

## RULES TO BE OBSERVED IN THE TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE

### Source

*Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle* Volume XXXVIII for the Year M.DCC.LXVIII. (August 1768) By Sylvanus Urban, London, pp 373 who quotes the folio source.

### The Rules

1. The ordinary Bible read in the church, commonly called the Bishops' Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the truth of the original will permit.
2. The names of the prophets, and the holy writers, with the other names in the text, to be retained as nigh as may be, accordingly as they are vulgarly used.
3. The old ecclesiastical words to be kept, viz. the word *church* not to be translated *congregation &c.*
4. When any word hath divers significations, that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most of the ancient fathers, being agreeable to the propriety of the place, and the analogy of faith.
5. The division of the chapters to be altered either not at all, or as little as may be, if necessity so require.
6. No Marginal notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek words; which cannot without some circumlocution, so briefly and fitly be expressed in the text.
7. Such quotations of places to be marginally set down, as shall serve for the reference of one Scripture to another.
8. Every particular man of each company to take the same chapter or chapters, and having translated or amended them severally by himself, where he thinketh good, all to meet together, confer what they have done, and agree for their part what shall stand.
9. As any one company hath dispatched any one book in this manner, they shall send it to the rest, to be considered of seriously and judiciously; for his majesty is very careful in this point.
10. If any company, upon the review of the book so sent, doubt or differ upon any place, to send them word thereof, note the place, and withal send their reasons; to which if they consent not, the difference to be compounded at the general meeting, which is to be of the chief persons of each company, at the end of the work.
11. When any place of special obscurity is doubted of, letters to be directed by authority, to send to any learned man in the land for his judgment in such a place.

12. Letters to be sent from every Bishop to the rest of his clergy, admonishing them of this translation in hand; and to move and charge as many as being skilful in the tongues; have taken pains in that kind, to send his particular observations to the company, either at Westminster, Cambridge, or Oxford.

13. The directors in each company, to be the Deans of Westminster and Chester; for that place; and the king's professors in the Hebrew and Greek in either university.

14. These translations to be used, when they agree better with the text than the Bishops' Bible: Tyndale's, Matthew's, Coverdale's, Whitchurch's [Great], Geneva.

15. Besides the said directions before mentioned, three or four of the most ancient and grave divines in either of the universities, not employed in translating, to be assigned by the vice-chancellor, upon conference with the rest of the heads, to be overseers of the translations, as well Hebrew as Greek, for the better observation of the 4th rule above specified.

#### See Also

McGrath, Alister (2001) *In the Beginning. The Story of the King James Bible and how it Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture*. Hodder & Sloughton, London, pp 173.