

# Verily, Verily

✘ Jon Sweeney | Zondervan

Why would anyone want to read the stodgy King James Version (KJV)—with its “thees and thous”—especially when more palatable and accurate translations exist? Jon Sweeney offers a host of reasons in *Verily, Verily: The KJV—400 Years of Influence and Beauty*.

Not only is the KJV the most widely printed and circulated version, but it also embodies the most literary power, he argues. Completed in 1611 and marking its 400th anniversary this year, the KJV has profoundly impacted Western culture. Its phrases (such as “to see the handwriting on the wall”) are embedded in our collective unconscious. Moreover, the KJV has influenced poets (Emily Dickinson), presidents (Abraham Lincoln) and civil rights leaders (Martin Luther King Jr.).

Lest readers think *Verily, Verily* is a tedious account of the history and development of the KJV, Sweeney highlights the translation’s humorous features. For instance, Martha said of the deceased Lazarus, “Lord, by this time he stinketh” (John 11:39).

*Verily, Verily* also contains helpful appendices, including a glossary of archaic words, as well as links to Web sites for parallel Bibles. Readers of Sweeney’s work, at minimum, will discover a

newfound respect for the heritage and impact of the KJV.

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