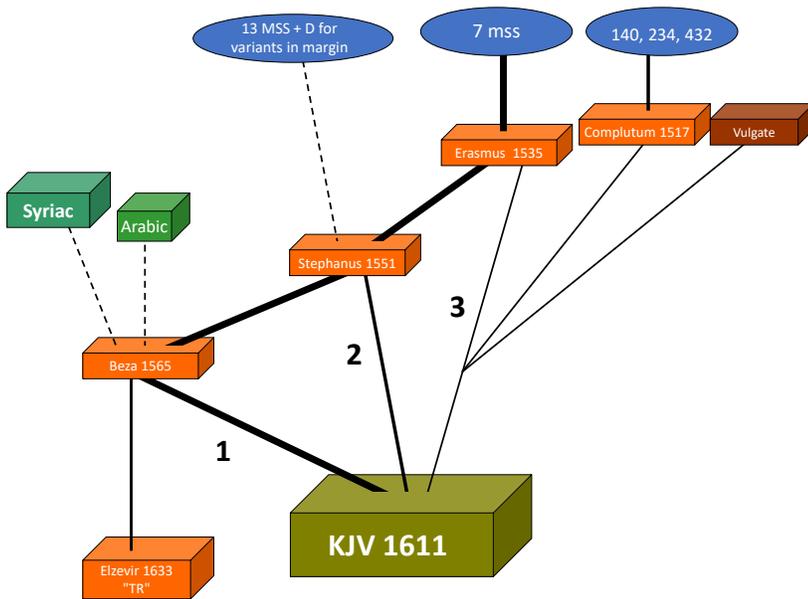


# Understanding the Greek Text Behind the King James Version

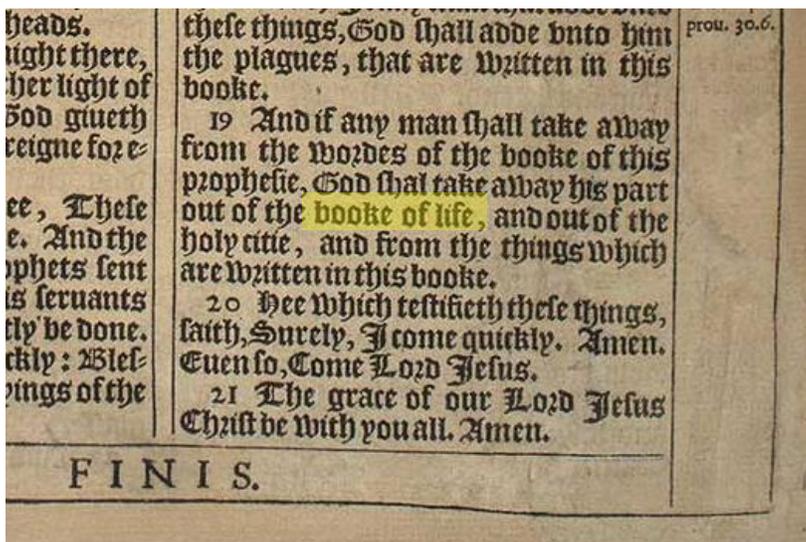
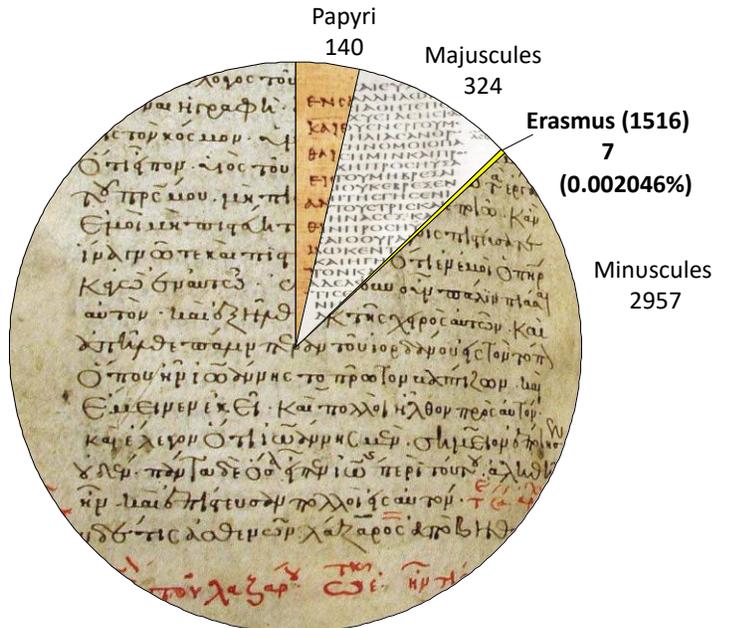


Although the KJV translators based their version on the English Bishop's Bible, there is evidence that they also consulted the printed Greek texts that were available in their day. These were the texts of Erasmus, Stephanus, and Beza. Stephanus was a reprint of Erasmus, and Beza copied the text of Stephanus. Erasmus's text was constructed using only seven partial Greek manuscripts; thus the Greek text for the KJV NT is those seven partial Greek manuscripts.

The term "Textus Receptus" ("received text") was first applied to the Greek NT printed by the Elzevir brothers in 1633, a couple of decades after the first appearance of the KJV.

The seven manuscripts used by Erasmus and his successors for printing the Greek NT represent 0.002% of the number of manuscripts available today. Furthermore, they were all late, with none dating before the 12th century. Erasmus's text was printed virtually verbatim for the next two centuries (1516-1719), and a true critical text did not appear until 1831 (Karl Lachman). Erasmus's seven manuscripts are as follows—

Manuscript	Content	Date
Minuscule 1	entire NT except Revelation	12th century
Minuscule 2814	Book of Revelation	12th century
Minuscule 2	Gospels	12th century
Minuscule 2815	Acts and Epistles	12th century
Minuscule 2816	Pauline epistles	15th century
Minuscule 2817	Pauline epistles	12th century
Minuscule 817	Gospels	15th century



Evidence that the KJV NT is based on the Greek text of Erasmus can be clearly seen in the text of Revelation 22:19. Erasmus had only 1 Greek manuscript for Revelation, and it was missing several verses at the end. Erasmus back-translated these verses into Greek from Latin, creating a unique Greek text.

The Latin text Erasmus used included a scribal error in Rev 22:19, reading "book of life" rather than "tree of life" (Lat. *ligno* for *libro*).

No Greek manuscript has this reading, but it is carried through all printings of the KJV and NKJV to the modern day.