The King James Bible

by Fiona Smith
for THEO 502
... why it’s still the best English translation of God’s Word.
The sections covered are:

1. The Importance of God’s Word.
2. The Verbal inspiration of the Original Scriptures.
3. The Commissioning of the King James Bible.
4. Why it’s the Best English Translation.
5. The Critical text – a Comparison.
6. Comparing Scripture in Four Different Bibles.
7. The Deceiving Nature of the New King James.
8. Conclusion.
1. The Importance of ...
It was the not comprehending, and then defiance of, God’s Word that caused all of our problems in the first place.

“Yea, hath God said ....”
marital tension

separated from God
death

pain in childbirth
ground cursed
thorns

marital tension
life loses meaning
thistles
It is our anchor, hope, and duty.
It is our anchor, guide, duty, reason for life, source of love.
It is our source of love...
It should be understood, learnt, and obeyed as our source of love.
The 3rd Commandment given to Moses is that we mustn’t take the Name of God in vain. i.e. disrespect or misuse it.
Yet, the psalmist describes that God values His Word even above His Name.

“I will worship toward Thy holy temple, and praise Thy name for Thy loving kindness and for Thy truth: for Thou hast magnified Thy Word above all Thy name.” Psalm 138:2
Lord Jesus best described the importance of God’s Word when He answered Satan in the wilderness. 

“But He answered and said, ‘It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.’” Matthew 4:4
... is our prime importance in life.
2. The Verbal Inspiration of the Scriptures
Since God’s Word is our prime importance, and it is God’s Word, only, that can bring us to a saving faith in the only Saviour, Lord Jesus, it is little wonder that God inspired the original Scriptures – penned in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.
A number of Scriptures testify that the Words of God have come by this inspiration of the Holy Spirit.... i.e. God
The Old Testament prophets generally began their writings attesting to their being revealed from God.
“The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem ..... 
Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.”
Isaiah 1:1-2
e.g. “The words of Jeremiah ... 
To whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign.” Jeremiah 1:1-2

e.g. “The word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was there upon him.” Ezekial 1:3
Peter wrote...

“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation (or reasoning).

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” 2 Peter 1:16-21
Paul wrote...
“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:”
2 Timothy 3:16
The Original Scriptures, called Autographs, were indeed the inspired Word of God.
King James I ascended to the throne of Great Britain in 1603, just after the Tudors reigned.
By the time of the reign of the Tudors in England, the Reformers had come to realise the importance of God’s revealed Word..
Many had shown they were prepared to die for God’s pure Word. Many did.
The English Reformers petitioned King James I for a Bible that could be read by all in the common English language.
In January, 1604, King James I commissioned the translation of the most accurate manuscripts of Scripture into English.
This Bible, the King James Authorised version, was to have 5 great advantages over all other translations.
1. All the men involved in the translation were godly, and believed in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. Therefore, they translated it literally.
2. All the men were of the greatest academic stature in languages and divinity.
3. They used the best, most reliable manuscripts of the autographs.
4. They had a peer review of their translations unequalled before or since.
5. It was written at the height of English literary eloquence.
George Abbott, one of the translators, was Archbishop of Canterbury for 25 years. All the men involved in the translation were godly, and believed in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. This meant that they gave a literal, or verbal equivalence translation.
It wasn’t just a commentary on what they thought it meant. It was God’s word literally translated.
The godliness of the translators can be found not only in their knowledge of the Bible and words of the church fathers, but in their writings to the reader of the Bible.

e.g. They wrote to the reader. “But now what piety without truth? What truth (what saving truth) without the Word of God? What word of God without the Scripture? The Scriptures we are commanded to search. (John 5:39, Isaiah 8:20)”

Miles Smith wrote the preface to the King James Bible.
The Chosen Translators were of the Highest Academic Stature in Languages and Divinity.

e.g. Henry Saville was famous for Greek and mathematical learning. He tutored Queen Elizabeth I. He translated Latin history and mathematics. He edited the Greek work of Chrysostem.
John Bois – worked at Cambridge University. At the age of 5 he had read the Bible in Hebrew. By 6 he could write Hebrew legibly. He wrote letters in Greek and was skilled in Greek and Hebrew. He was so familiar with the Greek NT that he could, at any time, turn to any word it contained.
Edward Lively was one of the best linguists in the world. He was King’s professor of Hebrew at Cambridge.

Richard Brett was skilled in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, Arabic and Ethiopian.

John Spencer was a Greek lecturer at 19 years of age.
Lancelot Andrews was conversant in fifteen languages. He wrote his manual for his private devotions in Greek.