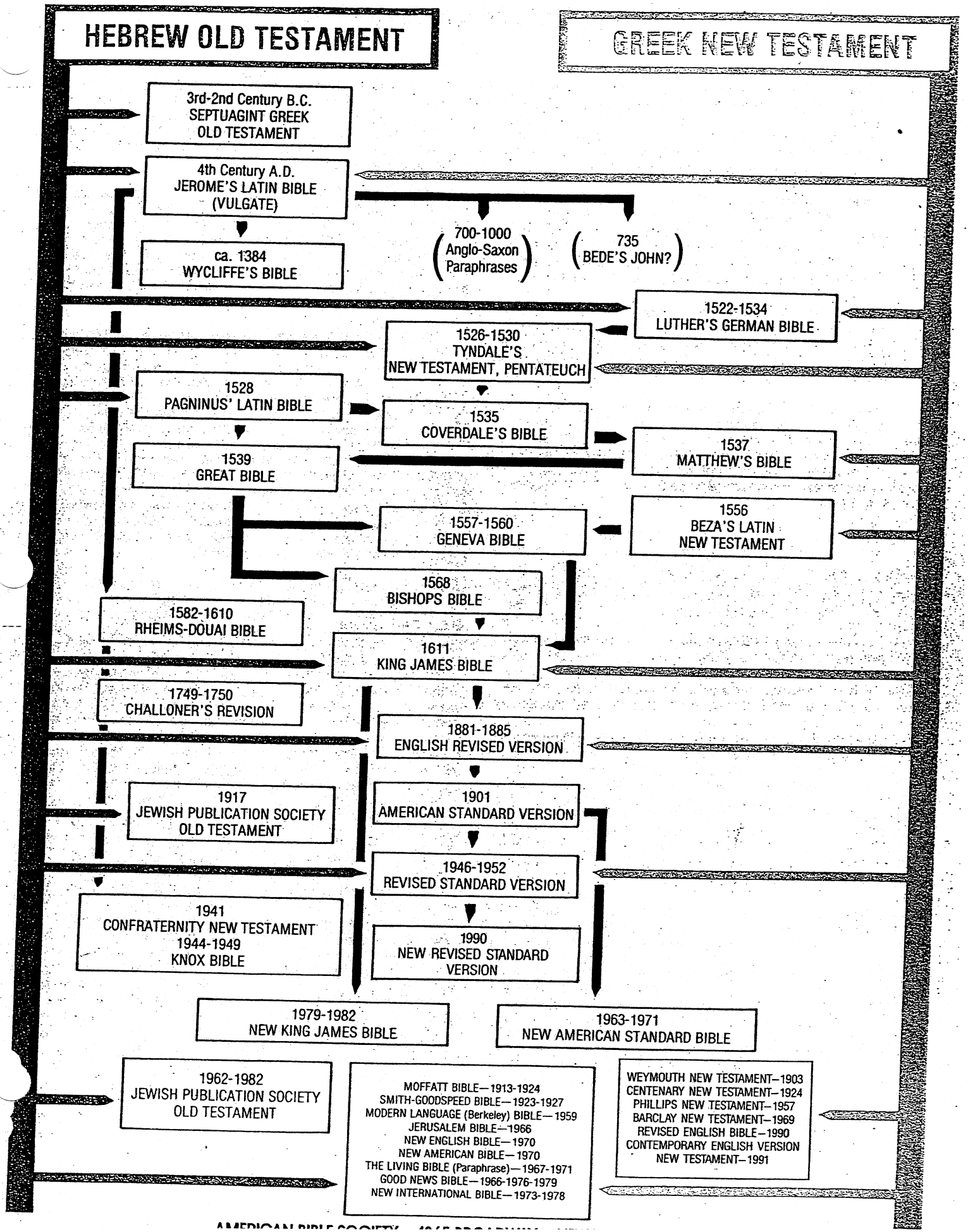
CHART OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE



NOTES FOR THE NOTEBOOK

Greek Septuagint: The Old Testament was translated into Greek during the third and second centuries B.C. for Jews living outside of Palestine. The name "Septuagint" (Latin for 70) reflects the tradition that it was translated in Egypt by 70 elders in 70 sessions. It became the Bible of the first generation of Christians to evangelize the Hellenistic world.

Greek New Testament: Paul wrote his letters for the early Christians in Greek. Aramaic was the language spoken by Jesus, but the whole New Testament was written in Greek, the language of the Mediterranean world. By the end of the second century the Old and New Testaments in Greek were used by the church as a special group of sacred writings.

Vulgate Bible: About 382 the Bishop of Rome asked Jerome to prepare a Latin translation of the Bible. Jerome's translation came to be called the Vulgate or "common" Bible. It served as the official text for the Roman Catholic Church from the Council of Trent to the Second Vatican Council.

Bede: Bede, the great historian of Anglo-Saxon England, began to translate portions of the Latin Vulgate Bible into the English of his day, because only the scholars could understand Latin. Legend says that he died as he was finishing the translation of the Gospel of John in 735. In the 10th and 11th centuries other translations were made of the Psalms and the Gospels.

Wycliffe: John Wycliffe led a movement of poor priests, called Lollards, who preached to the people in their own language instead of the Latin used in the churches. He realized that a Bible in English was needed, and under his inspiration the first translation of the entire Bible into English was made from Latin about 1384.

Luther: The Reformaton brought a renewed demand for the Bible in the language of the people. Luther himself prepared the German translation (New Testament 1522, Old Testament 1534). This was the first western European Bible not based on the Latin Vulgate, but on the original Hebrew and Greek texts.

Tyndale: When church authorities in England prohibited a new English translation, Tyndale went to Germany where he translated the New Testament from the original Greek. This first printed English New Testament was published in 1526. Copies were smuggled into England in shipments of grain and cloth, and frequently confiscated. Tyndale also translated portions of the Old Testament (Pentateuch 1530, Jonah 1531). Tyndale was betrayed, strangled and burned near Brussels. His work was so excellent that almost every English version since has been indebted to it.

Coverdale: Coverdale, like Tyndale, fled to Germany to complete a translation of the Bible. He used Latin and German versions as well as Tyndale's New Testament and portions of the Old Testament. This was the first printed English Bible (1535). Matthew's Bible (1537) contained additional sections of Tyndale's unpublished work (through 2 Chronicles), and portions translated by Coverdale (Ezra to Malachi and the Apocrypha). A revision of Matthew's Bible by Coverdale was known as the Great Bible (1539). The Psalms of the Great Bible underlie the Psalter in the *Book of Common Prayer*. The Bishops' Bible (1568), which was a revision of the Great Bible prepared by Matthew Parker and others, served as the base for the revision ordered by King James . The Geneva Bible (1560), also a revision of the Great Bible, was produced by English Puritans in Geneva; it was dependent on the Latin texts of Pagninus' Old Testament (1528) and Beza's New Testament (1556), and exerted a strong influence on the King James Bible.

King James: The various versions of the Bible aroused so many arguments that James I, after the Hampton Court Conference, appointed 54 scholars to make a new version. It took about seven years to complete the work, a monument to the critical scholarship of the time. Despite the great variety of the men who worked on it, the translation was harmonious in style and beauty. It was first published in 1611, and soon became the most popular English Bible.

Roman Catholic Versions: The New Testament published in Rheims (1582) and the Old Testament in Douai (1609-1610) were translated from the Latin Vulgate. These were revised by Bishop Challoner in 1749 and 1750. Ronald A. Knox prepared an independent translation of the Latin Vulgate text into modern English usage (New Testament 1944, Bible 1949). The Confraternity New Testament (1941) was also based on the Vulgate text, but it was influenced by Greek critical editions as well. When a new translation of the Old Testament, based on the Hebrew text, was completed in 1970, it was published with a revision of the 1941 New Testament based on the Greek text, as the New American Bible. Meanwhile the Jerusalem Bible (1966), edited by A. Jones, was a fresh critical translation with notes, inspired by the French *Bible de Jérusalem* (1954).

Later Revisions and Translations: For more than 250 years the King James Bible was supreme among English-speaking people. During the last 100 years, the knowledge from newly-discovered manuscripts, archeological discoveries and recent scholarship has led to its revision. The first "Revised Version" was published in England (1881-1885); a modification of this English Revised Version, the American Standard Version, was issued in 1901. Modern-speech versions of the early 20th century include those by Richard F. Weymouth (New Testament 1903), James Moffatt (New Testament 1913, Bible 1924), J.M.P. Smith and E.J. Goodspeed (New Testament 1923, Bible 1927), and Helen Barrett Montgomery (Centenary New Testament 1924). The last three decades have been characterized by an increase in the number of Bible translations. The Jewish Publication Society has revised its 1917 Old Testament with a new translation of the Torah (1962), the Prophets (1978), and the Writings (1982). Modern-speech versions of the New Testament include those of J.B. Phillips (1957, revised 1972), who also translated portions of the Prophets (1963), and William Barclay (1969). Complete Bibles include the Revised Standard Version (New Testament 1946, second edition 1971, Bible 1952), the Modern Language (Berkeley) Bible (New Testament 1945, Bible 1959, revised 1969), the New English Bible (New Testament 1961, Bible 1970), the Jerusalem Bible (1966), the New American Bible (1970), New American Standard Bible (1971), the Living Bible, a paraphrase (New Testament 1967, Bible 1971), the Good News Bible (New Testament 1966, Bible 1976, Apocrypha 1979), the New International Version (New Testament 1973, Bible 1978), the New King James Version (New Testament, 1979, Bible 1982), the New Revised Standard Version Bible, 1990 and the Contemporary English Version (New Testament, 1991).

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