



The Grammar and Archaic words of the KJB

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From Chapter 15 of the upcoming book *Magnified Above His Name*, a textual history of the Bible

Proverbs 1:2 To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding

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One of the most frequently voiced objections to using the KJB is the older English it uses. Those pesky “thee’s” and “thou’s” have been so frequently cussed and discussed until one may think archaic words are all that are found in the KJB. However, I doubt that anyone does not understand what thee and thou means. The English of the KJB is sometimes called “Old English,” which it is not, or “Elizabethan English.” Its official title is “Early Modern English.”

KJB English is used as an excuse to reject it and embrace a modern English version. It is said that the KJB is not readable by modern readers of English. It is also said, based on 1 Corinthians 14:22-25, that the KJB confuses people to the extent that they should reject it. It is further asked why we should read a bible filled with hard-to-understand words when we have so many clear translations in modern English to use. It has even been declared that it is a sin to give children the KJB when they cannot understand it.

However, I have seen people all over the world, whose mother tongues are not English, read the KJB, and I have seen them do it with understanding. Once I asked a German girl if she reads the KJB. She told me, "Yes." I asked her if she had any problems understanding it. She said, "No." I know of numerous people like this, who are native speakers and readers of Mandarin, Ewe, Twi, Busuku, Ekegusii, Luganda, Korean, Spanish, German, Isan, and others in their home country, who can still read the 400-year-old English of the KJB with understanding.

In this article, I will give a short English grammar tutorial that will hopefully aid in reading the KJB and help to show that the KJB is not as hard to understand as we are led to believe. Along with that, I will also offer some other suggestions that can help. I will also take up the argument against the KJB based on archaic and obsolete words. The fact that there are such words in the KJB and that the grammar is somewhat different cannot be denied.

Identifying the English of the KJB

Some have suggested that the KJB is written in a type of English that was never spoken anywhere. I beg to differ with this, although I have no quarrel with those who think so. They, who say this, really have little idea how English was spoken on the street in 1611, the year the KJB was first published. I suspect the reason this is so strongly stated is because of a comparison of the KJB with the English prose of the translator's preface to the KJB. As a young Christian (I was saved at age fifteen), I found reading the KJB to be rather easy. However, the first time I tried to read the preface to the KJB, it was like walking through knee deep mud. To say it was difficult is an understatement! People disagree about what reading grade level the KJB is on. Some say 5th grade (av1611.org) and others say 12th grade (margaretfeinberg.com). I can, perhaps, judge by my own experience. I began reading the KJB at age 13 or 14 as an unsaved non-church going boy. I was in the 7th or 8th grade. I found reading the KJB to be very easy from the beginning. The preface to the KJB is definitely *not* written on a 7th or 8th grade level. It seems to be written on a college level or later. Therefore, the comparison between the KJB and the preface is not a valid one.

The King James Bible was translated using the English of the time, which we now call Early Modern English (roughly 1485 to 1714 ¹). The KJB was translated from 1603 to 1611 and published in 1611. The spelling was very different than current English and was updated in 1769. By then, English had reached a high level of consistency and stability in spelling and had entered on the current period of Modern English. The simplicity of the KJB is not due to being an "English that nobody ever spoke," though. It is because it was translated from Greek and Hebrew using a formal equivalent method. This gave the KJB the style and simplicity of the original languages. The outstanding literature of the period included the writings of Francis Bacon (1561-1626), the plays of Shakespeare (1564-1616), and the King James Bible (also called the Authorized Version-1611).

English is essentially a Germanic language, having started with Celts who migrated to England before the Romans came. German Anglo-Saxon settlers and invaders arrived in the sixth century. Old English was Anglo-Saxon, the stage of English from roughly 450 to 1100 AD. As the Anglo-Saxons became dominate in Briton, their language began to push out the older Celtic languages. The Anglo-Saxons in England became divided into four independent kingdoms and separate dialects were spoken by each kingdom. The language was changed when the French Normans invaded and conquered England in 1066. Middle English developed from that time until the late 1400's. During that period many French loan words entered the English language.

Since English is basically a Germanic language, it carried many of the same characteristics as German in the Old English period. German is a highly inflectional language. This means that the grammar of nouns, adjectives, articles, and verbs depended on the individual form of the words. Some of these forms look like different words altogether. For example, "the" in German is der, die, das and each of these have a series of differing forms. The grammar of some words depends on special endings. Also, German has a differing word order than today's English. By 1611, English had almost entirely lost its inflections,

but a few remained. It is those remaining inflections that give many readers difficulty when they read the King James Bible. Below, I have attempted to help you make sense of these and other issues in the KJB. For the sake of convenience and brevity, I will limit the discussion to those areas in which KJB English differs from that of today, with a few relevant exceptions.

Grammar Notes for the KJB

Nouns and Adjectives: Since English had lost most of its inflections by 1611, the nouns and adjectives we find are in the same form as current English. Possession is indicated the same as today, by using the preposition “of” or using apostrophe s, ‘s. “And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God ...” (Luke 1:8). In Middle English the apostrophe was not used.

Personal pronouns: The KJB uses several words that all mean *you*, in the second person. The following chart shows all the personal pronouns as used in the KJB.

First Person (I, we)

Case	Singular	Plural
Subject	I	We
Possession	My, mine	Our
Indirect object	To, with, etc. me	To, with, among, etc. us
Direct object	Me	Us

Second Person (Thou, you)

Case	Singular	Plural
Subject	Thou	Ye
Possession	Thy, Thine	Your, yours
Indirect Object	To, with, etc. thee	To, with, among, etc. you
Direct Object	Thee	You

Third Person (he, she, it)

Case	Singular	Plural
Subject	he, she, it	They
Possession	his, hers	Theirs, their
Indirect object	(to, etc) him, her, it	(to, etc) them
Direct Object	Him, her, it	Them

Many of these forms are the same that are used in current Modern English. Most of the forms that are different are second person pronouns and they all mean you or your. The things to remember are that *thou*, *thy*, *thine*, and *thee* are singular and *ye*, *you* are plural. *Thy* and *thine* mean the same, your. *Thy* is the usual word used. *Thine* is used before a noun that starts with a vowel or h, at the end of a phrase, and other places where *thy* does not fit. The important thing is that they both are identical in meaning. Another difference is that *mine* is used as a possessive pronoun equal to *my*. *Mine* is also primarily used before a noun that starts with a vowel or h.

The terms *thee* and *thou* are used in the Translator’s Preface to the KJB. *Ye* is not used at all and *thou* is used once in a quote, while *thee* is used five times outside of a Biblical quote. However, according to the Oxford English dictionary, *Ye* and *thou* were no longer used in general conversation at that time.

In the second person, by 1600 *ye* was a rare alternative to *you*; no case distinction remained (in earlier English, *ye* was the subjective case and *you* the objective). The use of *you* as a ‘polite’ form of address to a single person progressively encroached on *thou* (originally the singular pronoun) until by 1600 *thou* (and its objective case *thee*) was restricted to ‘affective’ (both positive and negative) uses (i.e. so as to be intimate or disparaging). By the late seventeenth century *you* had become normal in almost all

contexts and thou and thee were limited to the Bible and religious use, the Quakers, and regional dialects. ²

According to this, in 1611, thou was sometimes used “disparingly,” that is they used it to insult one another (“Don’t thou me thou hypocrite!”). However, thou was also used as a familiar term, as between family members, good friends, and married couples. When there are two terms in a language that can be used for *you*, one in a polite or casual relationship and the other in a more familiar or intimate relationship, it is not uncommon for a Bible translation to use the familiar term. German has two terms for *you*, the common term, *sie*, and the familiar term, *du*. German Bible translations use *du*.

Reflexive pronouns: Words like ourselves, myself, herself, himself, and so on are largely used in the KJB like they are in current usage. The reflexive pronoun is used as direct object or indirect object when it refers to the subject. “John poured himself some tea.” The reflexive pronoun is also often used for emphasis. “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself” (Lk 24:39).

In Early Modern English, the reader will see the base pronoun, without the ending -self or -selves, used for the reflexive pronoun, for example, *him* instead of *himself*, *them* instead of *themselves*. “Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay **by him** in store ...” (1 Cor. 16:2). The word *him* comes from the Greek word, *eautou*, which is a reflexive pronoun meaning *himself*. The same thing is seen with *them* being used instead of *themselves*. “That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and **they** took **them** wives of all which they chose” (Gen. 6:2). Today, *them* would be *themselves*, in this verse. Nevertheless, the normal reflexive pronoun forms are also abundantly used in the KJB. Often the reflexive form (e.g. *himself*) is used for direct objects and the short form (e.g. *him*) is used as an indirect object.

Another difference between the conjugation of the reflexive pronoun in 1611 and today is in the second person singular: *thyself* instead of *yourself*.

Relative pronouns, that, which, etc.: Relative pronouns are used to introduce a dependent clause. These include the words *who*, *whom*, *whosoever*, *which*, *that*, and *what*. The words *that* and *which* were common in Early Modern English and were commonly used for things *and* persons, but now we usually say *who* for persons.

Demonstrative pronouns-this, that, these, those: There is a sequence that was common during the Early Modern English period, demonstrative+possessive+noun, as in Numbers 18:27, “And *this your heave offering ...*” and Acts 8:22, “Repent therefore of *this thy wickedness ...*” and Luke 15:30, “But as soon as *this thy son* was come ...” The type of construction exhibited in these examples no longer requires the word *this*.

Present tense verb: The second person singular verb retained its inflection, -est, in Early Modern English. Sometimes the -est ending is shortened to -st, as in *hadst*. However, over time this ending changed, until in current English it is altogether gone. Below are some examples along with how the statements would be expressed in current English. The second person also has corresponding helping verbs, *dost* and *hast*.

Reference	KJB-Early Modern English	Current Modern English
Mat. 27:11	And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.	And Jesus said unto him, You say.
Mark 5:31	Thou seest the multitude thronging thee	You see the multitude ...
Luke 2:29	Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart ...	Lord, now let your servant depart ...
John 1:50	believest thou?	Do you believe?
John 3:8	The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof	The wind blows where it lists (wishes), and you hear the sound thereof

Mat. 11:25	thou hast hid these things from the wise	you have hid these things from the wise
1 Cor. 4:7	why dost thou glory	why do you glory
1 Cor. 4:7	as if thou hadst not received it?	as if you had not received it?

Another present tense *verb* ending is the -eth ending used with third person pronouns. The -eth or -th ending has corresponding helping verbs, *hath* and *doth*. In later English, the endings became shortened to -s and -es. Below are some scriptural examples.

Reference	KJB-Early Modern English	Current Modern English
Matt. 16:4	A wicked ... generation seeketh	A wicked ... generation seeks
Mark 2:16	How is it that he eateth	How is it that he eats
Luke 3:16	one mightier than I cometh	one mightier than I comes
John 3:16	whosoever believeth	whoever believes
Romans 7:2	For the woman which hath an husband	For the woman who has a husband
John 2:10	Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine;	Every man at the beginning sets forth good wine;

In addition to these, there is the related construction -ith. When a word ends in y, the y is changed to -i and -th is added. The premier example in the KJB is *saith*. In current English, this is *says*.

Past tense, past perfect, and past participle: Some verbs in the KJB are conjugated differently than the same verbs are now. Among these are the following. The forms *molten* and *sodden* are most often used like adjectives.

Help, holp, holpen; melt, molt, molten; seethe, sod, sodden

Luke 1:54 *He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy;* (he has helped his servant Israel)

Isaiah 44:10 *Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image that is profitable for nothing?* (melted a graven image)

Genesis 25:29 *And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint:* (Jacob seethed pottage)

1 Samuel 2:15 *Also before they burnt the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to roast for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw.* (for he will not have seethed flesh-idiomatically, we are more likely today to say "for he will not have boiled flesh")

Lamentations 4:10 *The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children: they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people.* (seethed their own children)

The past participle verb went: A past participle is a verb, sometimes used as an adjective, describing action begun and finished in the past, that is, completed action in the past. The archaic verb *wont* is a past participle. It is used *nine times* in scripture. It means *used to* or *accustomed to*. "And he came out, and went, as he was **wont**, to the mount of Olives" (Luke 22:39). "And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was **wont** to be made" (Acts 16:13). "Now at that feast the governor was **wont** to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would" (Mat. 27:15). "But if the ox

were **wont** to push with his horn in time past ... Or if it be known that the ox hath **used to** push in time past ..." (Ex. 21:29, 36).

Modal and auxiliary verbs-to be and to do: Certain forms of the verb to be, *I be, we be, you be, etc.*, were very frequent in the sixteenth century, but started to become rare in the seventeenth century. They were overtaken by *I am, we are, you are, etc.* However, don't assume that *all* "be" forms in the KJB are archaic. They are not. Here are some examples.

Reference	KJB-Early Modern English	Current Modern English
John 12:32	And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.	And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.
Luke 9:41 (same)	how long shall I be with you, and suffer you?	how long shall I be with you, and suffer you?
John 8:33	They answered him, We be Abraham's seed,	They answered him, We are Abraham's seed,
2 Cor. 10:11 (same)	such will we be also in deed	such will we be also in deed
Heb. 3:13	lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin	lest any of you are hardened through the deceitfulness of sin
1 Peter 5:5 (same)	Yea, all of you be subject one to another	Yes, all of you be subject one to another

Out of these six examples of *be forms*, three are different in current English and three are the same. Two of the forms that are the same are future or subjunctive, but don't assume that all the forms that remain the same will be future or subjunctive. The third example is neither. It is imperative.

Forms of the verb *to do* also present an interesting grammatical structure. You will find Early Modern English constructions like *do set* instead of simply *set*, *do remember* instead of *remember* alone, *do sin* instead of *sin*, *doth sanctify*, *doth command*, and *doth give*. In current English, *do* is usually left out of these constructions. However, *do* is sometimes still used for purposes of *emphasis*, "I *do* remember." When a translator sees this construction, he would be wise to ask himself if it is being used for emphasis. Once again, do not assume that all uses of the verb *to do* are different in current English. Examples follow.

Reference	KJB-Early Modern English	Current Modern English
Gen. 6:17	I ... do bring a flood of waters upon the earth	I ... bring a flood of waters upon the earth
Gen. 19:8 (same)	unto these men do nothing	unto these men do nothing
Num.36:6	This is the thing which the LORD doth command	This is the thing which the LORD commands
Deut.10:12 (same)	what doth the LORD thy God require of thee	what does the LORD your God require of you

The verb *to do* was used often in the KJB, but it became used more and more in later English. Even verbs like *do command* are still used for emphasis, but it was in the eighteenth century when the emphatic use became common. Also, in 1611, you would have read "be not afraid," but now you will more likely see "do not be afraid."

Will versus Wilt: These are used often in the KJB. The two words mean exactly the same thing. *Will* is used in all persons. "And **I will** say to my soul ..." (Lk. 12:19). "**He will** make him ruler over all that he hath" (Lk 12:44). "For where your treasure is, there **will your** heart be also" (Lk. 12:34). *Wilt* is

primarily used in the second person. “Lord, if **thou wilt**, thou canst make me clean” (Lk. 5:12). “**Wilt thou** be made whole” (Jn. 5:6)?

Wast versus wert: Was, were, wast, and wert are all the past tense of the verb *to be*. *Was* is the singular of the first and third person singular pronoun. *Were* is the plural of the first and third person plural pronoun, and it is the verb used with the second person *you*. *Wast* is the singular verb of the second person singular pronoun. “**Thou** also **wast** with Jesus of Galilee” (Mt. 26:69). “**Thou wast** altogether born in sins” (Jn. 9:34). *Wert* is used six times in the KJB. It is also used with the second person singular pronoun. However, it is used with hypothetical or figurative language. “For if **thou wert** cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and **wert grafted** contrary to nature into a good olive tree ...” (Rom. 11:24). In this verse, it is used of the metaphorical olive tree.

Art versus are: Once again, both of these words have the same meaning. The word *are* is used with plural nouns, plural pronouns, and *you*. *Art* is used with the second person pronoun. “**All things are** delivered to me of my Father” (Lk. 10:22). “**Art thou** a master of Israel, and knowest not these things” (Jn. 3:10)?

The use of *should* and *would*: These two words can possibly cause some confusion with some readers and translators. The word *should* in 1611 carried meanings that it no longer carries in our current form of Modern English. In 1611, one of its meanings was 1) something will certainly take place when certain conditions are fulfilled, and 2) it implies that the fact actually exists without condition. Today, we think of *should* as the equivalent of *ought to*, but at that time it also meant something that would definitely happen. In current Modern English, we are more likely to use the word, *would*, in those cases, instead of *should*.

You ought to also know that the word *should* is most often a translation of the *Greek subjunctive mood*. Because of this, you need to understand some things about the subjunctive. The Greek subjunctive expresses something that is possible in contrast to something that is actually happening. It is not happening now, but it is a definite possibility. It also means that it *will* happen if certain conditions are fulfilled. In this way, the subjunctive expresses *purpose statements*. A purpose statement is one that tells us what God intends to do. It is sometimes connected with a condition we must fulfill first.

John 3:16 that whosoever believeth in him **should** not perish, but have everlasting life.

The use of *would* in the KJB is a different story. It is used in the sense of *I intend to* or *I am willing to*. “I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem” (Acts 25:20). *Would* is also used in the sense of *I choose to* or *I want to* or *I wish*. For example, “yet I would have you wise unto that which is good” (Rom. 16:19), and “I would to God ye did reign” (1 Cor. 4:8).

Punctuation marks: Most punctuation marks in the KJB are used in the same way as today, such as the period and semi-colon. However, certain differences should be noted. There are a lot of direct quotations in the KJB, but there are no quotation marks. Direct quotations can be recognized by a phrase ending in a comma followed by the first word of the quote capitalized (“And Jesus came and spake unto them, **saying**, **All** power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Mat. 28:18). There are exclamation points and questions marks used the same way as today. However, they are usually followed by a sentence in which the first word is *not* capitalized. “But woe unto you that are **rich!** **for** ye have received your consolation” (Lk. 6:24). It has been suggested that this keeps the second statement from taking away the emphasis from the first.³ The colon (:) does two things. First, it adds details and information, “For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding” (Prov. 2:6). Second, the colon gives opposing statements. “Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded” (Prov. 13:13).

The Sentence: There are a couple of things you should know about sentence structure in the KJB. The first is left over from the Germanic origin of English. The basic English rule of word order is subject-verb-direct object. German word order is the same, *in general*, but it is much more flexible, and it *can be verb-subject-object*. This German word order shows up very often in the KJB. It does not interfere with understanding, but it can seem unusual.

The second thing about sentence structure is the use of multiple negatives. Current English cannot take double negatives. Early modern English could. At that time, one use of multiple negatives was as a literary device to negate different parts of a sentence separately, as in, “*I will **not** meddle with **no** duplicate*” (Stephen Hawes, 1503). In the King James Bible, it is often a device to *emphasize the negation*, just as it is used in Greek. For example, “with such an one **no not** to eat” (1 Cor. 5:11).

Perfect tense: The Greek perfect tense has no exact equivalent in English. It is not future time. It is neither past time nor present time. It is both present and past at the same time. The Greek perfect tense describes an action that happened in the past and has results in the present. Sometimes the KJB translates the Greek perfect as present tense, “I **am** crucified with Christ ...” (Gal. 2:20). Another example of the KJB using present tense is 1 John 4:2: “Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ **is come** in the flesh is of God...” Other times the KJB translates it as past tense, “For if we **have been planted** together in the likeness of His death” (Rom 6:5). The closest one can come to it in English is a statement like, “The bed is made,” which implies that someone made the bed in the past, and it is still made in the present. The same thing is implied in the statement, “The bed has been made,” but not as clearly.

Understanding KJB Words

Languages change over time. New words are created and old words pass out of use. English is no exception and neither are the words in the King James Bible. The great majority of words in the KJB are still used today and mean the same today as they did in 1611. It is also true that some of the words have become archaic or obsolete. They are rarely or never used in current modern English. There are also words that are still used today, but no longer mean what they did in 1611. A reader will need to find the meaning of such words. To do this, he has many good resources available. So, when comparing Early Modern English with current Modern English, there are several types of words that require rethinking. To recap, see below.

1) **Words or phrases in the KJB that are obsolete or archaic** are rarely or never used in today’s English. Another obsolete word is *ouches* (Ex. 28:11). An *ouch* is a *clasp* or a *setting*. Another obsolete word is *nought* (Acts 19:27). It means *nothing*. It is only obsolete because the spelling has changed. The modern spelling is *naught*. However, the word *naught* is rarely used today.

2) **Words and phrases in the KJB that are old, and may show up sometimes in current Modern English.** These words are difficult, but may be neither archaic nor obsolete. Examples are *abode*, *albeit*, or *amiss*. Another such word may be *appertain* (c.f. Jer. 10:6-7), which is only used seven times in the KJB. We are more likely to say *pertain*, now. Another such word is *beseech*, which means to ask earnestly, but is rarely used.

3) **There are some words in Early Modern English that are still used but have fully or partially changed meaning.** One example is the word *curious*. In Exodus 28:8, the girdle of the ephod, a priestly garment, is called the “curious girdle.” At that time, curious had several meanings. One of them was *carefully and artfully made*. You will find that meaning in the Webster 1828 Dictionary and it is the definition that applies in Ex. 28:8. However, today the word curious means “eager to acquire knowledge; inquisitive.”⁴ It has lost the “carefully and artfully made” definition. For another example, Luke 20:11 uses the word *entreat*. Today *entreat* means to ask or request earnestly. In 1611, one of its meanings was “to maltreat; treat badly.”

Definitions of Archaic and Obsolete

What does it mean that a word is archaic or obsolete? Does a word qualify as either of these if it is simply a word you do not know? Is an archaic or obsolete word one that you have never heard, you

have never spoken, your friends have never spoken, you have never read, or you have never heard in the media? Are you the judge of what words are archaic or obsolete? Maybe we should get a definition of these two words, archaic and obsolete.

1. Obsolete = “No longer in use: an obsolete word.”⁵
2. Archaic = “Relating to, being, or characteristic of words and language that were once in regular use but are now relatively rare and suggestive of an earlier style or period.”⁶

The definition of obsolete is easy, but the definition of archaic is not. It calls for using discernment to judge a word. How do you know if a word is “characteristic of words that were once in regular use,” but not now? The King James was written in early Modern English modified to the style of the Greek text. Does that mean that *ALL* its words are archaic, since the general grammar is of an archaic dialect of English and an archaic form of Greek? Certainly not. The vast majority of words in the King James are also words used in our modern form of English. Even the grammar of the KJB mostly matches the grammar of Modern English. Another question is: how do you know if a word’s use is “rare”? None of us know how much any word is used.

Did you ever read a book that had words you did not understand? Were you ever assigned a book or article in school that had words that were hard to understand? If you haven’t, I doubt you ever went to school. This is a normal occurrence. When you encountered words you did not understand, what did you do? Did you throw the book in the trash and get a book with simpler language or call for a revision of the book? Of course not. Didn’t you look the words up in a dictionary? Your teacher assigned the material to expand your knowledge and your vocabulary. The KJB does the same thing. When you encounter words that you do not understand in the KJB, look them up in a dictionary. You may be surprised to learn that the problem of archaic and obsolete words in the KJB is not nearly as big a problem as many people would have you believe.

Many dictionaries will label words as archaic or obsolete if the editors judge that to be true. Then, in most cases, they will give you the archaic or obsolete definition. Again, in many cases that definition will match its meaning in the Bible. Two of those dictionaries that do this are *The American Heritage Dictionary* found on dictionary.com and *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary* at Merriam-Webster.com. The real issue is whether a word can be found in a dictionary. That is all that really matters. Words may have to be looked up in a dictionary regardless of what version of the Bible you are reading. If a word in the KJB is found in a dictionary, and that dictionary does not label the word or its meaning either archaic or obsolete, it can be accepted as a modern word. Even if it is labeled archaic or obsolete and the definition is there, you have learned the meaning of the word, and you can continue reading the KJB with understanding.

Laying the Ground Rules

You must remember certain truths about “archaic or obsolete words.”

1. A word you are not familiar with is not necessarily an archaic or obsolete word.
2. A word you do not understand is not necessarily an archaic or obsolete word.
3. A word you do not use and have never heard used is not necessarily an archaic or obsolete word.
4. A word that is never used on any of the TV shows or movies you watch or in the books you read is not necessarily an archaic or obsolete word.
5. A word that is used is not necessarily an archaic or obsolete word, even if its use is rare.

6. A word that is not used in everyday speech or writing may not be an archaic or obsolete word if it is used in other ways.
7. A word that is only used only within a certain group or in a certain unusual context is not an archaic or obsolete word.
8. It is not necessarily an archaic or obsolete word, simply because you prefer another word. For example, you may prefer to use the word *load*, but that doesn't make *lade* an archaic word.
9. Words that are spelled differently but are otherwise the same words as modern words are not archaic or obsolete words, i.e. *graff*, *graffed*=*graft*, *grafted* and *shew*, *shewed* = *show*, *showed* and *divers* = *diverse* and *grisled* = *grizzled*.
10. If a word is not used in American English, but it is used in another dialect of English, such as British, Scottish, Australian, or Canadian English, it is not archaic or obsolete.
11. Historical terms, such as *publican*, may only be used in a historical context, but they are neither archaic nor obsolete because they are an active part of the English language.

The Issue is Less Severe Than Many Say

It seems that there are a lot of people online that have a negative opinion about KJB vocabulary. One of these is Luke Wayne, a writer for CARM, Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry. He wrote an article named "The KJV and Archaic Words," in the section of the CARM website: Minor Groups & Issues, King James Onlyism. Even He acknowledged that we should not "exaggerate the problem."

Many words that were quite commonplace in 1611 and earlier have become nearly or completely incomprehensible today. This can pose a problem for contemporary readers who wish to approach the Bible with full understanding. When one has to read with the Bible in one hand and the Oxford English Dictionary in the other, it can become quite disruptive to really taking in and absorbing the train of thought ... We have to be careful, however, not to exaggerate the problem or present it in an overly simplistic manner. Archaic words are a difficulty, but they are not always as huge a problem as they can at first appear. There are a number of words that are archaic but whose meaning is nonetheless discernible without outside help. For example, "Armhole," (see Jeremiah 38:12) is archaic, but it means exactly what it sounds like it would mean; holes for your arms (i.e. sleeves). It may not be a term we generally use today, but the meanings of such terms are so obvious that they are hardly worth noting.⁷

It turns out that Luke Wayne has exaggerated the problem. It is true that many of the difficult words of the KJB can be understood by a small amount of *reason* or from the *context*, but the word "armhole" is *not* an archaic or obsolete word. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines armhole, "an opening for the arm in a garment." It does not label the word as archaic or obsolete. Then it gives these current uses of the term.

This wardrobe staple resembles a muscle tee with its large **armholes** and oversized fit, yet has a flattering silhouette that lends femininity. (*Christina Shepherd McGuire, Southern Living, 11 Aug. 2024*)

His suits were defined by their relaxed silhouettes, which featured high **armholes**, double vests and slim-cut trousers. (*Jean E. Palmieri, WWD, 10 July 2024*)⁸

There are several places online where lists of outdated KJB words are published. One such place is the website “dustofftheBible.com.” By my count, there are 147 words in their list.⁹ Most of them can be found in the dictionaries above and are not labeled either archaic or obsolete. In most cases, the Merriam-Webster Dictionary lists modern publications where the words are used from the 1980s to 2024. The reality is that 52 words in the list are labeled archaic or obsolete, 89 words are not archaic or obsolete, and 6 words are modern words, but spelled differently in the KJB. The entire list is included at the end of this chapter, divided into the categories listed here.

52 words in this list are archaic or obsolete. Most of these words are labeled as archaic or obsolete. A few are not in the dictionary at all, and we’ll talk about how to handle that below. Some are changes in meaning. 26 of these words are only used a single time in the Bible. That’s 26 words out of over 700,000 words. I am aware there are other archaic and obsolete words, but I am trying to put this in perspective. The problem is not as extensive or severe as some say it is.

On the other hand, 89 words in the list are not only in the dictionary, but they are listed as modern words without any labels in the dictionaries I mentioned above. Their definitions are given, and they match their meaning in the KJB. You can look at the list of “archaic words in the KJB that are not archaic words” at the end of this chapter but let me give you three examples. One example is *ague*. It is used one time in Leviticus 26:16. I used the word in a paper in junior high, and my teacher asked, “What is ague?” I got the word from some twentieth century fiction I had read. The word means, “A febrile condition in which there are alternating periods of chills, fever, and sweating.” Another word is *besom* (believe it or not). It also is only used one time in Isaiah 14:23. The modern dictionary defines it as “broom,” which matches the Biblical meaning. The third example is *churl*, used in Isaiah 32:5-7 and 1 Samuel 25:3. This is a medieval term that is still used in modern English, although many would take one look at the word and firmly declare it to be obsolete. The word means “a rude ill-bred person.” *Churlish* is behavior like such a person exhibits. Behold this: “Only a **churl** would lament the existence of these testaments to the out-of-nowhere potential of a great pop hit” (Los Angeles Times, 1 June 2021).¹⁰

Six words on the list are modern words, but their spelling in the KJB is old. One example is the word *shew*, which is pronounced *show* like the word *sew*. The word is now spelled s-h-o-w, but it is the same word. Another example is *grisled*. It is now spelled g-r-i-z-z-l-e-d (see Genesis 31:10).

What was archaic may not be archaic any longer. There is another small list of words at the end of this chapter that are not archaic or obsolete, even though it may seem that they should be. These include words like *hither*, *thither*, *verily*, etc. One of these words, *albeit*, was once considered to be archaic, but now it is not archaic. The Merriam-Webster dictionary explains.

Albeit dates to the 14th century and comes from a Middle English word meaning, literally, "all (or completely) though it be." Its heritage is clear in its pronunciation, which is as though it were three words instead of one: all, be, it. In the early 20th century, albeit was accused of being archaic. That descriptor was never quite accurate; the word had mostly been holding steady at "not-terribly-common" since at least the mid-18th century. When albeit began to see a marked increase in use in the mid-20th century, several usage commentators proclaimed that it was making a comeback, and its "archaic" descriptor was fully recognized as no longer apt.¹¹

We are constantly reminded that languages change over time, and they say because of that the King James Bible is no longer readable. After all, it is over 400 years old. What they apparently do not recognize is that old words sometimes return to popularity and obsolete words sometimes begin to be used again. *The only real question is: can you find the definition?* The answer is yes. Definitions for all KJB words are easily found. We will elaborate on that in a little while.

The real outdated words in the KJV are relatively few. In his article, *Isn't the King James Bible Too Difficult to Understand?*, David Cloud made the following comment.

The Trinitarian Bible Society publishes a list of 618 antiquated words. It is called Bible Word List. Most of these can be understood by considering the context. There are only about two hundred words in the KJV that have become so antiquated that they have changed meanings or have dropped entirely out of common usage, so that you really need a dictionary to understand them.

David Norris, author of *The Big Picture: The Authority and Integrity of the Authentic Word of God*, observes, "With respect to genuinely archaic words, their actual number in the Authorised Version is surprisingly small, possibly something less than 200. Apart from passages where the teachings themselves are quite complex and therefore couched in language of similar complexity, the history, doctrine, and precepts of Scripture can be read easily by anyone. Independent educational reading level indicators have shown time and again that the Authorised Version is far easier to read than most modern versions and is well within the reach even of children. The view that the AV is more difficult to read than other versions is just not supported by the evidence" ("Out with the Old, in with the New," blessedquietness.com).¹²

The Bible is a Holy book, it should sound reverent, worthy of God. Edward Hills said this in *The King James Version Defended*. "The Bible is not a modern, human book. It is not as new as the morning newspaper, and no translation should suggest this. If the Bible were this new, it would not be the Bible. On the contrary, the Bible is an ancient, divine Book, which nevertheless is always new because in it God reveals Himself. Hence the language of the Bible should be venerable as well as intelligible, and the King James Version fulfills these two requirements better than any other Bible in English."¹³

The King James Bible is readable on a low grade level. One way we can determine this is to compare the KJB to Shakespeare. Shakespeare is recommended for grades 9-12.¹⁴ That's starting at age 14-15. Shakespeare is considerably harder to read than the King James Bible, which indicates that the KJB would be appropriate for even younger children. Shakespeare has a vocabulary of approximately 21,000 words. The KJB, on the other hand, has a vocabulary of about 5,600 words in the Old Testament and about 4,800 words in the New Testament.¹⁵ The KJB uses simple words. "The entire KJV averages 1.31 syllables and 3.968 letters per word. This word length puts the KJV in the same readability category as the children's books."¹⁶ For example, Psalm 23 has 97 words of one syllable, 16 words with two syllables, and 5 words with three syllables for a total of 118 words.

The web site AV1611.org reports some tests performed to determine the reading level of the KJB. Their conclusions were as follows.

We "scientifically and grammatically" compared the ESV to the archaic, hard-to-understand King James Bible.

Note: To prove and validate our results. Anyone with a PC, a Bible Program, and WordPerfect can easily (in less than 30 minutes) duplicate the following tests. Utilizing Quickverse Bible software, we copied the complete New Testament text of the King James Bible and the ESV into text files. With no modifications, no editing, but exactly as they came from Quickverse, we opened the KJB and the ESV New Testament text files in Corel Wordperfect. We then simply performed the Grammar checking function within WordPerfect. Note: The WordPerfect Grammar checking function uses the authoritative and industry-standard Flesch-Kincaid readability scale formulas. Rudolf Flesch is the pioneer of Readability studies and author of several readability books, including the best-selling "Why Johnny Can't Read". Without question, Dr. Flesch is the recognized authority in this discipline.¹⁷

The following results of the tests were found:¹⁸

DESCRIPTION	KJB	ESV
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level (Lower Easier to Read)	4.32	8.22
Sentence Complexity (Lower Easier to Read)	29	61
Vocabulary Complexity (Lower Easier to Read)	2	10
Short Sentences (Higher Easier to Read)	10342	3441
Simple Sentences (Higher Easier to Read)	5728	2301
Big Words (Lower Easier to Read)	7020	13478
Average Words per Sentence (Lower Easier to Read)	8.78	18.82

The Most Important Thing

Archaic and obsolete words in the KJB are difficulties that can be overcome rather easily. I will tell you how below. These challenging words are not an insurmountable obstacle. There is something that is more important than a few difficult words. *It is more important that a Bible translation is accurate and complete.* These are advantages that the KJB has over all the other versions; a fact that has been repeatedly confirmed over four hundred years. The modern versions conflict with one another creating massive confusion, which does not find its source in God (1 Cor. 14:33). The modern versions have numerous untrue statements. They tell lies and cannot be trusted. Mark 1:1-3 is a prime example. Modern versions say the quote is from Isaiah, but it is really from Isaiah *and Malachi*. The KJB says the quotes are from *the prophets*. The NKJV agrees with the KJB, but it lies in John 5:24. Christians will be judged at the Judgement Seat of Christ. The modern versions lie, and the KJB tells the truth. 99.9 % of the modern versions are incomplete. They leave out 17 whole verses and thousands of phrases and words. The KJB is based on the Textus Receptus which is from the Traditional Greek manuscripts which comprise 93% of all ancient manuscripts. The Traditional Text can (and has been) traced all the way back to the first century, within the lives of the apostolic writers themselves. In the KJB, God has given people the *complete* truth. Even if we decide the KJB should be discarded in favor of a revision, the current revisions are not as good as the KJB. We cannot use *them*. Any new revision is doomed from the start because all revisors are too influenced by current philosophy which favors the Critical Greek Text, with its 8000+ changes from the Textus Receptus. Revisions since 1881 have always gone *too far* in their changes.

How Should We React to this Language Issue?

Must we reject the KJB because it contains words that are hard to understand? There is really no debate on whether the KJB has words in the categories listed above. The debate has to do with the conclusions people draw because of it. There is disagreement as to how critical the problem is and what we should do about it. Many of those who embrace one or more modern versions recommend completely scraping the KJB and creating a revision that updates all the problematic words. One recent statement is this, "So what do we talk about with our KJV-Only brothers and sisters? We talk about the thing even laypeople should know, in the moral sense of should: 1 Corinthians 14 says that edification requires *intelligibility*, and the English of the KJV is no longer fully *intelligible*."¹⁹ It's interesting that this writer

speaks of the difficulty of reading the KJB and uses the more difficult word *intelligibility* instead of the simple KJB word *understanding* found in 1 Corinthians 14. This argument runs the gamut from recommending a new revision of the KJB (regardless of the fact that we have already had over 200 revisions that do not seem to have met the need) to declaring that it is a *sin* to give a King James Bible to a child, as Mark Ward also said.

If we reject the KJB because it has difficult words here and there, should we not be consistent and reject all books that have difficult words? Perhaps we should reject all Bible commentaries that have difficult words and language. Maybe we should reject some of the more complicated theology books such as those written by Chaffer, Hodge, and Calvin. How difficult it is to understand *infralapsarianism* and *supralapsarianism*, etc. If we are not careful, we will have rejected three fourths of the library before we realize it.

In fact, perhaps we should reject the modern Bible versions because we also find difficult words among them that may require the use of a dictionary. Instead of “white of an egg” in Job 6:6 (KJB), we find “slime of the purslane” (RSV) or “the juice of the mallow” (ESV); “aghast” (NIV) instead of the KJB “amazed” (Is. 13:8). The NIV uses “abasement” with an archaic meaning in Ezra 9:5. The word no longer means to “lower physically.” “Annotations” (NIV) in 2 Chron. 13:22 is certainly clearer than “story” (KJB). The NIV uses the lesser known and rarely used word “brood” in Isaiah 57:4 instead of the simple KJB word “children.” Perhaps, we like “brooches” (NIV) in Ex. 35:22 instead of “bracelets” (KJB). I suppose we understand “mainstay” in Jer. 49:35 (NIV) easier than “chief” (KJB). Of course, wouldn’t you much rather read “Magi” (NIV) in Matt. 2:1 instead of the outdated “wise men” (KJB). And surely, “marauders” (NIV) in Job 12:6 is simpler than “robbers” (KJB). How about “memorandum” (NIV), Ezra 6:2, rather than “record” (KJB)? Certainly, we all understand what a “misdemeanor” is in Acts 18:14, but the old KJB word “wrong” is so hard to understand. Then, we have all had trouble with that awful KJB word “giants” in Genesis 6:4, and how refreshing it is to read the enlightening word “Nephilim” in the NIV. “Officiate” (NIV) sure is more helpful in 2 Kings 17:32 than “sacrifice” (KJB). Understanding is certainly enhanced by “porphyry” (NIV) in Esther 1:6 instead of “red” (KJB). How about “Praetorium” (NIV) in Matt. 27:27, “prefects” (NIV) in Dan 3:3, “satrap” (NIV) in Esther 3:12, and “proconsul” (NIV) in Acts 13:8 instead of “common hall” (KJB), “governors” (KJB), “lieutenants” (KJB), and “deputy” (KJB). And on and on it goes.

There are difficult words that require a dictionary in both the KJB and the modern versions. There is no difference!

To find what a word means, start with a dictionary: The general rule is to always know what a word means. The good thing is that the KJB often defines its own terms in the immediate or wider context. There are several dictionaries that list KJB words and their meanings.

1. First, choose a good modern dictionary that lists words with the labels “archaic” and “obsolete,” if they are, and that gives archaic definitions. I have already mentioned two of these, which can be found on the internet: The American Heritage Dictionary on dictionary.com and the Merriam-Webster Dictionary at merriam-webster.com.
2. Consult the Webster Dictionary 1828 Edition. This edition has almost all the KJB words with the definition as used in the KJB. This dictionary can be found online at <https://webstersdictionary1828.com>. You can also download it to your phone from the Google Play Store. Or if you prefer, a paper copy can be purchased from Amazon.com. This dictionary is also available as a part of the free Bible software E-Sword, www.e-sword.net.
3. Another dictionary specifically for words in the KJB is *A King James Dictionary, A Resource for Understanding the King James Bible* by Philip Kapusta, published in 2012, New Covenant Press, Fredericksburg, Virginia. The words in this dictionary are not limited to those that are considered to be archaic or obsolete.

4. The final dictionary I recommend is *4,114 Definitions from the Defined King James Bible* by D. A. Waite, Jr. founder of the Dean Burgon Society. It is published by The Bible for Today, Collingswood, New Jersey.

The Defined King James Bible is also a great resource. It combines the KJB with footnotes that define words. It is available from biblefortoday.org.

I will mention this final way to *easily* find definitions for 100% of KJB words. **Consider using a Hebrew and Greek dictionary.** This is much easier than you might imagine. You can download the free Bible software e-sword to your computer or phone from the e-sword.net web site. For cell phones, you can get the same thing with the *my-sword* app. There are several dictionaries for Hebrew, Greek, and English words. You can also find how the KJB translated the Hebrew or Greek word to get a fuller understanding of its meaning. You *do not* have to know Hebrew or Greek to use these resources.

There are admittedly archaic, obsolete, and difficult words in the KJB. However, this challenge is not nearly as extensive as many people would have us think. There are far fewer archaic and obsolete words than people say, and nearly all these words can be found in a good modern dictionary or any of several other dictionaries. Difficult words can be found in all modern versions, and it will be necessary to use a dictionary for all of versions. They all have a similar problem. That problem is that they require work if you are to understand them fully. In *that* regard, the King James and modern versions are the same. It is not necessary to discard the KJB simply because it contains a small number of difficult words. Neither is it necessary to issue yet another update to the KJB to solve the difficulty. Focusing on this issue as the primary issue like some do, is a distraction from the real issues. The real issues between the KJB and modern versions are *accuracy* and *completeness*. Completeness can only be obtained by translating from the correct line of Hebrew and Greek manuscripts, as the KJB does. Accuracy can only be obtained by the guidance and blessing of God. The Lord God has placed His seal of approval on the KJB for over 400 years and still does, while other versions have lived short lives and then been discarded by the Spirit of God.

“Archaic” words in the KJB that are not Outdated

[These words are from: Archaic and Outdated Words in The King James Bible (KJV) December 2, 2020 by admin; <https://dustoffthebible.com/Blog-archive/2020/12/02/archaic-and-outdated-words-in-the-king-james-bible-kjv>]

(This list is not a complete list of all difficult words in the KJB. The purpose of these lists is to show that many of the supposed archaic and obsolete words in the KJB are actually modern up-to-date words.)

Adamant (Ezekiel 3:9; Zechariah 7:12) “a stone (such as a diamond) formerly believed to be of impenetrable hardness”; “an unbreakable or extremely hard substance”; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Adamant>

Adjure (Josh 6:26, 1 Sam 14:24, 1 Kings 22:16, II Chronicles 18:15, Matthew 26:63, Mark 5:7, Acts 19:13) to command solemnly under or as if under oath or penalty of a curse; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/adjure>

Ague [Leviticus 26:16] A febrile condition in which there are alternating periods of chills, fever, and sweating. (American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.)

Amerce [Deuteronomy 22:19] to punish by a fine whose amount is fixed by the court; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/amerce>

Apothecary (Exodus 30:25, 35, 37:29, Ecclesiastes 10:1) one who prepares and sells drugs or compounds for medicinal purposes; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/apothecary>

Appertain (Numbers 16:30-33, Jeremiah 10:7, Nehemiah 2:8, Leviticus 6:5, 2 Chronicles 26:18) to belong or be connected as a rightful part or attribute: pertain; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/appertain>

Armhole (Ezekiel 13:18, Jeremiah 38:12) an opening for the arm in a garment; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/armhole>; The Hebrew word does not mean armpit in this context; you cannot sew a pillow to an armpit, see Ezek. 13:18.

Assay/Assayed [Job 4:2, Deuteronomy 4:34, 1 Samuel 17:39, Acts 9:26,16:7 Hebrews 11:29), Verb: try, attempt; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/assay>; (It is used as a verb in English)

Besom (Isaiah 14:23) Broom especially, one made of twigs; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/besom>

Betimes (Genesis 26:31, II Chronicles 36:15, Proverbs 13:24, Job 8:5, 24:5) in good time: early; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/betimes>

Botch (Deuteronomy 28:27, 35) an inflammatory sore; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/botch>

Bray (Job 6:5, Proverbs 27:22) This word is not archaic in Job 6:5; it refers to the sound made by a donkey; The Hebrew word in Prov. 27:22 means “to pound, mix by pounding, pound fine” (Brown-Driver-Briggs); in Miriam-Webster, the word means “to crush or grind fine,” a very similar definition.

Bullock (104 occurrences, Exodus 29:1, Leviticus 4:3-21, Leviticus 8:2-9:19, etc) A young bull; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bullock>; Most of the references in the KJB do not specify the age of the bull, however, the first mention (law of first mention), Ex. 29:1, does specify a *young* bullock.

Caul (Exodus 29:13, 22, Leviticus 3:4, 10, 15, 4, 7:4, 8:6, 25, 9:10, 19, Hosea 13:8) **Exodus 29:13** “And thou shalt take all the fat that covereth the inwards, and the caul that is above the liver ...” “Caul fat, also known as lace fat, omentum, crépine or fat netting, is the thin membrane which surrounds the internal organs of some animals, such as cows, sheep, and pigs, also known as the greater omentum.” Wikipedia, Caul Fat. This verse and verses like it refer to the portion of the caul that is above the liver in the sacrificial animal. “Caul” in Hos. 13:8 is a metaphorical use. However, the use of “caul” in Is. 3:18 may indeed be an obsolete meaning of the word (Here it means a kind of netting women use to enclose their hair.)

Chapiter (Exodus 36:38, 38:17, 19, 28, 1 King 7:16, 17, 18, 20, 31, 2 Kings 25:17, 2 Chronicles 3:15, 4:12, 13, Jeremiah 52:22) the capital of a column; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Chapter>

Charger (17 occurrences, Numbers 7:13-85, Matthew 14:8, 11, Mark 6:25, 28) a large flat dish or platter; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Charger>.

Choler (Daniel 8:7, 11:11) ready disposition to irritation : irascibility, *also* : *anger* <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Choler>

Churl (Isaiah 32:5, 7, 1 Samuel 25:3) 1. a rude ill-bred person, 2. a stingy morose person; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Churl>.

Cogitations (Daniel 7:28) the act of cogitating : meditation; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Cogitations>.

Collop (Job 15:27) a small piece or slice especially of meat; a fold of fat flesh; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Collop>.

Concupiscence [Romans 7:8, Colossians 3:5, 1 Thessalonians 4:5) strong desire, especially sexual desire; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Concupiscence>.

Contemn/Contemned/Contemneth (Psalm 10:13, 5:4, 107:11, Ezekiel 21:13, Song of Solomon 8:7, Isaiah 16:14) to view or treat with contempt: scorn; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/contemn>

Countervail (Esther 7:4) to exert force against: counteract; to exert force against an opposing and often bad or harmful force or influence; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/countervail>; This word’s definition has slightly changed. In the past, it meant to react against something with *equal* force. The idea of *equal* is not included in the definition now, but it still is to react with force against something. The force may or may not be *equal*, but it is still enough force to possibly *counteract* the opposition.

Cracknels (1 King 14:3) a hard brittle biscuit; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/cracknel>

Cruse (1 Samuel 26:11, 12, 16, 1 Kings 14:3, 17:12, 14, 16, 1 Kings 19:6, 2 King 2:20) a small vessel (such as a jar or pot) for holding a liquid (such as water or oil); <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/cruse>

Dam (Exodus 22:30, Leviticus 22:27, Deuteronomy 22:6, 7) the female parent of an animal and especially of a domestic animal; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dam>

Dissembled (Joshua 7:11, Jeremiah 42:20, Galatians 2:13) to hide under a false appearance; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dissemble>

Ere (Numbers 11:33, 14:11, 1 Samuel 3:3, 2 Samuel 2:26, 2 Kings 6:32, Job 18:2, Jeremiah 47:6, Hosea 8:5, John 4:49) Old fashioned and literary: preceding in time, earlier than, before; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ere>

Exactors (Isaiah 60:17) one who exacts; exact= to call for forcibly or urgently and obtain; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/exact>

Fairs (Ezk_27:12, 14, 16, 19, 22, 27, 33) In these verses, it is evident that the Hebrew word means a place (fairs) where wares are sold, and in v. 33 it refers to the wares themselves that are sold in fairs. Modern definition= a gathering of buyers and sellers at a particular place and time for trade; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fair>

Felloe is a variant of felley (1 Kings 7:33) the exterior rim or a segment of the rim of a wheel supported by the spokes; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/felley>

Fens (Job 40:21) low land that is covered wholly or partly with water; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fens>

Flagon (2 Samuel 6:19, 1 Chronicles 16:3, Solomon 2:5, Isaiah 22:24, Hos 3:1) a large usually metal or pottery vessel (as for wine) with handle and spout and often a lid; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/flagon>

Forswear (Matthew 5:33) to make a liar of (oneself) under or as if under oath; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/forswear>

Furlong (Luke 24:13, John 6:19, 11:18, Revelation 14:20, 21:16) a unit of distance equal to 220 yards (about 201 meters); <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/furlong>; This term is still a modern term still in use.

Gainsay (Luke 21:15) to declare to be untrue or invalid; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/gainsay>

Hale (Luke 12:58) to compel to go; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hale>

Habergeon (Exodus 28:32, 39:23, Job 41:26) a medieval jacket of mail shorter than a hauberk; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/habergeon>; This word is no longer used in casual conversation, but it is a historical term that is very much alive and used in historical contexts.

Haft (Judges 3:22) the handle of a weapon or tool; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/haft>

Harrow (Job 39:10, 2 Samuel 12:31, 1 Chronicles 20:3) Noun= cultivating tool set with spikes, teeth, or disks and used primarily for breaking up and smoothing the soil; Verb= to cultivate with a harrow; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/harrow>

Hart (Deuteronomy 12:15, 22, 14:5, 15:22, Psalm 42:1, Song of Solomon 2:9, 17, 8:14, 1 Kings 4:23, Lamentations 1:6, Isaiah 35:6) the male of the red deer especially when over five years old: stag; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hart>

Hoar, hoary (Exodus 16:14, 1 Kings 2:6, 9, Isaiah 46:4) gray or white with or as if with age; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hoary>

Hosen (Dan 3:21) Plural of Hose, a cloth leg covering that sometimes covers the foot; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hosen/hose>

Husbandman (Genesis 9:20, Jeremiah 51:23, Amos 5:16, Zechariah 13:5, John 15:1, 2 Timothy 2:6, James 5:7) one that plows and cultivates land: farmer; a specialist in a branch of farm husbandry; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/husbandman>

Hough (Joshua 11:6) Hamstring: to deprive of the use of a leg by cutting the leg tendons; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hough>; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hamstring>

Implead (Act 19:38) “to sue or prosecute at law”; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/implead>

Importunity (Luke 11:8) the quality or state of being troublesomely urgent : overly persistent in request or demand

Inditing (Psalm 45:1) to give literary or formal expression to; to put down in writing; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/inditing>; the word no longer carries the idea of dictating, however, “to give literary” expression to allows the dictating method. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/inditing>

Knop (Exodus 25:31-36, 37:17-22, 1 Kings 6:18, 7:24) a usually ornamental knob; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/knop>; A small decorative knob or boss; American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.

Lade/Laded/Laden/Ladeth (Genesis 42:26, 44:13, 45:17, 23, 1 Samuel 16:20, 1 Kings 12:11, Isaiah 1:4, Nehemiah 4:17, Habakkuk 2:6, Matthew 11:28, Luke 11:46, Acts 28:10, 2 Timothy 3:6) to put a load or burden on or in : load; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/lade>

Lees (Isaiah 25:6, Jeremiah 48:11, Zephaniah 1:12) “the sediment of a liquor (such as wine) during fermentation and aging: dregs”; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/lees>

Figure (Exodus 28:19, 39:12) a traditional precious stone that is probably the jacinth; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/figure>

Lucre (1 Samuel 8:3, 1 Timothy 3:3, 8, Titus 1:7, 1 Peter 5:2) monetary gain : profit; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/lucre>; The Greek word, *aischrokerdēs*, means “greedy of immoral monetary gain.” The 1611 English word, *lucre*, only means “monetary gain.” It means the same today.

Lusty (Judges 3:29) Full of vigor or vitality; robust; American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.

Mammon (Matthew 6:24, Luke 16:9, 11, 13) material wealth or possessions especially as having a debasing influence; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mammon>

Maw (Deuteronomy 18:3) the receptacle into which food is taken by swallowing: stomach, crop; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/maw>

Mote (Matthew 7:3, 4, 5, Luke 6:41, 42) a small particle: speck; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mote>

Murrain (Exodus 9:3) a pestilence or plague especially affecting domestic animals; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/murrain>

Neese (also neeze) (Job 41:18) sneeze (Scottish); <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/neeze>

Nitre (Proverbs 25:20, Jeremiah 2:22) This is a British spelling of a modern word-**Niter** is the American spelling. Definition: Potassium Nitrate; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/niter>

Noisome (Psalm 91:3, Ezekiel 14:15, 21, Revelation 16:2) noxious, harmful; highly obnoxious or objectionable; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/noisome>

Obeisance (Genesis 37:7, 9, 43:28, Exodus 18:7, 2 Samuel 1:2, 14:4, 2 Samuel 15:5, 1 Kings 1:16, 2 Chronicles 24:17) a movement of the body made in token of respect or submission : bow; acknowledgment of another's superiority or importance : homage; (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/obeisance>)

Offscouring (Lamentations 3:45, 1 Corinthians 4:13) someone rejected by society: outcast; something that is scoured off: refuse; (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/offscouring>)

Ouches (Exodus 28:11, 13, 14, 25, 39:6, 13, 16, 18) a setting for precious stones; (“Ouch.” Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ouch>. Accessed 2 Nov. 2024.)

Paramours (Ezekiel 23:20) an illicit or secret lover; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/paramour>

Pate (Psalm 7:16) The human head, especially the top of the head; American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.

Penury (Proverbs 14:23, Luke 21:4) severe poverty; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/penury>

Pilled (Genesis 30:37, 38) to peel or strip off; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pilled>; still current in one or more dialects.

Plaiting (1 Peter 3:3) to interweave the strands or locks of: braid; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/plait>

Prating (Proverbs 10:8, 10, 3 John 1:10) to talk long and idly: chatter; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/prate>

Publicans (Matthew 5:46, 47, 9:10, 11, 10:3, 18:17, 11:19, 21:31, 32, Mark 2:15, 16, Luke 3:12, 5:27, 29, 30, 7:29, 34, 15:1, 18:10, 11, 13, 19:2) a Jewish tax collector for the ancient Romans; a collector of taxes or tribute; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/publican>

Purloining (Titus 2:10) To steal, especially in a stealthy way. American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.

Quaternions (Acts 12:4) a set of four parts, things, or persons; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/quaternion>

Quicken/Quickened/Quickeneth (32 occurrences, 1 Corinthians 15:36, John 5:21, 1 Corinthians 15:45, Ephesians 2:5) To cause (a body or soul, for example) to become alive; vitalize. American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.

Rampart (Lamentation 2:8, Nahum 3:8) a protective barrier: bulwark; A scaly eruption of the skin or scalp.
Ravin (Genesis 49:27, Nahum 2:12) Voracity; rapaciousness; Something taken as prey; The act or practice of preying. American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.

Redound (2 Corinthians 4:15) to have an effect for good or ill; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/redound>

Stanch (Luke 8:44) to check or stop the flowing of; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/stanch>

Stomacher [Isaiah 3:24] A heavily embroidered or jeweled garment formerly worn over the chest and stomach, especially by women. (American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.) “Queen Camilla also slipped on her own diamond earrings, a diamond bracelet from Queen Elizabeth’s collection and a more unusual ornament: a stomacher.”—Janine Henni, Peoplemag, 6 Dec. 2023 (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/stomacher>).

Sufferest/Suffereth/suffer (150 occurrences, Leviticus 2:13, Psalm 66:9, Matthew 11:12, Acts 28:4, 1 Corinthians 13:4, Joshua 10:19, Esther 3:8) To feel pain or distress; sustain injury or harm; To put up with; tolerate; To permit; allow; (American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.)

Thitherward (Judges 18:15, Jeremiah 50:5, Romans 15:24) toward that place; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/thitherward>

Tread (Trode) (Judges 9:27, 20:43, 2 Kings 7:17, 20, 9:33, 14:9, 2 Chronicles 25:18, Luke 12:1) to walk or proceed along : follow, beat, trample, crush; [https://www. Merriam-webster.com/ dictionary/thitherward](https://www.Merriam-webster.com/dictionary/thitherward)

Twain [1 Samuel 18:21, 2 Kings 4:33, Isaiah 6:2, Jeremiah 34:18, Ezekiel 21:19, Matthew 5:41, 19:5, 6, 21:31, 27:21, 51, Mark 10:8, 15:38, Ephesians 2:15] two; [https://www. Merriam-webster.com/ dictionary/twain](https://www.Merriam-webster.com/dictionary/twain)

Usury (Exodus 22:25, Leviticus 25:36, 37, Deuteronomy 23:19, 20, Nehemiah 5:7, 10, Psalms 15:5, Proverbs 28:8, Isaiah 24:2, Jeremiah 15:10, Ezekiel 18:8, 13, 17, 22:12, Matthew 25:27, Luke 19:23) the lending of money with an interest charge for its use; [https://www. Merriam-webster.com/ dictionary/usury](https://www.Merriam-webster.com/dictionary/usury)

Verity (Psalm 111:7, 1 Timothy 2:7) the quality or state of being true or real; something (such as a statement) that is true; [https://www. Merriam-webster.com/ dictionary/verity](https://www.Merriam-webster.com/dictionary/verity)

Victuals [Genesis 14:11, Leviticus 25:37, Deuteronomy 23:19, Joshua 1:11, 9:11, 14, Judges 7:8, 17:10, 1 Samuel 22:10, 1 Kings 4:7, 11:18, Nehemiah 10:31, 13:15, Jeremiah 40:5, 44:17, Matthew 14:15, Luke 9:12] food usable by people; to supply with food; ([https://www. Merriam-webster.com/ dictionary/victuals](https://www.Merriam-webster.com/dictionary/victuals))

Visage (Isaiah 52:14, Lamentations 4:8, Daniel 3:19) the face, countenance, or appearance of a person or sometimes an animal; ([https://www. Merriam-webster.com/ dictionary/visage](https://www.Merriam-webster.com/dictionary/visage))

Wen (Leviticus 22:22) A harmless cyst, especially on the scalp or face, containing the fatty secretion of a sebaceous gland; (American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.)

Wimples (Isaiah 3:22) a cloth covering worn over the head and around the neck and chin; ([https://www. Merriam-webster.com/ dictionary/wimple](https://www.Merriam-webster.com/dictionary/wimple))

Wont (Exodus 21:29, Numbers 22:30, 1 Samuel 30:31, 2 Samuel 20:18, Daniel 3:19, Matthew 27:15, Mark 10:1, Luke 22:39, Act 16:13) accustomed to; apt or likely; (American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.)

Words that are modern words with different spelling

KJB Word	Modern Word
Divers	Diverse
Graff, Graffed	Graft, Grafted
Grisled	Grizzled
Shew, Shewed	Show, showed
marishes	marshes
Pilled	Peeled

Other Words that are not Archaic

Hither = to this place (Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, [https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hither.](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hither))

Thither = to that place: there (Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, [https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ thither.](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/thither))

Verily = in truth: certainly; truly, confidently (Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, [https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/thither.](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/thither))

Albeit = even though : although; ([https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/albeit.](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/albeit))

Archaic Words from the "Dust Off the Bible" Site

Ambassage (1)
Bakemeat(s) (1)
Bewray
Bishoprick (1)
Bolled (1)
Broided (1)
Bruit
Chambering (1)
Chapmen (1)
Chode
Cotes (1)
Daysman (1)
Descry (1)
Discomfit
Discomfiture-change in meaning (1)
Draught
Durst
Emerod
Ensample
Fray
Gad (1)
Kine
List, listeth
Matrix
Meteyard (1)
Meet
Outgoings
Outwent (1)
Pap
Peradventure
Pill
Polled (1)
Purtenance (1)
Rereward
Ringstraked
Sackbut
Scall
Servitor (1)
Shambles (1)
Sith (1)
Sleight (1)
Sodden
Sottish (1)
Strowed (1)
Surfeiting (change of definition) (1)
Taches
Trow (1)
Unction (change in definition) (1)

Winefat
Wist
Withs
Wot

NOTES

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⁵ *American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition*. Copyright © 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. (<https://www.thefreedictionary.com/obsolete>).

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