

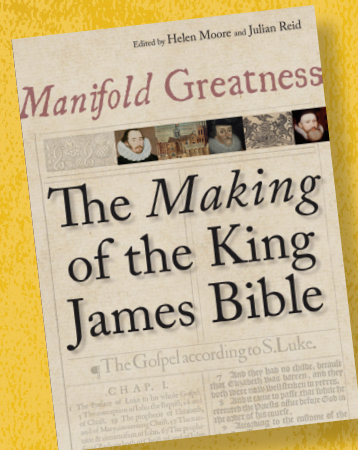
# MANIFOLD GREATNESS

The Creation and Afterlife of the King James Bible

is being displayed in 40 public, college, and university libraries throughout the United States.

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## Manifold Greatness: The Making of the King James Bible

Edited by Helen Moore  
 and Julian Reed  
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*Manifold Greatness: The Creation and Afterlife of the King James Bible*, a traveling exhibition for libraries, was organized by the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC, and the American Library Association Public Programs Office. It is based on an exhibition of the same name developed by the Folger Shakespeare Library and the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, with assistance from the Harry Ransom Center of the University of Texas, to mark the 400th anniversary of the publication of the King James Bible. The traveling exhibition was made possible by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in *Manifold Greatness* do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



# MANIFOLD GREATNESS

The Creation and Afterlife of the King James Bible



# THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES,

called GENESIS.

## CHAP. I.

1 The creation of Heauen and Earth, 3 of the light, 6 of the firmament, 9 of the earth separated from the waters, 11 and made fruitful, 14 of the Sunne, Moone, and Starres, 20 of fish and fowle, 24 of beasts and cattell, 26 of Man in the Image of God. 29 Also the appointment of food.

\*Psal. 33.6.  
and 136.5.  
acts. 14.15.  
and 17.24.  
hebr. 11.3.

**I**n the beginning God created the Heauen, and the Earth.  
2 And the earth was without forme, and voyd, and darke-nesse was vpon the face of the deepe: and the Spirit of God mooued vpon the face of the waters.

\*2.Cor. 4.6.

3 And God said, \*Let there be light: and there was light.

4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God diuided the light from the darkenesse.

†Hebr. be-  
tweene the  
light and be-  
tweene the  
darkenesse.  
†Hebr. and  
the euening  
was, and the

5 And God called the light, Day, and the darknesse he called Night: † and the euening and the morning were the first day.

8 And God called the \*firmament, Heauen: and the euening and the morning were the second day.

\*Ier. 51.15.

9 And God said, \*Let the waters vnder the heauen be gathered together vnto one place, and let the dry land appeare: and it was so.

\*Psal. 33.7.  
and 136.5.  
iob. 38.8.

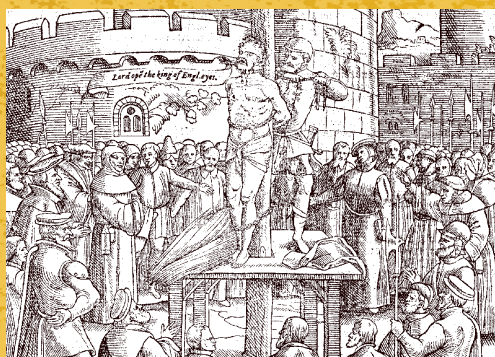
10 And God called the drie land, Earth, and the gathering together of

The words of the 1611 King James Bible ring out today in books, poems, popular songs, speeches, and sermons. But who translated it into English? And what made this particular Bible translation one of the most widely read and printed books in the history of the English language?

Join us to explore the dangerous world of earlier English Bibles, which could bring a death sentence to a translator ... the massive, multiyear project that produced the King James Bible ... and its cultural impact on both sides of the Atlantic.

Learn more about this towering achievement—which marked its 400th anniversary in 2011.






## MARTYRS AND HERETICS

The King James Bible was far from the first English Bible. Parts of the Bible were translated into Old English by the year 1000. In the late 1300s, followers of the religious reformer John Wyclif produced translations against opposition from the church. Translating the Bible into English was an act of heresy in England until 1539. More than a century after Wyclif, William Tyndale (c. 1494–1536) risked and lost his life in the service of translating into English and printing the New Testament and the five books of Moses. Subsequent English Bibles included the Great Bible of Henry VIII, the popular Geneva Bible, and the Bishops' Bible, produced under Elizabeth I.

Learn more:

[www.manifoldgreatness.org/timeline](http://www.manifoldgreatness.org/timeline) 



## MAKING THE BOOK

Not long after he became king of England in 1603, James I (1566–1625) met with his clergy at the palace of Hampton Court in January 1604. At the suggestion of John Rainolds of Oxford, James agreed to a new Bible translation. The King James Bible, as it is now known, was the work of about four dozen translators divided into six companies: two each at Cambridge, Oxford, and Westminster. Rainolds served on one of the Oxford companies until his death in 1607. Each translator received a copy of the 1602 edition of the Bishops' Bible with permission to consult other translations and sources. Their work took more than six years to complete.

Learn more:

[www.manifoldgreatness.org/making](http://www.manifoldgreatness.org/making) 



## ONE BOOK, MANY FORMS

Like many earlier English Bibles, the King James Bible was first published in the large folio format best suited for church lecterns and public reading. It soon was published in additional sizes and formats, designed for different readers. Royal presentation copies were among the largest and most elaborate, often richly bound. Bibles also could be purchased with fine embroidered bindings. The King James Bible was first printed during a period in which pocket-size editions were popular for those who wanted a Bible to carry with them.

Learn more:


[www.manifoldgreatness.org/onebookmanyforms](http://www.manifoldgreatness.org/onebookmanyforms) 



## WIDENING INFLUENCES

The cultural impact of the King James Bible is almost too vast to summarize. Among a sampling of examples, John Milton's poem *Paradise Lost* is full of the language of the King James Bible, as are *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Moby-Dick*, and Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon*. Handel's *Messiah* (1742) draws much of its text from the King James Bible; African American spirituals use its language as well. Musicians from the Byrds to Bob Marley have recorded songs based on the text. Television viewers heard the words of the King James Bible read by Linus in *A Charlie Brown Christmas* and by the Apollo 8 astronauts on Christmas Eve 1968. And in 1989, its words inspired a civil rights memorial based on a scriptural quotation by Martin Luther King, Jr., beginning "Until justice rolls down like waters."

Learn more:

[www.manifoldgreatness.org/modernlife](http://www.manifoldgreatness.org/modernlife) 



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