MS. 388

Bible, in the later Wycliffite version
England; s. xv\(^1/4\)

Text
The Old Testament has unique prologues to the books from Exodus to Proverbs, plus Daniel and I Maccabees; those to Jeremiah and Ezekiel are only otherwise found in Cambridge University Library, MS. Dd.1.27; other books have usual prologues.

[The Table occupies Quire 1]
1. (fol. 1r-7v) Table of lessons, gospels, and epistles through the year: ‘Here begynneþ a reule þat telliþ in whiche chapitris of þe bible 3e may fynde þe lessouns, pistlis, gospels, þat ben red in þe chirche at masse after þe use of Salebury ... First Sundai in Advent Romayns xij ...’ (edited by Forshall & Madden, IV, pp. 683-98); fol. 8r-v blank except for s. xvi inscriptions (see under Provenance). [Image]

[The Old Testament occupies Quires 2-45]
2. (fols. 9r-187v) Genesis, starting imperfect in Gen. 1:20 (at ‘|| þe erþe, undur þe firmament...’) due to the loss of the first leaf (fols. 9r-26r) [Image]; prologue ‘This book of exodi þat is to seie of going out ...’; Exodus (fols. 26r-40r); prologue ‘This book of leuitici makiþ mencioun how god lauȝte ...’; Leviticus (fols. 40r-50r); prologue ‘This book elpid Numeri þat is to seie þe book of noumbe ...’ (fol. 50r-v); Numbers (fols. 50v-64v); prologue ‘In þis book of Deuteronomye be contened þe wordis ...’ (fol. 64v); Deuteronomy (fols. 65r-77v); prologue ‘This book of iosue makij mynde how þe lord spak to isue ...’; Joshua (fols. 77v-86r); prologue ‘This book of judicum makij menciouþ how þe sones of israel braken þe boond of þe lord ...’; Judges (fols. 86r-95v); prologue ‘This book of Ruth schewiþ þe fulnesse & stidefast loue of þis wumman Ruth ...’; Ruth (fols. 95v-96v); prologue ‘In þis book of kingis þe firste is contened how anna þe wiif of helchana þt was longe tyme bareyn ...’ (fols. 96v-97r); I Kings (fols. 97r-109v); prologue ‘This secounde book of kingis makij menciouþ of þe coronacioun of dauiþ ...’; II Kings (fols. 109v-119v); prologue ‘In þis biddle book of kingis is contened þe ending of dauiþ ...’; I Samuel (fols. 119v-131v); prologue ‘This fourþe book of kingis makij menciouþ of alle þe kingis of israel ...’; II Samuel (fols. 131v-142v); prologue ‘This book of paralipmenon þe firste bigyneth at adam ...’; I Chronicles (fols. 142v-152v), ending imperfect in 29:7 (at ‘... & eiȝtene þousynd ta||’) due to the loss of a leaf after fol. 152; II Chronicles (fols. 153r-165v), starting imperfect at 3:1 (at ‘|| And salomon bigan to bilde ...’) due to the loss of the same leaf; prologue ‘This firste book of Esdre which was a wurþi man among iewis ...’; I Ezra (fols. 165v-169r); prologue ‘In ðis secounde book of esdre is contenþ þe actis of Neemye ...’; II Ezra (fols. 169r-174v); prologue ‘In ðis book of tobie ben contenþ þe seuen dedis of merci ...’; Tobit (fols. 174v-178r); prologue ‘This book of iudith þe holi widewe ...’; Judith (fols. 178r-183r); prologue ‘This book of hester þe qween makij mynde of þe riȝtful mardoche ...’; Esther (fols. 183r-187v); prologue ‘In þis book of ioob is contenþ first þe possessioun & prosperite of þe iust man ioob ...’; Job (fols. 187v-197r); prologue ‘This book sauter is clepid þat is
to seie þe book of songis …”; Psalms (fols. 197r-220r); prologue ‘In þese prouerbis of
solemmon is contened much prudence …”; Proverbs (fols. 220r-228v); Ecclesiastes
(fols. 228v-231v); Song of Songs (fols. 231v-233r); Wisdom (fols. 233r-238v);
Ecclesiasticus (fols. 238v-254r); prologue (fol. 254r-v), Isaiah (fols. 254v-273r);
prologue ‘This profete iremye told openli þingis to comynge …”; Jeremiah (fols.
273r-294v); Lamentations (fols. 294v-296r); Prayer of Jeremeiah; prologue ‘This book
which is titlid in þe name of baruk is not had in þe canoun …”; Baruch (fols. 296r-
299r) [Image]; prologue ‘This profete ezechiel seiþ in uisioun …”; Ezekiel (fols.
299r-318v); prologue ‘This profete danyel was in þe transmygracioun of babiloyne …’
(fols. 318v-319r); Daniel (fols. 319r-326v); Hosea (fols. 326v-329r); Joel (fols. 329r-
330r); Amos (fols. 330r-332r); Obadiah (fol. 332r-v); Jonah (fols. 332v-333r); Micah
(fols. 333r-334v); Nahum (fols. 334v-335v); Habacuc (fols. 335v-336r); Zephaniah
(fols. 336r-337r); Haggai (fol. 337r-v); Zachariah (fols. 337v-340v); Malachi (fols.
340v-341v); prologue ‘This book of machabeis techiþ alle men bi ensaumple …”; I
Maccabees (fols. 341v-352v); II Maccabees (fols. 352v-360v).

[The New Testament occupies quires 46-56]

3. (fols. 361r-400v) Prologue; Matthew (fols. 361r-371v); prologue (fols. 371v-372r);
Mark (fols. 372r-379r); prologue; Luke (fols. 379r-391v); prologue; John (fols. 391v-
400v); Romans (fols. 400v-405r); prologue; I Corinthians (fols. 405r-409v); prologue;
II Corinthians (fols. 409v-412v); prologue; Galatians (fols. 412v-414r); prologue;
Ephesians (fols. 414r-415v); prologue; Philippians (fols. 415v-416v); prologue (fol.
416v); Colossians (fols. 417r-v); prologue (fol. 417r-v); I Thessalonians (fols. 418r-v);
prologue; II Thessalonians (fols. 418v-419r); prologue (fol. 419r-v); I Timothy (fols.
419v-420r); prologue; II Timothy (fols. 420v-421v); prologue; Titus (fols. 421v-422r);
prologue; Philemon (fol. 422r); prologue; Hebrews (fols. 422r-425v); prologue (fol.
425v-426r), Acts (fols. 426r-438r); prologue; James (fols. 438r-439r); I Peter (fols.
439r-440v); II Peter (fols. 440v-441r); I John (fols. 441v-442v); II John; III John (fols.
442v-443r); Jude (fol. 443r-v); Revelation (fols. 443v-449v).

Decoration
Major initials mutilated, leaving foliate marginal extensions only, at the start of Genesis
(leaf missing, but some offsets remain), Psalms, and the New Testament [Image];
illuminated 7-line gold initials on a quartered blue and red ground, with white tracery,
and foliate pen-sprays extending into the margin, at the start of Leviticus, Joshua, I Kings
(excised), I Samuel, I Chronicles (excised), Proverbs (excised), Isaiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, I
Maccabees, Luke, Romans, II Corinthians, I Thessalonians, Hebrews, Acts [Image], and
James; penwork initials at the remaining books [Image], prologues, and divisions of the
Psalms [Image]; three-line initials in blue with red penwork to each chapter. Guides to
the illuminator and the rubricator are often visible.

Physical description
Parchment, c.430 x c.305 mm., of good quality with a soft suede texture.
ff. i (parchment, conjoint with pastedown) + 449 + i (parchment, conjoint with pastedown), foliated in 19th-century pencil on fols. 9, 361 (‘355’), 449 (‘443’); re-foliated throughout in modern pencil: i, 1-450.

Qures mostly of 8 leaves each: 18 (fols. 1-8); 28-1 (1st leaf excised) (fols. 9-15), 3-198 (fols. 16-151), 208-1 (2nd leaf missing); fols. 152-158, 21-448 (fols. 159-350), 4510 (fols. 351-360); 46-558 (fols. 361-440), 5610-1 (last leaf cancelled; fols. 441-449); catchwords throughout, except in quires 1, 45, and 56, sitting on the ruling in the lower margin; quire signatures in the form of an Arabic numeral in black ink in the centre of the lower margin of the first recto of each quire, [1]-56, s. xvi?; leaf signatures in two series, perhaps original: in the form of letters of the alphabet in ink, starting anew in quire 46 with the New Testament; and Arabic numerals [1]-37 in black ink, then, in red ink, lower-case roman numerals for each leaf, with superscript Arabic numerals for each quire (e.g. ‘i1’, ‘ij1’, ‘ijj1’, ‘iv1’, ‘i2’, ‘ij2’, ‘ijj2’, etc.)

Ruled for two columns of 60 lines of text per page, in two columns, each column with single vertical bounding lines extending the full height of the page, the top horizontal line extending the full width of the page, and with double lines in the three outer margins to guide the writing of running-titles, etc.; these rulings all in brown ink, the remaining horizontals all apparently in drypoint (or now-invisible leadpoint); the ruled writing-space c.325 x c.210 mm., each column c.95 mm. wide; prickings often survive for the ink rulings.

Written in anglicana script; rubrics, psalm tituli, running titles, chapter numbers, etc., in red, parishes in blue or red.

Secundo folio: ‘Sat(er)dai’ (fol. 2r), ‘þe erþe’ (fol. 9r), [chil-]’dide a sone’ (fol. 10r).

**Binding**

Sewn on 10 bands and bound in 19th-century brown reversed calf over pasteboards, tooled in blind.

**Provenance**

1. Written in England, perhaps c.1420.

2. William Smyth, Queen Elizabeth I’s Sargeant of the Scullery, 1561-63: inscribed, with changes of ink at the beginnings of the third and fourth lines, ‘Ego Will(el)m(us) Smyth seruiens scutelie | D(omi)ne Reg(in)e Elezabethe | incepi legere 2o die octob. an’. 1561 | & finem feci 10 die Junii a’. 1563 | iteru(m) relegere incepi 12o Junii an’. p(re)dicto’ (fol. 8v) [Image]; Smyth was discharged from this office due to the loss of silver plate during the first eight years of Elizabeth’s reign (the royal warrant for his dismissal, dated 26 June 1568, is BL, Additional MS. 5751B, no. 20).

3. Queen’s College; presumably the ‘Biblia Anglice’ listed by James in 1600, and the Wycliffite Bible listed in the 1689 catalogue in MS. 555 with the shelfmark ‘IX. 4’ (i.e. presumably stored among the printed books); former shelfmark ‘IX 1’ (listed with this shelfmark in MS. 557), and ‘X Z’ (or X 2?), both crossed through, on the front pastedown, a paper label printed ‘1’ at the top of the spine; inscribed ‘Queen’s College Library | Oxford | [signed] JW’ (upper pastedown, by the same hand that inscribed the
first and last pages of MS. 151) [Image]; ‘This manuscript was lent to Mr Forshall July 9\textsuperscript{th} 1831 \& returned to the Provost [John Fox] August 22\textsuperscript{nd} 1844’ (in pencil, fol. i verso).

**Bibliography**

James, *Ecloga*, p. 52 no. 1.


Coxe, *Catalogus*, p. 89.

Forshall and Madden, I, pp. xxix, xxxi n., xxxv, xxxvi, liii no. 101 (cited as MS. 23 and 947, referring to the numbers in Bernard, *CLM*; siglum ‘M’).

Alexander & Temple, *College libraries*, no. 397.


Ogilvie-Thomson, *IMEP*, pp. xviii, 84.

Status: Draft