

# William Tyndale

**William Tyndale** was born in about 1494 and was executed on October 6, 1536. In 1536, he was convicted of heresy and executed by strangulation, after which his body was burnt at the stake. Tyndale's translation was the first English Bible to draw directly from Hebrew and Greek texts. Erasmus third edition of 1522 was probably used by Tyndale for the first English New Testament. In 1611, the 54 scholars who produced the King James Bible drew significantly from Tyndale's work, the Matthew Bible, as well as from translations that descended from his. One estimate suggests that the New Testament in the King James Version is 83% Tyndale's and the Old Testament 76%.

## Erasmus

**Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus** was born October 28 in about 1466 and died July 12, 1536. Originally trained as a Catholic priest, Erasmus was an important figure in classical scholarship who wrote in a pure Latin style. Erasmus lived against the backdrop of the growing European religious Reformation, but while he was critical of the abuses within the Catholic Church and called for reform, he continued to recognise the authority of the pope, emphasizing a middle way with a deep respect for traditional faith, piety and grace, rejecting Luther's emphasis on faith alone. Erasmus remained a member of the Roman Catholic Church all his life. Only when he had mastered Latin did he begin to express himself on major contemporary themes in literature and religion. He felt called upon to use his learning in a purification of the doctrine by returning to the historic documents and original languages of sacred Scripture.

Erasmus had been working for years on two projects: a collation of Greek texts and a fresh Latin New Testament. He declared, "My mind is so excited at the thought of emending Jerome's text, with notes, that I seem to myself inspired by some god. I have already almost finished emending him by collating a large number of ancient manuscripts, and this I am doing at enormous personal expense." Also, "But one thing the facts cry out, and it can be clear, as they say, even to a blind man, that often through the translator's clumsiness or inattention the Greek has been wrongly rendered; often the true and genuine reading has been corrupted by ignorant scribes, which we see happen every day, or altered by scribes who are half-taught and half-asleep." So he included the Greek text to permit qualified readers to verify the quality of his Latin version. Using humanist techniques for working on texts, he prepared important new Latin and Greek editions of the New Testament, which raised questions that would be influential in the Protestant Reformation and Catholic Counter-Reformation. Later versions of the Greek New Testament by others, but based on Erasmus's Greek New Testament, became known as the *Textus Receptus*.

## Tamim with Hashem

Moses commands us to be *tamim*, i.e., "finished," "complete," or "perfect" before the LORD. Note that this Hebrew word does not denote ideal moral perfectionism as much as it suggests being "thoroughly made" or brought to successful completion. For example, *tamim* is used to describe *completed* years (Gen. 47:18); *healthy* animal sacrifices (Lev. 22:21-22); *nourishing* vines (Ezek. 15:5); *truthful* speech (Amos 5:10); *finished* building projects (1 Kings 6:22); and even the *fulfilled* destruction of a people (Num. 14:33). In our relationship with God, *tamim* means being wholehearted, resolute, and entirely committed to walking "with" Him in this world. This is what Jesus meant when he said, "Be ye perfect..." (Matt. 5:48).