

KING JAMES ONLYISM: A NEW SECT by James D. Price; Published by the Author, Chattanooga, TN; 17 Chapters, 658 Pages, 10 Appendices; \$39.95

Reviewed by Pastor Gary Small

There are several serious heresies fomenting within Bible-believing churches these days, but none is more potentially harmful or unbiblical than what has come to be known as King James Version Onlyism. It is dangerous for numerous reasons, chief among them that it not only denies the historical belief of the church on matters regarding Bibliology, which the church has held tenaciously for the past 20 centuries; but it denigrates the Biblical doctrines of the inspiration, inerrancy and infallibility of the Word of God as He originally gave it to us.

The latest volley to be fired into the heat of this battle is a large 600-plus page tome entitled *King James Onlyism: A New Sect*, penned by a long-time student of such issues, Dr. James Price, who for 33 years was professor of Hebrew at Tennessee Temple Seminary, as well as the Old Testament Executive Editor and Chairman of the Executive Review Committee for the New King James Version. He demonstrates that he is neither a slouch nor a new kid on the block when it comes to this volatile controversy.

To declare that this is a masterwork would be an understatement. It is a kindly-written, studiously-researched, and thoroughly-biblical approach to an explosive subject. Having been a student of the Bible version and Bible text controversies for 40 years, I have read much on the subject, but Dr. Price has broken new ground here by boldly challenging several of the King James Only sacred cows ... not by goring them, but by completely rendering them useless, and showing them to be less than credible.

For instance, after giving a fascinating history of the English Bible, as well as the background of the various families of Greek manuscripts, Price begins to dissect the favorite arguments of his opposition by daring to suggest that their arguments don't stand up to scrutiny. He masterfully demonstrates – using factual findings and actual statistics, and illustrating with seven fundamental doctrines of the faith – that most modern translations of the Scripture firmly defend and uphold each of those cardinal tenets without compromise, some, in fact, doing so more often than the KJV itself.

The church I pastor, when revising its doctrinal statement a couple of years ago, recognized that it needed to address this matter of Bible versions. Part of our statement is as follows: “The King James Version of the Bible shall be the official and only translation used by the church. However, we do not adhere to the teachings known as Ruckmanism or King James Onlyism.” As I am known to say on occasion. “We are only King James, but not King James Only.” The differences in those two views are stark.

We recognize the value of this majestic translation. But we also realize, as Price has so clearly articulated, that all translations ... yes, all of them, are the products of fallible humans, and are as perfect as their translators. Show me a perfect translation, and I will show you a perfect translator. (And by the way, the first translation inaccuracy in the KJV, which is corrected in most modern versions, is in Genesis 1:1, the opening verse in the Bible, where the word “heaven” should be plural, thus “heavens.” In fact, the singular form of the Hebrew word never occurs in the Old Testament Hebrew). Price proves that such errors aren't a serious problem, only evidence that we need to continue to strive to get as close to the original autographs (without possessing them) as humanly possible. This is one of the things making the book so balanced and fair-minded.

Pastors and laymen alike will profit greatly from this volume. It is a treasury of information presented in a non-combative, no-axe-to-grind style. It concludes with no less than ten appendices, which alone account for a third of the book. Included also are a Glossary of Terms, an extensive Bibliography, as well as an Index of Persons and Topics, though the latter could have been somewhat more thorough. And need I add that the footnotes are where they should be...at the bottom of each page. Amen for that.

Here is a book that not only refutes the heresy of King James Onlyism, but balances that with an articulate defense of the even-handed view of such matters that have prevailed in church history for two thousand years. It is an honor to enthusiastically commend this book. May it have a far-reaching impact and influence on those who value not only the King James Version, but the truth as well.

– *Reviewed by Pastor Gary Small*

The editor adds a word: We concur with Brother Small's evaluation. This is an excellent book, one needed by all who have a problem in this area – and it will be additional light for those who don't! It belongs in every church library and pastor's study. In addition to the 10 Appendices, there are 65 Figures, 48 Tables, 12 Charts – all adding to its value and usefulness. There are many notes (where they belong, at the foot of the page for easy reference).

This is such an important work – and only available from the author, although bookstores will hopefully pick it up – we give the information for ordering: Dr. James D. Price, 2102 Colonial Parkway Drive, Chattanooga, TN 37421-3309; Phone (423) 894-6197; the price of this hardbound book is \$39.95, plus \$5.00 shipping and handling and, of course, Tennessee sales tax if you are a resident of that State.

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