiring that the lines be reset. Eleanor Knowles, a Deseret Book editor at the time commented:

These typesetters are real artists. When you think what kind of a challenge it is to set the text so that all of the references come out on the same page without juggling, resetting, and refitting, you can see why we wanted them. And they're so experienced in working on the Bible that they could catch errors as quickly as the proofreaders. We simply couldn't get that quality of work anywhere else.¹⁷

The press at Cambridge had a reputation for Bible printing since the earliest edition in 1611. They were obviously best fit for this historical work. Each word of text was proof-read aloud five times by proof readers.

All of these problems were only associated with the printing phase of the project. The notable work in the actual researching, compiling and organizing of thousands of footnotes was already completed. This work had to be done before printing.

Cross-references and Footnotes

Research for the cross-referencing and footnotes required many hundreds of volunteer workers. Without the help of the computer, it would have been nearly impossible. The work was to be carefully supervised and done in an orderly manner. It would be read and studied by keen students of the gospel and devoted, faithful members of the Church. Enemies and detractors with angry eyes would also study it. It had to be correct in every detail.

Many Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Old and New Testament scholars dedicated thousands of hours looking up cross-references in existing concordance, making new lists and refining them, running the cross-references through another computer check and refining again. The cross-references they organized identified important themes that would help readers solve historical or doctrinal problems for potentially every verse in the Bible.

An innovative system for the footnote would be used as well. Footnotes within a verse are indicated by superscript *a*, *b*, *c* and so on, depending on the number of references the verse contains. The footnotes

contain several types of information. The most important type, of course, is the cross reference-- there are approximately 28,000 cross references in the LDS version of the King James Bible.¹⁸

Rasmussen and Patch worked on Hebrew translation in the Old Testament and Greek translation in New Testament. In addition, modern synonyms for archaic or obscure words in the King James Version were identified and added to the edition (Represented by “IE” or “OR”; for example, see Matthew 1:19 footnote).

TOPICAL GUIDE

There are 750 topics in the Topical Guide. Originally, it was as twice as long, but for a practical use at home, it was painstakingly reduced to its current lengths. The committee, which included seminary and institute teachers from Idaho and Utah, evaluated each item for significance and relevance and asked others to check the result against their own scriptural knowledge and teaching experiences. Rasmussen said: “It was a tedious work... it was repeating of a fair trade-off between everything that *could* be included and what *should* be included.”¹⁹

When a report was given to the First Presidency on how the project of laboriously listing of topics in alphabetical order was progressing, the committee responded: “We have been through Heaven and Hell, past Love and Lust, and we are working toward Repentance.”²⁰

These 598 pages in the Topical Guide are “intended to help the readers find scriptures most often used.”²¹ The Topical Guide contains subjects that are not identified by the same words in the Bible text. For example, if the reader looks up “tabernacle,” he finds not only a helpful concordance of key words, but also of doctrinally illuminating scriptures that begin with Gen. 25:8 “let them make me a sanctuary” and end with Moses 7:62, “there shall be my tabernacle called Zion.” It gives students of the Bible more immeasurably more knowledge and enlightenment than ever before. The entire process of cross-referencing, annotating and the making the Topical Guide took over 7 years.

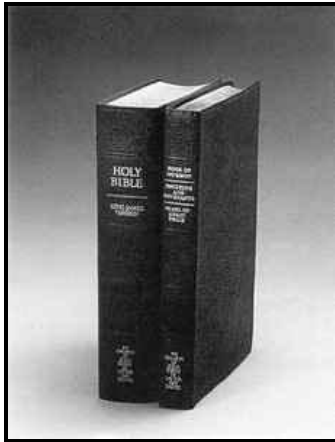
APPENDIX

Meanwhile, other intensive work for the project was underway. Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve wrote chapter headings introducing the main plot and doctrines in every chapter and every book in the Bible. Also after receiving a kind permission from the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Joseph Smith Translation (widely known as the “Inspired Version”) was made available to the Bible. About 600 passages of Joseph Smith Translation fill seventeen pages, giving “many interesting insights” and “valuable aid to biblical interpretation and understanding.”²²

Robert J. Matthews, a former BYU administrator, provided 196 pages of the Bible Dictionary, including 1285 entries.²³ The dictionary identifies places and people, provide historical background in light of such recent discoveries as the Dead Sea Scrolls, and explain languages and cultural items. It includes quotations of all Old Testament passages found in the New Testament where Bible students can quickly refer to the prophecies made by all the Lord’s prophets.²⁵ Introduction to the dictionary explains that it “provide[s]... [a] concise collection of definitions and explanations of terms that are mentioned in the Bible.”²⁴

Patch provided the valuable Gospel Harmony not only with the four gospels but also with 3 Nephi and relevant references to the Doctrine and Covenants.²⁶ Maps were also included to “assist and enhance in the study of the scriptures”. Both maps and the index were added to help us “better understand the scriptures... [and] scriptural events.”²⁷ A ten page gazetteer indexes all of the maps, so that readers can quickly look up the location of any place, mountain or river mentioned anywhere in their reading. The photographs include important sites where Jesus and His Apostles lived and taught. Significant scriptural events are listed so that readers can read more about those events.

The Topical Guide, Bible Dictionary, Joseph Smith Translation, and the scripture maps and photographs constitute the Appendix to the Bible. And the whole volume constitutes the first LDS edition of the King James Bible, finally published in 1979.



LDS edition of the Bible and the Triple Combination, containing, the Book of Mormon, The Doctrines and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price.

Triple Combination and Quadruple combination

As well as working with new the LDS edition of the King James Bible, another notable work was quietly engaging. The manuscripts of the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price were also reviewed to correct error which crept into early editions, and many cross-references to the Bible were added to these scriptures.

New historical headnotes, reflecting increased knowledge of the background of the revelations, were added to the Doctrine and Covenants. Also, new content outlines appear at the beginning of each revelation (by this time, Sections 137 and 138, Declaration 1 and 2 were added to this scripture). For the first time, maps were added to show important sites of early church history. The Pearl of Great Price also received a revised concordance (an old index that was attached to older edition of Pearl of Great Price) and index, and a new introduction explaining its background.

When it finally came off the press in 1981, there were no mistakes-- not even one. It is the best and most accurate edition we have ever had. These three scriptures are combined into one volume, making what we now know as the triple combination. This triple combination, combined with the LDS edition of the Bible, stands as the quadruple combination. The Stick of Judah and the Stick of Ephraim are joined together in our hands. Elder Boyd K. Packer observed that after more than seven years of quiet, intensive work, these sticks are “now woven together in such a way that as [we] pore over one [we] are drawn to the other; as [we] learn from one, [we] are enlightened by the other. They are indeed one in our hands. Ezekiel’s prophecy now stands fulfilled”.²⁸

Fruits of the Project

Earlier, I quoted an epistle dedicatory in the King James Bible. I quote again from the same passage: “None is more forcible to declare it to others than the vehement and perpetuated desire of accomplishing and publishing of this work [King James Bible].”²⁹

To contrast this, I now wish to quote from the words of Mr. Coleman, who contributed so much to this overwhelming project. Said he: “Nothing is perfect in this world, if you will permit me to make profoundly philosophical observation, but this Bible is as nearly perfect as human beings can manage.”³⁰ I add to this: it is perfect as far as the hand of the Lord in this work is concerned! Indeed, this compilation of books can worthily bear the title, *the Holy Scriptures*.

Boyd K. Packer, who was one of the active committee chairs of this project, commented:

While we have been about the work of anchoring ourselves to the scriptures, others have been busily cutting themselves loose from them. They have been drifting downstream, interpreting and revising the scriptures to agree with the philosophies of men. We, on the other hand, have been struggling upstream against the same current. We are determined to reach the headwaters of divine communication and revelation “that every man might speak it in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the World.”³²

Concurrent with this publication project, the Church reorganized Seminary, Institute, Priesthood, Relief Society and other auxiliary programs and curriculum. This restructuring of Church programs and curriculum is just one example of the fruits of the publication project. With the passing of time, these scriptures have produced successive generations of faithful members. Every child, man and woman from any cultural background can have access to the illuminating light of the gospel through the standard works. There are no limits on the acquisition of truth through proper study of our standard works. It gives us what

President Hugh B. Brown called “an unquenchable appetite for learning.”³¹ Many generations were raised without them, but we have it available in our hands today. Is it any wonder why we are able to have the best generation of missionaries?

Some people in other churches often cannot understand how we can be Christians. Others mistakenly think our Church is a cult or some new religion that Joseph Smith invented. Such misconceptions can be solved by using the Topical Guide of the newly published LDS edition of the Bible. It contains 58 categories of information about Jesus Christ; 18 pages in small print-- single spaced-- lists literally thousands of scriptural references to all standard works on the subject. These references from the five volumes of scripture constitute the most comprehensive compilation of scriptural information on the mission and teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ that has ever been assembled in the history of the world.³³ Our quadruple combination is an evidence of our “acceptance of, a reverence for, and testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ,” as Elder Packer said.³⁴ In Nephi’s words, “we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins.”³⁵

One of the ten footnotes in Ezekiel 37:15-17 references to 2 Nephi 3:12, where a descendant of Joseph, Lehi, said:

Wherefore, the fruit of thy loins shall write; and the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write; and that which shall be written by the fruit of thy loins, and also that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah, shall grow together, unto the confounding of false doctrines and laying down of contentions, and establishing peace among the fruit of thy loins, and bringing them to the knowledge of their fathers in the latter-days, and also to the knowledge of my covenants, saith the Lord.³⁶

Of this scripture, Elder Packer commented: “One footnote may seem a flimsy thread to tie the two together, but five of the ten footnotes lead us to headings in the Topical Guide where 611 other references broaden our knowledge of this one subject and speak as voices from the dust.”³⁷

We owe so much to those who made this publication possible. Some early contributors were persecuted, some were despised and some were even martyred. Other contributors gained no remuneration, and some hardly received any recognition from the public. These researching, compiling and printing projects went practically unnoticed by the secular world and many Church members. We cannot forget them. We must not forget them. Because of these valiant men and women, these *Holy Scriptures* become one in our hands to give us strength and help us learn to receive salvation from our Lord Jesus Christ. “Wherefore, we search the prophets, and we have many revelations and the spirit of prophecy; and having all these witnesses we obtain a hope, and our faith becometh unshaken.”³⁸ In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

References

1. See Ezekiel 25-48
2. Ezekiel 37:15-16.
3. See Bobrick, Benson (2001). *The Making of The English Bible*. Simon & Schuster. See also Daiches, David (1941) *The King James Version of the English Bible; an account of the development and sources of the English Bible of 1611 with special reference to the Hebrew tradition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, . Reprinted 1968.
4. See Bobrick, Benson (2001). *The Making of The English Bible*. Simon & Schuster.
5. Epistle Dedicatory, King James Bible, 1979.
6. Answers to Gospel Questions, vol. 1, 97.
7. See for example Joseph Smith—History 1: 5, 6.
8. Romans 4:21.
9. v.16.
10. See Gordon B. Hinckley, “A Testimony Vibrant and True,” *Liahona*, Aug. 2005, 5.
11. “News of the Church,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2006, 74-6; “Statistical Report, 2005,” *Ensign*, May 2006, 24; see also see Gordon B. Hinckley, “A Testimony Vibrant and True,” *Liahona*, Aug. 2005, 5.
12. See D&C 76:75; 123:12.
13. Ezekiel 37:17.
14. See quoted from “History of the Project” *Ensign*, Oct. 1979, 12.
15. See O'Donnell, A. M. Four Histories for the Forthcoming Fourth Centenary of the King James Version, 1611-2011 [Review Article]. *The Catholic Historical Review* v. 90 no. 4 (October 2004) p. 719-23.
16. See Wm. James Mortimer, “Printing at Cambridge,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1979, 15.
17. See Wm. James Mortimer, “Printing at Cambridge,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1979, 15.
18. See “Scriptures”, *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 53.
19. “Hard work by individuals,” *Ensign*, Oct 1979, 13;emphasis added.
20. Boyd K. Packer, “On Zion’s Hill,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 70.
21. See Introduction to Topical Guide, Appendix in LDS edition of KJB.
22. See Bible Dictionary s.v. “Joseph Smith Translation.”
23. “The Topical Guide,” *Ensign*, Oct 1979, 9.
24. See “Preface”, Bible Dictionary.
25. See Bible Dictionary s.v. “Quotation.”
26. “The Topical Guide,” *Ensign*, Oct 1979, 9.
27. See *Maps*, LDS King James Bible.
28. “Scriptures”, *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 53.
29. “Epistle Dedicatory”, LDS King James Bible.
30. “Printing at Cambridge,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1979, 15.
31. In Conference Report, Apr. 1968, 100.
32. “Scriptures,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 53; see also D&C 1:20.
33. “Scriptures,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 53; see also Boyd K. Packer, “Using the New Scriptures,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1985, 49.
34. “Using the New Scriptures,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1985, 49; see also “Scriptures,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 53.
35. 2 Nephi 25:26.
36. 2 Nephi 3:12.
37. “Using the New Scriptures,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1985, 49; see also “Scriptures,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 53.
38. Jacob 4:6.