

course not. He wrote in the language of the Hebrew people. That's why this book deals with our common language - English.

English Language

Surprisingly, the almost 500 years of history that is the focus of this chapter only covers what must be called Modern English! That's right - the King James Bible is modern English. Actually it is *Early* Modern English according to some historians. Certainly it reads differently than does *our* modern English.

The English language traces its roots back to somewhere around the year 450.

7. Ic secge ēow þæt swā byð on heofone blis be ānum synfullum þe dædbōte dēð, mā þonne ofer nigon and nigontigum rihtwītra þe dædbōte ne beðurfon.

Luke 15:7 in West Saxon

This period is properly

called "Old English" though many have used that term for what is found in the King James, or Authorised, Bible. This is often referred to as Anglo-Saxon.

The next major period of English begins about 1100-12 A.D. This phase, Middle English, will see the first Scriptures written in English. It is still not the type of English we are used to reading. It would undergo many changes and influences before settling into what we can read today. The Wycliffe Bible is an example of Middle English.

The current period of English, Modern English, began about 1500 A.D. The earlier period, marked by the use of Gothic lettering, produced Bibles that are rather difficult to read today. However, when the words are printed in modern fonts, they are easily readable. Most King James Bibles today have done away with some confusing elements of the 1611 version. The actual 1611 version interchanged the letters v and u, had an "f" that looked like an "s" and sometimes had creative spelling by printers to make lines fit properly on the page. The use of ending such as -eth and -est eventually died out leaving us with our current modern English.