



Quarterly Record

The Magazine of the Trinitarian Bible Society • Issue Number 630

January–March 2020



THE WORD OF GOD AMONG ALL NATIONS



Trinitarian Bible Society

Founded in 1831 for the circulation of
Protestant or uncorrupted versions of the Word of God

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Issue Number: 630

January to
March 2020

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ADVANCE NOTICE



OPEN DAY

GOD WILLING

Saturday
14 March 2020

at the Society's Headquarters
William Tyndale House

29 Deer Park Road, London SW19 3NN

The Society is again opening the doors of our London Headquarters for a time of information about the Society and fellowship with like-minded believers. But this year **we are planning a NEW FORMAT for Open Day.**

THERE WILL BE TWO SESSIONS,

MORNING BETWEEN 10.00 & 12.00 AND
AFTERNOON BETWEEN 13.30 & 15.30.

Those wishing to attend are invited to select one.

Open Day is free of charge as always, but booking is essential; 100 tickets will be available for each session, obtainable online at

tbsbibles.org/event/openday2020

or by contacting the Society. Please book for only one session in order that others will have opportunity to attend.

During the first hour of each session attendees will have opportunity for fellowship and refreshments, and will

be able to explore various displays and activities. Short tours will be available for those new to William Tyndale House and the work of the Society. The second hour will include an introduction and presentations on the Society's principles, our work of translating God's Word, and the impact of our distribution of the Scriptures.

Please mark your diaries for 14 March and make plans to attend. We look forward to seeing you then.

THE WORD OF GOD AMONG ALL NATIONS



The 189th Annual General Meeting advance notice



GOD WILLING
commences at **11.00 a.m.** on

Saturday, 19 September 2020

at the **Metropolitan Tabernacle, London SE1 6SD**

The Business Meeting at 11.00 will include reports and updates on the Society's work, including the Armenian Scriptures project.

After the Business Meeting,

at **2.00 p.m.**

The Rev. R. G. Ferguson

member of the General Committee
is expected to preach.

Lunch will be served between the Meetings.

All are invited to attend.





Introduction from the Editorial Director

If the Word of the living God has become precious and dear to our own souls, we cannot but earnestly desire that the same inestimable treasure should be available in faithful translations to others. We trust that it is encouraging for our supporters to know that the sacred volume of inspiration, the lively oracles of God, are penetrating the vast regions of this earth far and wide.

However, there is still a great need, still a great number of language groups without a faithful translation, or even any translation. Maybe you think that the Word of God, though confessedly in the form of a translation or paraphrase from the Critical Greek Text and a non-Masoretic Hebrew text, has been sufficiently circulated in the thousands and tens of thousands of copies. Here,

however, arises a serious question. Can the versions from these texts be considered as the faithful Word of God? How far do they really agree with the providentially preserved Word of God? How much have they removed from the original? What basis does the translation give to a church trying to be faithful to the Lord? Making allowance for human imperfection can we reasonably hope that the true Word of God, in the vernacular tongue, is really being circulated in the various countries in which these versions are distributed?

Well, sadly we must cite the number of omissions in these widely used translations. There are obvious discrepancies. Certain passages are not found in the current Critical Greek Text translations, including Mark 16.9–20 where the account of the resurrection



is removed and the Gospel ends at verse 8 with the words ‘for they were afraid’. Although verses 9 to 20 were accepted for centuries as part of the inspired Scriptures and some 99% of manuscripts include it for being ancient (which is recognised even by those who would oppose the Textus Receptus) they are removed.¹

We appreciate that the Lord can and has used ‘blunt instruments’ in the form of less accurate translations to save and build His church. Careful investigation will show that there have been and are languages that need a more faithful translation. Therefore it is necessary on Scriptural principles, under the blessing of God, to labour to substitute in due time faithful versions made from the Hebrew Masoretic and Greek Received Texts in the place of those mistranslations and paraphrases and editions based on the Critical Greek Text and non-Masoretic Hebrew texts. It is this work upon which the Trinitarian Bible Society is called to engage.

Therefore the first *Quarterly Record* of 2020 gives the opportunity to earnestly request your prayers. This year (and into 2021) we hope to publish Scriptures in a number of languages and to bring to fruition projects we have been working on for a number of years. In the Lord’s providence currently being printed are the Thadou Bible and the large print Thadou New Testament. To be printed in due course are the Shona Bible, the Simte Bible, the Amharic New Testament and Psalms, and the French New Testament. We trust that in this manner the Society is prosecuting its aim, ‘The Word of God Among All Nations’.

The Second Law of our Society reads:

The object of this Society is to promote the Glory of God, and the salvation of men, by circulating, both at home and abroad, in dependence on the Divine blessing, the HOLY SCRIPTURES, which are given by inspiration of God, and are able to make men wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

This circulation is, as far as possible, free of cost to those recipients who cannot afford to pay. We are not primarily a trading Society—a fact that is sometimes overlooked by our friends. Though we do sell Scriptures to our supporters and those who are able to pay, our principal object is to distribute these Scriptures, where needed, gratuitously: ‘freely ye have received, freely give’ (Matthew 10.8).

It has especially been a great encouragement in recent months to be able, through our auxiliaries, to make the Scriptures available to schools and institutions in the UK. In that regard we regularly receive numerous appeals for Scriptures and there is an evident increase of interest across the world as the Society publishes in more languages. We are endeavouring to meet these demands as the Lord provides.

Pastor Jay Stehouwer

It is with both joy and sadness we report that Pastor J. Stehouwer was called home on 17 November 2019, aged 95. He served as pastor of Zion Baptist Church near Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA, for forty-two years. For thirty-three of those years he also presided over Trinitarian Bible Society (USA), and after retiring stayed on as a member of the board for an additional

nine years. He prayerfully built TBS (USA) and supported it as it grew from a small organisation operating out of his home to the present headquarters for the USA in Grand Rapids, Michigan. We thank the Lord for his life and pray for his family and church at this time.

We trust this edition of the *Quarterly Record* has a number of articles of interest for our supporters and friends. Included are two messages from our Annual General Meeting held in September 2019: the challenging sermon preached by Dr David Allen and an informative report on our Thadou Project presented by our translator Vumthang Sitlhou. Our Chairman has again provided a devotional article, this one dealing with the trust God has committed to His people. Larry Brigden gives a thought-provoking study on the recent attempt by Pope Francis to change the Lord's Prayer. Joe Sayers, a member of our General Committee who voluntarily helps the Society with auxiliaries, provides details of that very important work. And we tell of the recent death of a dedicated servant of God who used even her declining years to support the Society and her fellow men. Along with these are David Broome's informative discussion of the Society's

policy regarding fundraising, and of course letters from those who receive the Scriptures that our supporters have made possible.

Endnotes:

1. 'The longer end of Mark 16:9–20 is found in 99 per cent of the Greek manuscripts as well as the rest of the tradition' (Kurt and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 292, quoted in David Hester, *Does Mark 16:9–20 Belong in the New Testament* (Eugene, OR, USA: Wipf & Stock, 2015), p. 86). Even the argument that Vaticanus and Sinaiticus are old and therefore more reliable does not work, as major uncial text Codices Alexandrinus and Ephraemi Rescriptus within decades of the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus have the longer ending. Versions dating from the second century (Diatessaron), Old Latin and Old Syriac Curetonian manuscript all have it. Leaders of the early church such as Justin, Tatian and Irenaeus cite parts of the longer ending. Irenaeus, when commenting on the Gospel according to Mark, said, 'So then, after the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God', confirming what had been spoken by the prophet: "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thy foes Thy footstool" (*Adversus Haereses (Against Heresies)*, book 3, ch 10, para 5, www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.html). One critic of the inclusion of the verses even writes that the longer ending 'clearly also has ancient support' (Darrell Bock in *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark*, David Black, ed. (Nashville, TN, USA: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2008), p. 130.

The Rev. D. Silversides, M.A.

Just before going to press with this *Quarterly Record* we learned of the passing of the Rev. David Silversides on 12 December. The Rev. Silversides had been minister of Loughbrickland Reformed Presbyterian Church in Northern Ireland for nearly thirty years beginning in 1988. He was instrumental in organising the Society's Northern Ireland Regional Committee in 1998, and served as its chairman. He joined the Society's General Committee in 2000, as well as serving on the board of our Australia branch, and upon retiring from the General Committee served as a Vice-President. His wise guidance will be sorely missed.

PUT IN TRUST WITH THE GOSPEL

But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

1 Thessalonians 2.4



Thessaloniki: View from the Byzantine Fort

by Mr G. D. Buss

Chairman of the General Committee

The introduction of the Gospel to Thessalonica was not without its opposition from professors and profane. The complaint was that 'these that have turned the world upside down

are come hither also' (Acts 17.6). Of course, this is indeed the purpose of the Gospel! But in so doing, Satan's kingdom being disturbed, like a hornet's nest, brings out the natural hostility of fallen man to the truth in Jesus. The chief complaint was of envy among the unbelieving Jews who resented their power base being

undermined by the defection of many to the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ and His just claims upon men.

It is very instructive to notice the simplicity of Paul's preaching. His great theme was a once crucified now risen Saviour, Jesus Christ the Son of God. The Scriptures and his own experience of these truths were his only resources of proof. Sadly, he was driven from Thessalonica to Berea where we read 'these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so' (Acts 17.11). However, his labours were not in vain as he left an established church of Christ behind him, and the church of Christ has benefited from his two epistles to the Thessalonians down the ages. God's Word does not return unto Him void (cf. Isaiah 55.11). We might ask ourselves the question as to whether the Gospel has turned our lives upside down to what they were as we were born. How Paul loved the Gospel that had turned his world upside down on the Damascus Road! In the days of Whitefield this is what happened in our land, and in Wales in times past there were several periods of revival which turned society around.

Writing in 1 Thessalonians 2.4 Paul the apostle speaks of three things relative to the Gospel of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. These are:

1. A sacred privilege
2. A solemn responsibility
3. A sure success

How may we define the Gospel? The word 'Gospel' comes from the Anglo-Saxon—God-spell: meaning, in essence, 'good news from God'. Listen to Paul's own words.

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. (1 Timothy 1.15–16; see also 1 Timothy 1.11–12)

A sacred privilege

Paul says, speaking of himself and his fellow-labourers, 'we were allowed of God to be put in trust of the Gospel'. That God had given him this immense privilege was to Paul a continuing source of amazement. He did not



Thessaloniki - ruins of the Roman Forum

take this honour to himself, but as he writes to the Galatians: 'But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen' (Galatians 1.15–16). When he was apprehended on the road to Damascus Paul, astonished, asked the question of the very One whose Name he had been denying and blaspheming, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' (Acts 9.6), as if he was astounded to think that Jesus would be ready to use such a wretched sinner as he now felt himself to be! In 1 Corinthians 1.27–29 Paul expands on this theme.

But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence.

Those who are called by God to preach and proclaim the Gospel increasingly feel their unworthiness so to do—Gideon, Moses, and also those that had been with Jesus (Acts 4.13: unlearned men yet!).

A solemn responsibility

Paul speaks of this privilege as being 'put in trust with the gospel ...'. To have the Gospel entrusted to us carries with it a solemn obligation not to tamper with it. Paul writing to the Corinthians says 'nor handling the word of God deceitfully' (2 Corinthians 4.2). On the very last pages of Holy Scripture we are warned neither to add anything nor to subtract anything from the Word of God, with most solemn warnings to any who should attempt so to do. Paul could say to the Ephesians in bidding them farewell: 'For I have

not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God' (Acts 20.27). Agur writes: 'Every word of God *is* pure: he *is* a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar' (Proverbs 30.5–6).

How sharply did Paul reprove those in the Galatian churches who were preaching 'another gospel: which is not another' (Galatians 1.6–7; this 'gospel' is not the good news of salvation!) and such as sought to 'pervert the gospel of Christ' (v. 7). How easily the pendulum may swing from legalism to antinomianism. How strongly does he speak: 'But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed' (Galatians 1.8).

Why is Paul so strong, or should we not say, why is the Holy Spirit so jealous of the integrity of God's Word? Is it not because there is a sacred union between the written and inspired Word of God and He who is the Word, the incarnate Son of God? To injure the Word of God is to do despite to the Son of God, a sin that God will call such to account for. (Moses was sharply reprov'd for smiting the Rock twice rather than speaking to it. Likewise, the children of Israel who loathed this light bread—a type of Christ, the bread of life.)

Ezekiel was solemnly warned in chapter 3.17–21 about the responsibility of being one of Christ's ambassadors. To speak in His Name calls for solemn accountability to our Master as it is His Word, His work and His honour that are at stake. The astounding thing is that God should use such weak instruments as we know ourselves to be. Paul himself said that his speech was contemptible and that he was but an earthen vessel. As I heard one good man once say: 'If my Master were another than

who He is, He would have dispensed with my services long ago’.

A sure success

Many examples could be given of the success of God’s Word, but we need look no further than the church at Thessalonica itself for proof of this blessed principle.

For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost . . . how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even Jesus*, which delivered us from the wrath to come. (1 Thessalonians 1.5–6, 9–10).

In other words it had turned the lives of these Thessalonians upside down! And because the change was so outstanding, it could not be hidden. The Gospel not being any longer hidden to them was now displayed in their lives for all to see.

God has promised that His Word will not return unto Him void but that it shall prosper in the thing whereto He has sent it (see Isaiah 55.11). And did not the Saviour Himself say in contending with the Pharisees, ‘the scripture cannot be broken’ (John 10.35)? We must, with Paul, claim that:

For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ . . . For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ. (2 Corinthians 2.15–17)

In the next chapter Paul tells us the secret of his success:

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency *is* of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. (2 Corinthians 3.5–6)

The Trinitarian Bible Society has a ministry to be engaged in, in which these principles must be uppermost in our minds. It is indeed a sacred privilege to be called to this work in whatever capacity we may serve. It is a most solemn responsibility that we seek to preserve the integrity of God’s Word and pass to future generations uncorrupted versions of Holy Scripture. But may we, depending on the all-sufficiency of the grace of our God, seek humble confidence to believe in the success of the Word of God, as Paul exhorted the Corinthians at the close of his noble defence of the Gospel in 1 Corinthians 15.58: ‘Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord’.

Martin Luther said: ‘No greater mischief can happen to a Christian people, than to have God’s Word taken from them, or falsified, so that they no longer have it pure and clear. God grant we and our descendants be not witnesses of such a calamity!’

Despite the continued and repeated efforts of Satan to accomplish the very thing that Luther dreaded, Almighty God will have the last word: ‘Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away’ (Matthew 24.35).

May it be our privilege to be used in some small way by our God as instruments in His hand to accomplish this noble end.

Endnote:

1. *The Table Talk of Martin Luther*, William Hazlitt trans, ‘Of God’s Word’, book 1, no. 12.

Editorial Director's Report

by *Jonathan D. Arnold*

There has been much cause for thanksgiving in recent weeks at the Trinitarian Bible Society with the publication of the Persian (Farsi) New Testament.

The Persian (Farsi) language is spoken by over 100 million people, mainly in Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Complete translations of the Bible into Farsi first arose following the pioneering work of nineteenth-century missionaries such as Henry Martyn. In 2009 we commenced work on the preparation of the Bible in Persian. This latest work is a revision of the 1895 Standard Farsi Bible with reference to Martyn's 1859 Persian Bible. We sought to eliminate Arabic words and incorrect grammar and ensure conformity to the Greek Received and Hebrew Masoretic Texts.

The second edition of the revised Gospel according to John was published in 2014 when 50,000 copies were printed for distribution around the world. The New Testament was completed and printed in

September 2019. In November 7,500 copies were delivered to our UK warehouse and a further 5,000 copies will be printed in the USA in 2020, the Lord willing. How grateful we are to the Lord for the completion of this



part of the work. We would request much prayer for the distribution of these Persian Scriptures across the world.

Thanksgiving services for the publication of the New Testament took place in London and Cardiff in November. The history of the



Pastor Pooyan Mehrshahi at the Thanksgiving Service

Persian Scriptures and the background to the translation work was given by Pastor Pooyan Mehrshahi, which was greeted by an atmosphere of thanksgiving to the Lord for His provision, and optimism regarding future outreach to Iranians and other Persian speakers. Free copies were distributed to those in attendance.

A substantial amount of the Old Testament revision work has already been completed, but it will take at least two years before this is ready to print. As there are many challenges in translation work and in the distribution of Scriptures for persecuted peoples, we would urge your continued prayer for this project.

‘And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him’ (Colossians 3.17).

Amharic



In October 2019 a group in Ethiopia gathered to spend around two weeks proofreading the Amharic New Testament and

Psalms. This afforded the opportunity for careful review of the translator’s work and confirmation of the text to be published. It is anticipated the text will be finalised and then printed in 2020, the Lord willing.

Turkish



We are very grateful to all those who have given feedback on the text of the Turkish Bible.

We anticipate making the New Testament available early in 2020 while we complete a further proofreading of the Old Testament.

Non-English Websites

In recent months a number of non-English websites have been added to our online presence. These websites have been prepared in conjunction with our translators in those particular languages. The sites contain links to the relevant Scripture items in the TBS online store. You can find the links to the relevant pages by going to www.tbsbibles.org/page/nonenglishsites or by clicking on ‘TBS

non-English sites' at the top of our website homepage. The relevant languages are:

- **Amharic** (new)
- **Catalan** (existing)
- **Chinese** (new)
- **French** (existing)
- **Hebrew** (new)
- **Maori** (existing)
- **Persian/Farsi** (new)
- **Portuguese** (existing)
- **Romanian** (new)
- **Spanish** (existing)

Please encourage any who speak these languages to visit these pages.



TBS Online Bible/app

(www.tbsonlinebible.com)

As mentioned in previous *Quarterly Records* this app contains the full Bible in English along with the New Testament in Spanish and individual books in Chinese, Hebrew and Romanian. We have recently updated the system so you can also access the cross references and other details from the Westminster Bible. To do so you will need to login to your TBS account (it will prompt you to do so when you turn on cross references).

Current users come from a wide range of over fifty countries—a large number of users come from countries such as the

UK, USA, Brazil, Canada, Australia and the Netherlands, but there are also groups of people from Argentina, Belgium, Switzerland, France, Armenia, Indonesia, India, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Romania, Slovakia and Turkey.

Text and Canon

In October 2019 the Editorial Director attended the Text and Canon Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. This was a gathering of scholars and pastors presenting lectures in support of a Textus Receptus (TR) position. It is worth noting that in recent days there has been an increased interest in this whole topic, and some have produced a directory of a number of churches which are both confessional and hold the TR position (reedsburgchurch.org/textus-receptus-church-directory). Whilst we cannot formally endorse either the conference or the directory, we are glad to see the study of and advocacy for the TR position that for too long has been swept under the carpet. We pray this may cause many to consider the doctrine of Scripture they hold to, the Bible they use, the underlying Greek and Hebrew Texts, and the translation principles employed.

Conclusion

Thank you once again for all your prayers and support. What a privilege and responsibility it is to have the Word of God, 'for the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart' (Hebrews 4.12). Therefore may each of us take up this sword of the Spirit to the edifying of our souls and the spread of the Gospel.

The Thadou Bible Project

By the Rev. **Vumthang Sitlhou**

Presented during the 188th Annual General Meeting of the Trinitarian Bible Society on 21 September 2019

Edited for publication

Introduction

At the outset I thank God for enabling me to come and participate in the 188th Annual General Meeting of Trinitarian Bible Society, London. I also thank TBS for the kind invitation extended to me. It is a precious opportunity and honour for me to share the Thadou Bible project in this meeting.

The Bible is the unshakable and eternal living Word of God. As the Lord Jesus Christ says, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away' (Matthew 24.35). Every created thing will be shaken and pass away but the Word of God shall not be moved; it shall remain for ever. In this time, God has given His Word for every tribe and every nation to read, to believe and to have eternal life.

The Bible is the only place in which men can find and see the true living God, know His will, and claim His glorious promises and plan for eternity. Therefore nothing is more tragic and disastrous for any man or tribe on earth than not to have the Bible. It is tragic and heartbreaking to say that the Thadou people do not have the whole Bible even unto this day in the twenty-first century. But, God willing, we will soon have one.

The Thadou people's history

According to the documents and records of the British writers and anthropologists, the Thadou are one of the ancient people groups in Southeast Asia and are part of the Kuki group. They have a long history, language, tradition, culture and custom and are recognised as one of the indigenous tribes by the governments of India and Myanmar.

The Thadous are dispersed in the Northeast India region and neighbouring countries as well. They inhabit the Sylhet region of Bangladesh and along the Chindwin valley in Chin state in Myanmar. In India they live



The hills of Manipur

in Assam and Nagaland and occupy the hills of Manipur on all sides of the Imphal Valley.

Thadou chiefs were powerful, non-elected monarchs with an hereditary right to rule. Their powers were absolute, unchangeable and irrefutable. They were looked upon with great respect and almost superstitious veneration. They ruled and governed the hill areas of Manipur before the arrival of the British. In the late nineteenth century British missionaries came to India. The first Baptist missionary of Manipur, William Pettigrew, came from Great Britain in 1894 and learned and spoke the Thadou dialect. During the British period, the Thadou dialect was prerequisite for any government employee in Northeast India.

Anglo-Thadou War

Although classified as independent, the Kuki tribes came increasingly under British influence. In 1917 they rose up against the British and fought against their mighty power for three years, when it used to be said that ‘the sun never set on the British Empire’. They launched a massive war against the British on 17 March 1917. It was known as *Thadou Gaal* (Thadou War) and also known as the ‘Kuki Rebellion’ by outsiders. The military operations against the Thadous during 1917–1919 were also recognised as part of the Great War (World War I). Thadou warriors proved to be definitely formidable foes, and the British government issued more modern weapons to be used against them. After three years the Thadous were completely suppressed and defeated and the war was officially declared closed on 20 May 1919. The story of the Anglo-Thadou war did not just end there but it has had a colossal impact in both the political and religious life of the Thadous.

Belief

The Thadous are neither animists nor idolaters. Their religion is known as *indoi* (literally house magic). According to them there are two powerful gods—one is almighty God (*chungmangpa*), the benevolent god of the upper-world who with supernatural power created heaven and earth and gave all good things such as sunlight, moonlight, rainwater and gentle breeze to mankind. The other god is the malevolent or the god of the subterranean world (*noimangpa*), who rules the world and causes all kinds of sickness, calamities and death.

Christianity

Before the Anglo-Thadou war the Thadou chiefs vehemently opposed any religion other than their *indoi* worship. But they assumed that the world was the abode of evil spirits which caused all kinds of diseases and death, and they lived in terror and in a state of fear. As a result of this fear, they worshipped the evil spirits and made sacrifices to appease them. When the Thadou were completely suppressed and defeated by the British in the war, their chiefs realised that the British are much stronger and mightier than the Thadous and believed that the God of the British is superior and mightier than their gods. Thus they were not only defeated politically but the stronghold of their evil spirit worship had been also destroyed and torn down. Their spiritual worldview was completely changed and they started to accept the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Since 1920s the seed of the Gospel has spread like a wildfire among the Thadous and today 99% of the Thadous claim to be Christians.

But it is also sad to say that though Thadou Christianity has completed more than one hundred years, the majority of Thadou Christians do not read the Bible, the living

Word of God—many do not have even a single portion of the Word. As a result their understanding and knowledge of the Bible is shallow, hollow and superficial. Consequently their faith becomes shaky, unsteady and wavering and the numbers of nominal Christians are increasing. Churches have become weak and their mission and evangelistic work has become ineffective, dry and powerless. The main reason for this miserable failure in the work of evangelisation can only be attributed to the non-availability of the Bible.

It may not be excessive to say that Thadou people are spiritually perishing for lack of the Bible. To ensure spiritual revival, strengthening of their faith, a restructuring of the churches and a revitalisation of a total commitment to our Lord Jesus Christ, the Thadous' greatest need is the Holy Bible.

The History of the Thadou Bible

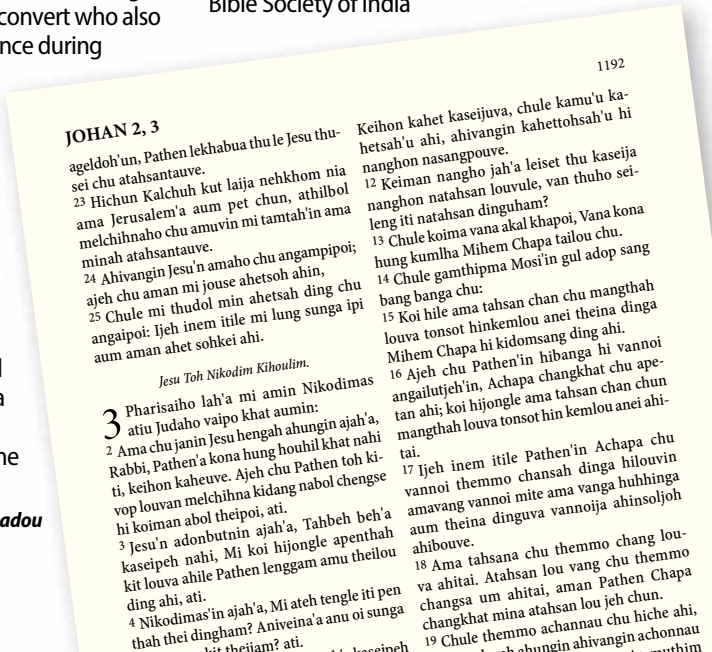
The first Bible (the Authorised (King James) Version) that was seen and possessed by the Thadous was presented by Britain's King George V to Mr Ngulhao Thomsong, the first Thadou Christian convert who also led the labour corps in France during World War I. Besides the Bible, the king also presented him a blanket with the colour of lion stripes embroidered on it. After returning home from France, with permission obtained from the British and Foreign Bible Society and under the supervision of medical missionaries from America he started translating the New Testament. Prior to the

whole New Testament being ready, the Gospel according to John was printed in 1925 and the Epistle of Paul to the Romans in 1933. The whole New Testament in Thadou was completed and printed in 1942 by the Bible Society of India (BSI). In the 1960s TBS revised it and in 1973 printed ten thousand copies.

During ethnic violence in Manipur in 1992–1995, many Thadou houses were burnt down to ashes, their New Testaments also being destroyed. Since then the New Testament was hardly found in any Thadou household. The mass population did not have the chance to read the Bible in their own dialect and depended only on the preaching and teaching of the pastors and evangelists. As the population increased the demand for the Holy Bible in Thadou became great.

This desperate need and demand for the Holy Bible in Thadou compelled a group of educated Thadou persons to start translating the Holy Bible in 1974. They finished the translation in 1980s but it remained unpublished for many years. They approached Bibles International and Bible Society of India

Page from the Thadou New Testament



JOHAN 2, 3

ageldoh'un, Pathen lekhabua thu le Jesu thu-sei chu atahsantaue.
23 Hichun Kalchuh kut laija nekhom nia ama Jerusalem'a aum pet chun, athilbol melchihnaho chu amuvn mi tamtah'in ama minah atahsantaue.
24 Ahivangin Jesu'n amaho chu angampipoi; ajuh chu aman mi jouse ahetsoh ahin,
25 Chule mi thudol min ahetsah ding chu angaipoi: Ijeh inem itile mi lung sunga ipi aum aman aheth sohkei ahi.

Jesu Toh Nikodim Kihoulin.

3 Pharisaiho lah'a mi amin Nikodimas atiu Judaho vaipo khat aumin:

2 Ama chu janin Jesu hengah ahungin ajah'a, Rabbi, Pathen'a kona hung houhli khat nahi ki, keihon kaheuve. Ajuh chu Pathen toh kint vop louvan melchihna kidang nabol chengse hi koiman abol theipoi, ati.
3 Jesu'n adonbutnin ajah'a, Tahbeh beh'a kaseipeh nahi, Mi koi hijongle apenthah kit louva ahile Pathen lenggam amu theilou ding ahi, ati.
4 Nikodimas'in ajah'a, Mi ateh tengle iti pen thah thei dingham? Aniveina'a anu oi sunga kit theiam? ati.

1192
Keihon kahet kaseijuva, chule kamu'u kahetsah'u ahi, ahivangin kahettohsah'u hi nanghon nasangpoue.
12 Keiman nangho jah'a leiset thu kaseija nanghon natahsan louvule, van thuhoh sei-leng iti natahsan dinguham?
13 Chule koima vana akal khapoi, Vana kona hung kumlha Mihem Chapa taulou chu.
14 Chule gangthipma Mosi'in gul adop sang bang banga chu:
15 Koi hile ama tahsan chan chu mangthah louva tonsot hinkemlou anei theina dinga Mihem Chapa hi kidomsang ding ahi.
16 Ajuh chu Pathen'in hibanga hi vannoi angailutjeh'in, Achapa changkhat chu ape-tan ahi; koi hijongle ama tahsan chan chun mangthah louva tonsot hin kemlou anei ahi-tai.
17 Ijeh inem itile Pathen'in Achapa chu vannoi themmo chansah dinga hilouvin amavang vannoi mite ama vanga huhhinga aum theina dinguva vannojia ahinsoljoh ahibouve.
18 Ama tahsana chu themmo chang louva ahitai. Atahsan lou vang chu themmo changsa um ahitai, aman Pathen Chapa changkhat mina atahsan lou juh chun.
19 Chule themmo achannau chu hiche ahi,

for printing but failed. Thus, the Thadou Christians became helpless and could not but humbly pray to the Lord Almighty God. They organised mass prayer meetings for the Bible, asking God to provide His living Word, the Bible in their own language.

I personally prayed without ceasing for printing of the Holy Bible in Thadou. During my two years of theological study in South Korea I used to go to the prayer mountains and prayed with tears for the Thadou Bible. I approached the Korean Bible Society thinking that God might answer my prayer through them. But God answered our prayers in His own time and His own way through the Trinitarian Bible Society and firstBible International (fBI).

The door for printing the New Testament in Thadou was opened in 2005. While attending the Baptist World Alliance Congress in Birmingham, England in 2005, I visited the office of TBS. It was a rare opportunity for me to share about the need of Thadou people for the Bible. We praise God that our request was accepted. The TBS provided the materials for translation such as a computer, a Greek lexicon and Greek New Testament which helped us. The revision and editing of the New Testament was completed under the scrupulous guidance of the TBS and bigheartedly printed by the firstBible International in 2014.

The TBS and firstBible International freely provided the Thadou people the living Word of God, the New Testament, in their own language. How amazing it was for the Thadous! Representatives from fBI and TBS also came personally and visited the Thadou people in November 2014. During their visit the New Testament was released and a service of thanksgiving held at the largest Thadou Baptist church in India. It was a remarkable and great event in the history of Thadou Christianity. The Thadous rejoiced exceedingly and praised

God for His priceless providence. Truly God provides and He is our Provider!

Today the Thadou churches, families, and individuals are reading the Word of God, the New Testament in their own dialect. Their long desire and cherished hope has been fulfilled and achieved. But most of the pioneer translators passed away without seeing the Thadou Bible. Only one person—who is no other than my brother—is alive and has seen the Thadou New Testament. Now he is waiting to see the Holy Bible. [ed.: Sadly, the Rev. Sitlhou's brother passed away in October and thus was not able to see the published Bible. We will always be grateful for his efforts to translate the Word of God for his tribe: by God's grace his work will not be in vain.]

During their visit in November 2014, the representatives from TBS and fBI saw our distress for want of the whole Bible and accepted our humble request for printing the whole Bible. In July 2016 staff members from TBS came to Manipur and we had consultation meetings. We immediately started the work of revising and editing the whole Bible and completed it in the month of August 2019. It is a great joy to say that this Holy Bible in Thadou will have a concordance: this will be the first of its kind among the tribal communities in Manipur.

In conclusion, I thank God for providing us His living Word through TBS and firstBible International. I trust that by reading the Word of God in their own dialect the Thadou Christians will strengthen their faith and many others will come to know Christ. There will be a great change and transformation in the lives of Thadous by reading the living Word of God and the Thadou Christians will become a significant instrument for advancing the work of evangelism in Southeast Asia.

May the Lord continue to bless TBS.

‘And lead us not into temptation’

BY LARRY BRIGDEN

Senior Editorial Consultant (Linguistics)

Recently the Pope of the Roman Catholic Church altered the English translation of the Lord’s Prayer from ‘and lead us not into temptation’ to ‘and do not let us fall into temptation’. The reason given for the change is that the traditional translation ‘is not a good translation because it speaks of a God who induces temptation’ whereas ‘it’s Satan who leads us into temptation—that’s his department.’¹

But the original Greek of this verse, as found in Matthew 6.13 and Luke 11.4, reads as follows:

καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν

and lead us not into temptation

This is quite clearly an accurate English translation of these Greek words. The verb **εἰσενέγκῃς** is the second person aorist subjunctive form² of εἰσφέρω which means to ‘bring in’ or ‘lead in’, and when coupled with the negative particle μὴ the meaning is ‘and lead us not into ...’.

The same verb occurs elsewhere in the New Testament with exactly this meaning of ‘bring in’ or ‘lead in’. Thus, in Luke 5.18–19 the men ‘brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy’. In Acts 17.20 the Athenian philosophers say to Paul ‘thou bringest certain strange things to our ears’. In 1 Timothy 6.7 Paul says that ‘we brought nothing into *this* world’. In Hebrews 13.11 the blood of the beasts ‘is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest’. In all these instances the verb clearly has an active meaning and cannot reasonably be taken in any other sense. Could the men in Luke 5.18–19, for example, be understood as somehow allowing the man taken with palsy to find his own way in?

Thus the Pope’s alteration of the translation of the Lord’s Prayer is linguistically indefensible. In making the alteration the Pope has evidently not had any regard to

what the Word of God actually says, but instead only to his own notions of God. And when the literal meaning of the text does not agree with those notions, the latter prevails over the former and the Word of God is effectively set aside.

But such a setting aside of the Word of God ought not to surprise any, for thus has the Roman Catholic Church done for many centuries now, and especially since the Reformation. She has established her own notions of God in opposition to the truths which God Himself infallibly reveals in His Word. This setting aside of the Word of God is, of course, a departure from God Himself, and in just recompense the Roman Catholic Church has been given up to walk in a darkness of her own choosing. This altering of a verse in the Lord's Prayer is only a further evidence of that darkness. It is as Isaiah said: 'To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is because there is no light in them*' (Isaiah 8.20).

The True Meaning of the Petition

But if the Pope has stumbled at the words 'and lead us not into temptation' and not correctly understood them, it may be profitable to inquire concerning their true meaning. Given that the Scriptures elsewhere declare that 'God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man' (James 1.13), how is it that we are to pray against His leading us into temptation?

The misunderstanding arises from supposing that an active leading on the part of God is meant by the words of the petition. But James 1.13 expressly declares that this is not so, while the very next verse declares from whence the temptation actually arises: 'but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed' (v. 14).

But if temptation arises from the corrupt heart of man, why do we petition God not to lead us into temptation?

To answer this question we must bear in mind the true state of man since the Fall. When man fell by sinning against God in the garden of Eden, his heart became corrupt and prone to sin, so that 'every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was only evil continually*' (Genesis 6.5). Satan, as the constant adversary of man, continually tempts man to sin, intending his ruin thereby. Thus many things which befall a man, in God's providence become occasions for sin.

The phrase in the Lord's Prayer is then a petition for the preservation of the saints, that

God by his providence would so order and dispose all the occurrences of our lives, so as not to lay before us those objects, nor proffer those occasions, which might either excite or draw forth our inbred corruptions.³

It should be remembered that

there is no outward act of sin committed in the world but the sinner took occasion from some providence of God to perpetrate it. A thief steals not anything but what God's providence brings in his way; the murderer slays not any man but whom Providence offers to his sword and violence.⁴

Of course, if in the wise providence of God we should yet encounter such temptations, our prayer will be that the Lord would sustain and deliver us from them, and hence the words of the very next part of the petition: 'but deliver us from evil'.

The petition 'and lead us not into temptation' is succinctly expressed and this doubtless contributes to its being misunderstood. But examples may be found elsewhere in Scripture where the petition for a saint's preservation is more fully expressed, such as in Proverbs 30.7–9:

Two *things* have I required of thee; deny me *them* not before I die: remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full, and deny *thee*, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God *in vain*.

Agur, knowing the corruption of his own heart, entreats the Lord to so dispose His providence toward him that he might not be exposed to a temptation that could lead to his spiritual ruin. The temptation may come upon him through either poverty or riches. Not that poverty is itself a sinful condition, though it may expose a man to sin through the greater temptation of breaking God's eighth commandment. Nor are riches in themselves wrong, though a corrupt heart in resting upon them may make them so.

It is sobering to reflect that those abandoned by God are often judged by Him by being given up to their own corruptions to be seduced and entangled by them, so that they become more and more enslaved to sin. And this process of hardening in sin is a judicial one. Thus, the true saint will entreat the Lord that he be not given up to his own corruptions by being led into temptation, but that he may be delivered from them.

We may conclude with Question and Answer 195 of the Larger Catechism which gives the Westminster Assembly's explanation of the meaning of this petition of the Lord's Prayer.

Q. 195. What do we pray for in the sixth petition?

A. In the sixth petition, (which is, And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,) acknowledging, that the most wise, righteous, and

gracious God, for divers holy and just ends, may so order things, that we may be assaulted, foiled, and for a time led captive by temptations; that Satan, the world, and the flesh, are ready powerfully to draw us aside, and ensnare us; and that we, even after the pardon of our sins, by reason of our corruption, weakness, and want of watchfulness, are not only subject to be tempted, and forward to expose ourselves unto temptations, but also of ourselves unable and unwilling to resist them, to recover out of them, and to improve them; and worthy to be left under the power of them: we pray, that God would so overrule the world and all in it, subdue the flesh, and restrain Satan, order all things, bestow and bless all means of grace, and quicken us to watchfulness in the use of them, that we and all his people may by his providence be kept from being tempted to sin; or, if tempted, that by his Spirit we may be powerfully supported and enabled to stand in the hour of temptation; or when fallen, raised again and recovered out of it, and have a sanctified use and improvement thereof: that our sanctification and salvation may be perfected, Satan trodden under our feet, and we fully freed from sin, temptation, and all evil, forever.

This explanation by the Westminster Assembly is the fruit of their adhering to the principle of Sola Scriptura, so that they explain the more obscure parts of the Word of God by other clearer parts. Their reward for thus holding to this important principle is a clear understanding of the meaning of this sixth petition of the Lord's Prayer. The Roman Catholic Church, on the other hand, by her rejection of Sola Scriptura receives as her reward a further plunging into darkness away from the light of God's Word, obscuring that Word in this case by her own faulty translation.

Endnotes

1. Harriet Sherwood, 'Led not into temptation: pope approves change to Lord's Prayer', *The Guardian* 6 June 2019, www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jun/06/led-not-into-temptation-pope-approves-change-to-lords-prayer, accessed 22 October 2019.

2. 'Second person' means 'you', and here it is singular. The aorist tense is often translated as past action. However it is not primarily concerned with time, but with 'aspect' or 'kind' of action and is used to express an action as a whole. The aorist looks at the action from the outside, as it were, as an overall, completed event. (On the other hand, the present or the im-

perfect tenses look at the action from the inside, as an ongoing event.) The Greek subjunctive is generally used for hypothetical statements (as in English), but it may also be used to express a prohibition when coupled with the aorist tense and the negative particle μή, in which case it has the meaning, 'do not at all do this', or 'do not begin to do this'.

3. Ezekiel Hopkins, *The Lord's Prayer, And, the Doctrine of the Two Covenants* (London, England: Religious Tract Society, 1799), p. 148.

4. Ibid.



SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

THE SERMON PREACHED AT THE 188TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY

by Dr David Allen
Senior Deputation Speaker (*retired*)

EDITED FOR PUBLICATION

Please turn with me in the Word of God to John 5:39: ‘Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.’ The Lord Jesus Christ had healed an impotent man—an invalid—at the pool of Bethesda but because He had healed this man on a Sabbath day the Jews sought to slay Him. In the discourse which followed, the Lord Jesus Christ claimed absolute equality with God the Father. Indeed, between verses 17 and 29 we have one of the most profound portions of Holy Scripture, in which the Lord Jesus Christ makes seven remarkable claims concerning Himself and then provides four further witnesses to the validity of those claims.

By way of introduction I mention just three of Jesus’s claims regarding Himself

The **first** claim He makes is in verse 17:

‘My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.’ In this one verse the Lord Jesus Christ claims absolute equality with God the Father. There cannot be any misunderstanding of His words, no mistaking the force of His language here. In this one utterance Christ places Himself on the same level as God the Father, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father. His accusers fully understood the force of the Lord’s statement—that He was making Himself equal with God—and at once their anger was kindled against Him: ‘the Jews sought the more to kill him’ (verse 18).

The **second** statement to which I draw your attention is in verse 19, ‘Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he

doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. This can be compared with verse 30, 'I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me'. It is clear in these verses that the Lord is claiming that He cannot act independently of the Father's will. Christ's will is absolutely one with that of God the Father. His will is in perfect union with that of the Father. In John 6.38 our Lord says, 'For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me', and in John 10.30 He says, 'I and *my* Father are one'. His first recorded utterance was, 'wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?' (Luke 2.49). And again in the wilderness He declared, 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me' (John 4.34). Thus we see that Christ's will is absolutely one with that of God the Father.

The **third** statement of our Lord to which I draw your attention is in John 5.21, 'For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth *them*; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will'. In this verse our Lord claims divine sovereignty. The healing of the impotent man was a clear demonstration of His power and His absolute sovereignty. Chapter 5 begins with the pool of Bethesda where lay a great multitude of impotent men, but the Lord only healed one. He fixed His eye upon that one man and healed that one man, singling that one man out. He heals whom He will.

After these three statements where our Saviour claims equality with God the Father He gives four witnesses to His equality. He **declares** in verse 31, 'If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true' (also see 2 Corinthians 13.1 and Deuteronomy 19.15). He has borne witness of Himself and now He cites others who bear witness of Him. First

He speaks of God the Father (verse 37), 'the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape'. God the Father witnessed of Him 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased' (Matthew 3.17).

The **second** witness whom He cites is John Baptist in John 5.33–35, 'Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.'

Then He brings forth a **third** witness: the miracles which He had performed. In verse 36 He says, 'But I have greater witness than *that* of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me'. The very miracles that He performed bore witness that He had been sent by God the Father. Indeed, Nicodemus had to confess, 'we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him' (John 3.2).

In spite of the extravagant claims of many of our day we do not witness those biblical miracles. We do not see the leper instantly cleansed; we do not witness the paralysed and lame restored in an instant; we do not see those born blind receiving their sight; we do not see the dead being raised to life.

The **fourth** witness He cites is the Holy Scriptures (5.39): 'Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me'. This last witness is without question of utmost importance. John Baptist has long since passed away. The miracles of Christ are no longer before our eyes. The voice of the Father no longer thunders from the

heavens. But the Scriptures remain, and the Scriptures testify of Christ. The Holy Scriptures, given by inspiration by God, are the final court of appeal. Above them there is no higher authority; beyond them there is no appeal; after them there is no further witness.

Thus we turn to our text in John 5.39. I would draw attention to three points: first we look at the Scriptures; second we search the Scriptures; and finally we look at the Saviour in those Scriptures.

LOOK AT THE SCRIPTURES

First then ‘Search the scriptures.’ The fifth aim of the Trinitarian Bible Society is ‘To uphold the Bible as the inspired, inerrant Word of God.’ The Bible is no common book. The Scriptures are **inspired**.

The apostle Peter writes in 2 Peter 1.21, ‘For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.’ As David, Moses, Solomon, the prophets and the apostles took their quills in hand and began to write upon those ancient papyrus scrolls, something happened to them. Peter tells us they were moved by the Holy Ghost: the third Person of the Blessed and Holy Trinity took hold of those godly men and moved them and bore them along and carried them. The Greek word for moved in 2 Peter 1 is the same as that in Acts 27.15 translated ‘drive’ in referring to a ship driven by the wind. Here is the apostle Paul being carried to Rome in that sailing ship that is caught in a tremendous gale. The captain tries to hold that boat into the wind but to no avail. He realises that to save that boat and all that are on that boat he has to let that boat to be taken by the wind and carried in the direction

that the wind would take it.

In like manner when the Holy Spirit came upon those men of God, He took hold of them, moved them and drove them in the direction that He Himself would have them go. Thus the apostle Paul could declare to Timothy (2 Timothy 3.16) that all Scripture—not some of it, not most of it: all Scripture—is given by inspiration of God.

Yet this is not mechanical dictation. The Holy Spirit carried those godly men along; He drove them and bore them along but in such a manner that He used their individual gifts, intellectual abilities and personalities. Thus we are left with, for example, the rough simplicity of the Gospel according to Mark, the wonderful poetry and harmonic melody of the Psalms of David, and the majestic eloquence of the apostle Paul: yet their words all inspired.

The **second** thing I want to say about the Scriptures is about their **purity**. God, we are told in Titus 1.2, cannot lie. God alone is truth and cannot inspire falsehood; He cannot inspire error, for God is truth.

The Psalmist wrote in Psalm 12.6, ‘The words of the LORD *are* pure words: *as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.’ The picture that is brought before us is that of a silversmith who receives ore from the mine. He makes a furnace in the earth and puts a crucible of the ore in that furnace. The furnace is heated up to 962 degrees Celsius, at which temperature the silver and the ore melt. The silversmith takes that crucible and removes the dross then puts that crucible back in the furnace and once more heats it up. This is repeated seven times so that the silver that emerges is the purest, the finest silver imaginable, without any trace whatsoever of base metal or dross; it is silver of silver.

Now says the Psalmist ‘The words of the LORD *are* pure words: *as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.’ Agur declares in Proverbs 30.5, ‘Every word of God *is* pure’; not some of it, not most of it, but every word of it. From ‘In the beginning’ in Genesis 1.1 to the last amen at the end of Revelation 22.21, every word of God is pure. That is why a man like William Tyndale would not alter one syllable of God’s Word against his conscience.

The **third** thing I mention concerning the Scriptures is their **preservation**. Having read the articles of faith of many Christian societies (including many Bible societies) and many churches, it is clear to me that they do not hold to this vital doctrine. Often these statements of faith read something like: ‘We believe the Scriptures as originally given are inerrant.’ That sounds fine; but what they mean is that the only pure Scriptures are the actual handwritten manuscripts produced by the hand of Moses, David, the prophets, and the apostles—manuscripts that we no longer have. However, what we do have are accurate, meticulous copies of those original autographa. The Westminster Confession of Faith, the Baptist Confession of 1689, the Savoy Declaration of 1659, all agree with Westminster’s statement (1.8) regarding the copies of the original manuscripts that were available to them.

The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which, at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and, by His singular care and providence, **kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic**. (emphasis added)

One of the gifts the Lord promised to His church was scribes (Matthew 23.34): men who meticulously, painstakingly, accurately copied the Word of God from generation to generation. Consider for a moment Isaiah 59.21, ‘As for me, this *is* my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that *is* upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.’ In this remarkable declaration Jehovah Himself promises two things. **First**, the church will always have the presence of the Holy Spirit; and **second**, the church will always have the pure Word of the living God.

Consider the end of the glorious hundredth Psalm. Verse 5 says, ‘For the LORD *is* good; his mercy *is* everlasting; and his truth *endureth* to all generations.’ According to a multitude of Greek scholars in our day and generation, the church did not have the pure Word of God in the New Testament for the better part of 1,400 years. Thirty-five generations of Christians lacked the pure Word of God until Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus—manuscripts that had been squirrelled away for centuries—came to light. The Reformers were bereft of the pure Word of God; the Puritans would not have had the pure Word of God; those mighty preachers of the eighteenth century did not have the pure Word of God. Even Spurgeon lacked the pure Word of God.

I prefer to believe my Bible: ‘his truth *endureth* to all generations’ (Psalm 100.5). We believe that the Holy Scripture has endured to all generations, and that its truth is found in the Hebrew Masoretic Text of the Old Testament and the Greek Received Text of the New Testament—texts which underlie the English

Authorised (King James) Version and all those great Reformation Bibles of Europe and which have been available to God's people throughout their generations.

First then we have the Scriptures: their inspiration, their purity and their preservation.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

Second, we have the search. Note that the Lord Jesus Christ did not say read the Scriptures, profitable as that is. Nor did He say memorise the Scriptures—valuable indeed but not what He said. He said 'search the Scriptures': search the Scriptures as you would search for hidden treasure in the earth; dig down deep and discern what lies beneath the depths. These things do not lie on the surface to be discovered by the casual reader. They lie like a hidden treasure very deep and accessible only with the help of the Holy Spirit.

There is a grammatical problem with the verb 'search' and I point those interested in the full treatment to read the article by Larry Brigden in *Quarterly Record* 619 beginning on page 12. The question is this: is the verb 'search' in the indicative mood—a statement—or is it in the imperative mood—a command? The New International Version reads 'You diligently study the Scriptures'; the New English Bible reads 'you study the Scriptures diligently'; the Revised Standard Version, the New King James Version, the English Standard Version, the New American Standard Bible all have it in the indicative, as the statement 'you search the Scriptures'. Men like Erasmus, Matthew Poole, John Bengel, Philip Doddridge, William Hendrickson, and even Dr John Gill think that the verb is in the indicative, implying

that this was something that they were already doing.

But was it instead an imperative—a command? Men like Augustine, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Bishop Ryle, and Bishop Wordsworth believed it to be a command, 'search the Scriptures'. Here is Christ commanding them to search the Scriptures. The imperative mood seems best to fit the context. If they were in the habit of diligently searching the Scriptures, as these modern translations would have us believe, surely those searchers would have found that by seeking they shall find. Yet our Lord in the previous verse had just declared, 'ye have not his word abiding in you.' I believe the imperative mood is more appropriate; it is a command from the Lord Himself to 'search the Scriptures'.

The force of this search is that we are to concentrate all our attention upon the Word of God, diligently searching and examining each expression, tracing every verse and word. It is as if the Lord was saying to them, Go and search your Old Testament Scriptures; examine them, become deeply acquainted with them. And if you do that you will soon discover that the Scriptures—those same Old Testament Scriptures—testify of Me. If you wish to know God the Father's testimony of Me, go and search your own Scriptures for these are the Scriptures of truth.

So first the Scriptures, second the search and third the Saviour.

THE SAVIOUR IN THE SCRIPTURES

The Jews of course had a very high view of Holy Scripture. The apostle Paul says that unto the Jews 'were committed the oracles of God' (Romans 3.2). They knew the letter of the law, so much so that the scribes counted the number of

each Hebrew letter in the Old Testament Scriptures and could tell you how many Alephs there were (42,377), how many Beths (38,218). They knew the oracles of God had been committed to them. They thought their knowledge of the Scriptures was in and of itself life giving. But to them it was a dead letter. Our Lord noted that the Jews believed that in the Scriptures they had eternal life, but that those very Scriptures ‘testify of me’ (John 5.39).

Just having the Scriptures does not give eternal life, but they do show the way to eternal life. The Old Testament Scriptures tell us of our Lord as one who would die for perishing sinners, as the only Mediator between God and men, as the only one through whom the Father can be approached. They speak of His wondrous perfections, His various offices, the sufficiency of His finished work. Apart from the Scriptures He cannot be known, and in them alone He is revealed. It is Jesus Christ who is the key that unlocks the Scriptures.

Consider prophecy for a moment. Genesis 3.15 informs us that He is to be of a seed of a woman—not of a seed of man, but of a woman. Isaiah teaches us that the mother of the great Immanuel is to be a virgin, and the Child thus born is the given Son whose name is Wonderful, Counsellor, Almighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. The Old Testament Scriptures single out Shem (Genesis 9.26–27), then Abraham (Genesis 12.3), then Isaac as he is distinguished from Ishmael (Genesis 17.20–21), and then Jacob, and from among the sons of Jacob the tribe of Judah out of whom shall come forth Shiloh and to whom shall be the gathering of the nations (Genesis 49.10). But the Scriptures are even more definite: the son of Jesse and of David would be the promised great King and Redeemer.

We might think, as did the wise men from the east, that Jerusalem would be His birthplace. But Micah knows differently and points out Bethlehem Ephrathah (Micah 5.2). And Hosea also tells us that He will be taken out of Egypt (Hosea 11.1). Malachi and Isaiah reveal to us that at His coming there will be a voice of one crying in the wilderness to make straight in the desert a highway for our God (Isaiah 40.3–4; Malachi 3.1). This God-Man will come as a shepherd (Isaiah 40.10–11; Ezekiel 34.23). He shall not cry nor lift up His voice but will quietly open the eyes of the blind and the ears of the deaf (Isaiah 35.6; 42.7). He will preach good tidings to the meek and liberty to the captives (Isaiah 61.1). But He will be despised and rejected of men (Isaiah 53.3). This Person will be Jerusalem’s King but will come to the city lowly, bringing not military might but salvation (Zechariah 9.9). His own familiar friend will lift up his heel against Him, and that for a mere thirty pieces of silver (Psalm 41.9; Zechariah 11.12). He will be smitten and suffer (Zechariah 13.7; Psalm 22.14, 17; Psalm 34.10).

The Lord Jesus Christ commands us to search the Scriptures. We are not to be content with a cursory reading of them nor with a mere head knowledge of the Scriptures. We need to seek the help of the Holy Spirit that He might open the eyes of our understanding and show us wondrous things out of His law. The command was to the Jews and to you and me: ‘search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me’ (John 5.39). They point to Jesus.

APPLICATION

By way of application let me make three points. **First** of all I have noticed,

especially over the last five years, that there is an increasing tendency in Reformed churches for ministers to preach sermons in their entirety from the Old Testament and not once mention the Lord Jesus Christ. Sermons like that would be well received in a Jewish synagogue but should never be tolerated in the church! Sometimes I look at my watch and note how long it takes the preacher to mention the name of Jesus Christ. Sadly there are times I listen right through to the end of the sermon and not once is my Saviour mentioned.

Consider the journey on the road to Emmaus. We read, ‘And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself’ (Luke 24.27). From page after page of the Old Testament our Lord opens to them the things concerning Himself. Then when meeting with His disciples He reiterated this: ‘all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me’ (v. 44). He opened their minds that they might understand what the Old Testament Scriptures were saying about Him. If you do not see Christ in the Old Testament Scriptures, you are not understanding the Scriptures at all.

Lest you think it was only to Jewish disciples, think of the eunuch from Ethiopia. He holds in his hand the parchment scrolls of the Old Testament open to Isaiah 53 and asks Philip ‘of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?’ (Acts 8.34). In answer, ‘Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus’ (v. 35).

When the apostle Paul invited the Jews to his prison home in Rome, we read, ‘he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus,

both out of the law of Moses, and *out of* the prophets, from morning till evening’ (Acts 28.23).

My dear preacher friends, let us have that persistence of the apostle Paul, who when he went to Corinth determined not to know anything among them ‘save Jesus Christ, and him crucified’ (1 Corinthians 2.2). Let us preach to all the unsearchable riches of Christ. Those sermons that you have prepared that never mention Christ: throw them on the fire. Seek the help of the Holy Spirit that you might preach Jesus Christ.

Now a point of application for believers, especially for those who have to endure Christless preaching; tolerate it no more. Emulate those Greeks who went to Philip desiring, ‘Sir, we would see Jesus’ (John 12.21). Believers who face all the trials and tribulations of life, who have to endure in the workplace the blasphemous hatred of this godless generation: they need to learn of Jesus Christ who ‘himself hath suffered being tempted’ and ‘is able to succour them that are tempted’ (Hebrews 2.18).

Then a final point of application to the Trinitarian Bible Society. I was converted in 1968—fifty-one years ago. Prior to my conversion I had never set a foot inside a place of worship. On 17 December 1965 someone put in my hand a Bible; and I thank God it was an Authorised Version Bible. They challenged me to read the Bible, so I began for the first time in my life to read the Word of God. Day after day I was reading the Word of God and studying it; and one day in April 1968 I was convicted of my sin and of my need of the Saviour. I hadn’t attended church during those three years; that conviction came through the reading of the Word of God applied by the Holy Spirit. I then sought a church where the Word of God was faithfully preached and eventually

found one that believed and taught the Word. It was they who introduced me to the work of the Trinitarian Bible Society.

I have been a supporter of TBS for the past fifty-one years and I believe with all my heart that every evangelical church throughout the British Isles should prayerfully and practically support the Trinitarian Bible Society. Though we are encouraged by the numbers gathered here today, yet this building should be packed to the rafters with people supporting the work of the Trinitarian Bible Society. Why then is there so little interest among Christian churches in our land regarding the work of the Trinitarian Bible Society?

At the back of the Annual Report and every issue of the *Quarterly Record* and most of our articles you will see the six aims of the Trinitarian Bible Society. The third aim is, 'To be instrumental in bringing light and life, through the Gospel of Christ, to those who are lost in sin and in the darkness of false religion and unbelief'. The fourth aim is, 'To uphold the doctrines of reformed Christianity, bearing witness to the equal and eternal deity of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, One God in three Persons.' Those two aims are the reason why we take our uncompromising stand for the Authorised Version and for the underlying Hebrew and Greek manuscripts upon which it is based. Modern English Bibles and the majority of foreign language Bibles of the last one hundred and more years are deficient in their doctrine of the Godhead and of the deity of Christ. The teachings of 1 Timothy 3.16 'God was manifest in the flesh', and Revelation 22.13 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last' are corrupted or missing from so many modern Bibles. I would encourage you to obtain a copy

of *The Textual Key to the New Testament* which lists more than six hundred such corruptions.

We take our uncompromising stand because we believe that these modern versions are defective, particularly when it comes to the doctrine of the Person and the Work of the Lord Jesus Christ and of the Trinity. It is absolutely vital that this Society continues to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. It is vital and necessary in these dark and fearful days of declension and apostasy that this Society defends the underlying texts of the Authorised Version and exposes the errors of the modern versions. But we must not lose sight of the Society's third aim; 'To be instrumental in bringing light and life, through the Gospel of Christ, to those who are lost in sin and in the darkness of false religion and unbelief'.

As I close let us consider the Lord Jesus Christ:

- the chiefest among ten thousand,
- the altogether lovely [One],
- the bright and morning star,
- the Alpha and the Omega,
- the one mediator between God and men,
- the way, the truth and the life,
- the One in whom the Father was pleased that all fulness should dwell,
- the brightness of His glory,
- the express image of His Person.

May Jesus Christ have the pre-eminence and be all and in all. Let us resolve as a Society that Jesus Christ shall be at the centre and the circumference of each and of every activity that this Society engages in. Our Lord commands us, 'search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me' (John 5.39). Amen.



UK Auxiliary Report

by Mr J. P. Sayers

Member of the Society's General Committee

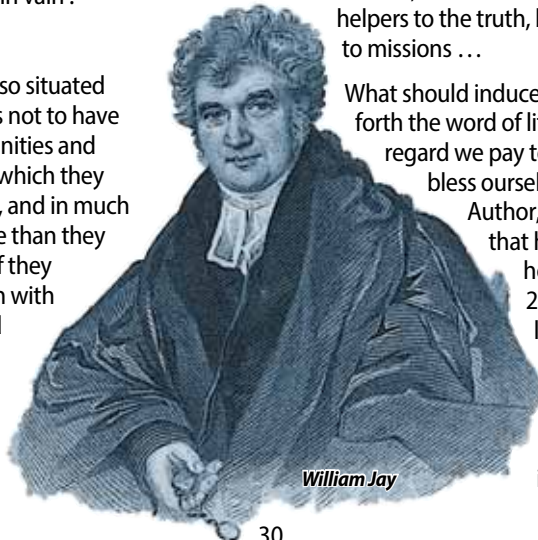
The Society was originally formed in 1831 'For the Glory of God and the Increase of His Kingdom through the circulation of Protestant or uncorrupted versions of the Word of God'. Around the same time, the nineteenth century minister William Jay, who died in 1853 after a long pastorate in the city of Bath, wrote a short exposition of Philippians 2.16: 'Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain'.

Jay wrote,

There are few so situated and limited, as not to have some opportunities and influences by which they may be useful, and in much greater degree than they are aware of, if they will seize them with simplicity, and diligence, and prayer. The talents of men are various;

but the servant who has only one talent will be condemned if he wraps it up in a napkin. When we cannot do much individually, we can do something by joining with others, and recommending and aiding those institutions which aim at the diffusion of the cause of Christ. We cannot translate the Scriptures into other tongues; but we can circulate them. We are not at liberty to go abroad ourselves; but we can be fellow-helpers to the truth, by contributing to missions . . .

What should induce us to hold forth the word of life? Interest. The regard we pay to the Gospel will bless ourselves; for, like its Author, it says, Them that honour me I will honour [1 Samuel 2.30]. We seldom labour in vain in this work; but if our efforts should prove successful, in some way



William Jay

or other they will return into our own bosom. The most respected and the most happy Christians are the unselfish, the active, the fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

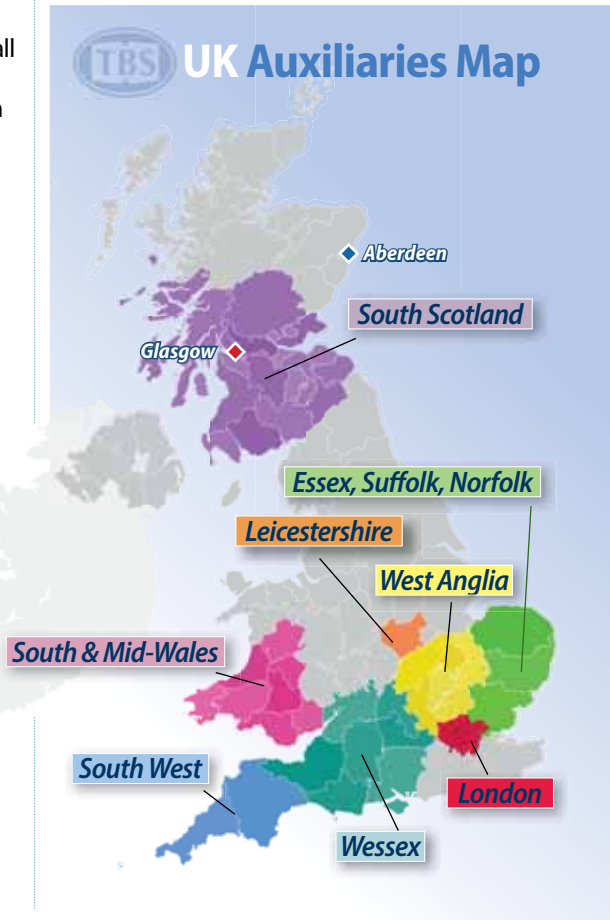
Benevolence. The Gospel is not only wonderful, but all-important. It is the Gospel of our salvation. It is the bread, the water of life. For dying souls it is the only remedy. It has done more already for even the public welfare of nations than all the civil institutions of men: and by this alone will the wilderness and solitary place be made glad, and the desert rejoice, and blossom as the rose.¹

Regular readers of this magazine may recall that at the close of an article on the work of the Wessex Auxiliary in QR623, the then General Secretary of the Society wrote,

If there are others in the UK and wherever we have branches who (after prayerful consideration) would like to be involved in similar activities in their areas, please contact the Society's offices. Where possible we will then seek to put such individuals in contact with others in their region who have an interest in forming a TBS Auxiliary. It is the Society's desire to see TBS Auxiliaries, and individual local churches and assemblies, engaged in the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, 'which are able to make [men and women, boys and girls] wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus' (2 Timothy 3.15).²

It is with thankfulness to the Lord that, over the past year, a number of men have come forward whom the Lord has exercised in the matter of the distribution of His Word and in the forming of an

auxiliary in their region of the United Kingdom. As this article goes to press arrangements are being made for inaugural meetings of some of these new auxiliaries in 2020 if the Lord will. The purpose of this report is to bring the Society's members up to date with these developments, and to seek their continued prayers for all auxiliaries as they commence and continue the distribution of the Word of God to needy sinners across our land and nation. For reference, see the map adjoining this article which highlights the geographical locations of each auxiliary.



Existing Auxiliaries

West Anglia

- **Regional area:** Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire
- **Population:** 3.3m
- **Areas for distribution DV:** 1,539 schools and colleges, 10 prisons, 1,024 care homes
- **Activity:** this auxiliary was formed in 2007 and expanded from Beds and Herts to the wider region in 2017. The Committee has been strengthened in recent years and distribution expanded to include prisons, care homes and doctor's surgeries. A series of large billboard posters with Scripture texts were displayed around Luton some years ago. A regular newsletter is produced, and the auxiliary has its own area within the Society's website (www.tbsbibles.org/westanglia). An AGM is held in February and a public prayer meeting later in the year.

Wessex

- **Regional area:** Wiltshire, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Dorset, Hampshire, Berkshire
- **Population:** 7.25m
- **Areas for distribution DV:** 3,442 schools and colleges, 13 prisons, 2,540 care homes
- **Activity:** over the past nine years since the commencement of the work much of the focus has been around schools and prisons and the placement of railway station posters. In more recent years this has been expanded to include care homes and hospitals. On an occasional basis there has been distribution in public areas

through supporting churches. A newsletter is produced in the summer each year, and the auxiliary has its own area within the Society's website (www.tbsbibles.org/wessex). An AGM is held in January each year, and the sermons preached at this meeting are available for listening or download on the Wessex website. Two public prayer meetings are held annually in spring and autumn.

Leicester

- **Regional area:** Leicestershire
- **Population:** 690,000
- **Areas for distribution DV:** 320 schools and colleges, 3 prisons, 288 care homes
- **Activity:** this auxiliary is believed to be one of the longest standing of its type, going back well over a century. The primary distribution work in recent years has been to schools, with the annual mailing of a letter with a Bible to head teachers. The Lord has seen fit to grant many openings through this, including into schools of other faiths.

Aberdeen

- **Regional area:** City of Aberdeen
- **Population:** 241,000
- **Activity:** an AGM is held each year and a collection taken in support of the Society



Expanding Auxiliaries

Glasgow

(expanding to south Scotland)

This auxiliary has been based in the city of Glasgow for a number of years, but in 2018 a group of men came forward with the present auxiliary chairman to explore the possibility of expanding the region of operation. If the Lord will, a meeting to launch the expanded auxiliary has been arranged for Saturday 8 February 2020 at 11.00am at The GLO Centre, Motherwell, near Glasgow. The speaker on that occasion will be the Rev. Craig Dennison, a Deputation Speaker for the Society, DV.

■ **Expanded area:** Argyll and Bute, Clackmannanshire, Dumfries and Galloway, East Ayrshire, East Dunbartonshire, East Lothian, East Renfrewshire, City of Edinburgh, Falkirk, Fife, Glasgow City, Inverclyde, Midlothian, North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire, Perth and Kinross, Renfrewshire, Scottish Borders, South Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire, Stirling, West Dunbartonshire and West Lothian.

■ **Population:** 4.2m

■ **Areas for distribution DV:** 2,580 schools and colleges, 10 prisons, 864 care homes

Croydon, Brixton and Bromley

(expanding to Greater London)

This is one of the oldest auxiliaries still in operation. In the autumn of 2019, a meeting was held at William Tyndale House including men from the existing



auxiliary and a good number of others from across the London supporting churches to discuss the expansion of the existing auxiliary to include the whole of Greater London. This Greater London Auxiliary will have an inaugural meeting on 25 April 2020 at 2.30pm at TBS headquarters.



■ **Regional area:** Greater London boroughs of Barking, Barnet, Bexley, Brent, Bromley, Camden, City of London, Croydon, Ealing, Enfield, Greenwich, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Haringey, Harrow, Havering, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Kingston upon Thames, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Newham, Redbridge, Richmond-upon-Thames, Southwark, Sutton, Tower Hamlets,

Waltham Forest, Wandsworth, Westminster, all of Greater London and the City of London areas.

- **Population:** 8.8m
- **Areas for distribution DV:** 2360 schools and colleges, 10 prisons, 1359 care homes

New Auxiliaries

South and Mid-Wales

An inaugural meeting was held to launch this auxiliary on 31 July 2019. A good number of supporting churches were represented, and Mr G. D. Buss, Chairman of the Society's General Committee, preached the sermon.



- **Regional area:** Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot, Newport, Pembrokeshire, Powys, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Swansea, Torfaen, and Vale of Glamorgan.
- **Population:** 2.4m
- **Areas for distribution DV:** 1,156 schools and colleges, 4 prisons, 760 care homes

Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk

In the early part of 2018 a group of brethren came forward to propose the commencement of an auxiliary in eastern England. There were a good number of supportive churches at the investigative meeting across a number of denominations. If the Lord will, an inaugural meeting will be held on 1 February 2020 at The Community Association Centre, Frinton-on-Sea. The Rev. Edward Malcolm from St Mary's Church of England (Continuing), Reading, is engaged to preach on that occasion.

- **Regional area:** Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk
- **Population:** 3.1m
- **Areas for distribution DV:** 1,877 schools and colleges, 3 prisons, 1,079 care homes

South West Auxiliary

During the early summer of 2019 a new auxiliary was formed, supported by a number of churches across the region. If the Lord will, an inaugural meeting will be held on Saturday 25 January at Beacon Park Baptist Church, when the Rev. J. Thackway is expected to preach.

- **Regional area:** Devon and Cornwall
- **Population:** 1.7m
- **Areas for distribution DV:** 689 schools and colleges, 3 prisons, 738 care homes

We would encourage all our supporters to attend these inaugural meetings in their region.

If the Lord will, we will be able to form further auxiliaries in the months to come

and hope to bring you news of them in due course. We seek the Lord's guidance and direction in all these things, remembering that He has said, 'Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass' (Psalm 37.5). Our greatest desire is that the Lord would use His Word as it is distributed amongst the needy people of this country, and that it might be made a blessing to them by the work of the Holy Spirit alone.

It is rare that we hear anything of what the Lord has done through the distribution of His Word but it is always encouraging when we have an enquiry from anywhere for Scriptures to be supplied. We recently had an email from an immigration removal centre in the south of England. The chaplain there, with whom we have had a relationship for several years, wrote in an email:

We seem to have had a surge of Iranians while I was away on leave. There are now 36, of which 26 state they are Christians. We have run out of Farsi Scriptures and other literature. I feel like I've asked a lot of you lately, but any chance you can help us with this?

This email was received almost to the day that the Farsi New Testament was received into stock at our London Headquarters, the fruit of many years of labour by the translator and others. We gladly agreed to send fifty copies. However, the chaplain came back and said that he was going to be studying John chapter 3 with them that evening, and would it be possible to send over an electronic copy so that this could be printed out in time for the meeting. Again we were able to help, and the meeting went ahead that evening using a reliable translation of the Word of God.

We trust that the Lord will continue to bless the work of auxiliaries as He has



done for over 180 years since the first one began in Yeovil in 1834. May the new auxiliaries be granted new openings in their regions, 'that the word of the Lord may have *free* course, and be glorified' (2 Thessalonians 3.1).

**'Now unto the King
eternal, immortal,
invisible, the only wise
God, be honour and glory
for ever and ever. Amen'.**

1 Timothy 1.17

Endnotes

1. William Jay, *Morning Exercises for The Closet: Every Day of the Year*, ninth edition, vol. 2 (London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co., 1835) pp. 182–183.
2. TBS *Quarterly Record* no. 623, April to June 2018, p. 14.

The Treasury

From **David J. Broome**

Resources Director

The Word of God tells us of the apostle Paul's determination that Christ should be at the very centre of his ministry (cf. 1 Corinthians 2.2, Galatians 6.14, Philippians 3.8–10); we were reminded of this by Dr David Allen (recently retired Senior Deputation Speaker) at the Society's Annual General Meeting on 21 September 2019. (Please see this sermon on page 22 of this QR.) We trust that this noble determination remains true of the Trinitarian Bible Society today. Indeed, it is integral in our constitutional Aim to circulate 'the HOLY SCRIPTURES, which are given by inspiration of God, and are able to make men wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus'.¹

How favoured were those two disciples who journeyed with Christ to Emmaus on the Resurrection evening, when 'beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself' (Luke 24.27). Christ Himself says concerning the Scriptures that 'they are they which testify of me' (John 5.39). If we have spiritually enlightened eyes and awakened hearts, the Holy Bible will, under the Holy Spirit's influence, inevitably lead us to Christ, even where there may be no direct mention of Him.

This is not surprising, given that Christ is the Word made flesh (John 1.14). The Society believes that the whole Bible is the Word of Christ, who is the living Word (therefore we do not publish Bibles with Jesus's words in red letters).

But spiritually opened eyes and exercised hearts will also be led to Christ by the 'book of nature', which is again unsurprising, given that He is the Creator of all things (Colossians 1.16) and has left His glorious stamp on all creation, even though sinful man has marred it. This was impressed on me afresh this summer whilst staying in a Highland lodge in Scotland, where a pair of swallows were raising their young in the eaves. These remarkable little birds are mentioned four times in Scripture (Psalm 84.3, Proverbs 26.2, Isaiah 38.14 and Jeremiah 8.7) and much could be written about them. But it was immediately evident that nothing had changed in their behaviour since Old Testament times, when the swallow found 'a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, *even* thine altars, O LORD of hosts' (Psalm 84.3); they still nest high up on buildings. By contrast we read of Jesus that 'the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head' (Matthew 8.20). Even the created

birds have a greater provision from their Creator than He made for Himself when He trod this earth and '... being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself ...' (Philippians 2.8).

What was also remarkable was the way that these swallows knew that their young needed to be helped to grow and mature quickly as they would soon have to make a long, arduous flight to southern Africa, crossing deserts and other challenging environments. Whereas the parents had been continually flying in with food it was soon evident that they were gradually drawing the youngsters away from the nest to feed, first to the rafters and then ultimately to fledge and leave the nest altogether. We read of similar behaviour in Deuteronomy 32.11–12, 'As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the LORD alone did lead him, and *there was* no strange god with him'. As Jacob and Israel of old (to whom this passage in context refers) were led, so in this twenty-first century Christ is still leading forth His swallows (cf. Isaiah 38.14), we might say, on a spiritual migration: those in whom He has wrought the new birth, drawing them away from their natural nest in this world, working in them that growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (cf. 2 Peter 3.18), strengthening them with all might in the inner man (cf. Ephesians 3.16) and providing for all their needs (cf. Philippians 4.19) in the arduous journey through this 'waste howling wilderness' (Deuteronomy 32.10), until they reach the eternal summer of heaven (Revelation 22.5).

Just as the Lord provides for His people personally, so He does for the Society's work. We do not carry out traditional fundraising (although from time to time

we do make specific financial needs known to our supporters). The Society seeks to depend upon the gracious provision of the Lord for all its needs in furthering the work for which it was established.

This is a position that the Society's membership has indicated support for. In responses to the recent Member Consultation, 58% (249 out of 429) said they 'strongly agree' and 26% said they 'somewhat agree' that they 'support the Society's policy of asking supporters for prayer but not directly asking for financial support'. Also, 67% (288 out of 429) strongly agree and 23% somewhat agree that 'the Society communicates its considerable ongoing financial needs clearly to its supporters'. We are very thankful for confirmation of our long-standing principle in this area, but we do detect a hint in the above figures, and more explicitly in some of the comments accompanying the answers, that we could be just a little less reticent in making the Society's financial needs known without breaking our principle.

On this subject of giving to the Society, there is a certain tension between the desirability of encouraging donations where the purpose is restricted by the donor (i.e. Restricted Funds), as opposed to the complete flexibility of unrestricted donations where the Society's Trustees can decide what the funds are used for (i.e. General Fund). Occasionally we get donations for uses that we cannot fulfil because we do not have any activity in that particular area or for projects where we have only very limited costs. In these circumstances we then need to consult the donor about what to do. We also have a large number of Restricted Funds to administer, which can be quite challenging in itself.

Therefore we would respectfully and gratefully discourage our supporters from restricting the use of their donations unless the Society has itself indicated the need for donations to specific projects, which we shall try to highlight a little more explicitly in future *Quarterly Records*. And like many charities, we shall more clearly communicate the caveat that the Society reserves the right to use the donation elsewhere if it is unable to use it for the purpose given, which will give us more flexibility. The Society highly values the prayerful and practical support of all its friends, that it may be used to God's glory and the advancement of His Kingdom, through the circulation throughout the world of faithful or uncorrupted versions of the Holy Scriptures.

The Society has five core activities; Translating, Publishing, Distributing, Promoting and Upholding. During 2018, the Society's worldwide costs for these activities were as follows (percentages are of worldwide Operating Expenditure).

- **Translating** (including Editorial)
£692,000 (45%)
- **Publishing & Distribution**
£472,000 (31%)
- **Promoting & Upholding**
£374,000 (24%)

You will note that some of the five core activities are merged together above. Due to the limitations of our current financial systems, there is room for improvement in our expenditure analysis. With the help of a new financial system—which we are currently in the process of selecting and hope to roll out worldwide across TBS during 2020—we plan to introduce new, more accurate and helpful ways of analysing the Society's expenditure across our five core activity areas and to specific projects. This will enable us to communicate more accurately with

our supporters about costs and specific financial needs.

In the meantime, it has been requested as part of the Member Consultation that an explanation be given in the *Quarterly Record* of what the costs of 'Promoting & Upholding' relate to. These costs deal with the furtherance of the following long-standing published aims of the Society.

- To promote Bible translations which are accurate and trustworthy, conforming to the Hebrew Masoretic Text of the Old Testament, and the Greek Textus Receptus of the New Testament, upon which texts the English Authorised Version is based.
- To uphold the doctrines of reformed Christianity, bearing witness to the equal and eternal deity of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, One God in three Persons.
- To uphold the Bible as the inspired, inerrant Word of God.

On a practical level, the costs arise from the effort to spread the Society's message principally through the following means, all of which form a core part of our work.

- The Society's Deputation Speakers and Senior Staff, who travel nationally and internationally, representing the Society by speaking at individual churches, conferences, etc.
- Promotion of new Scripture translations or revisions, both before, when and after they are published.
- Promotion of the Society's aims and principles by advertising, attendance at exhibitions and via electronic promotion.
- The *Quarterly Record* magazine.

If there are any other areas of the Society's financial or business arrangements that the Society's members would like to

see addressed in these Treasury articles, please do let us know. We seek, under God, to be good and faithful stewards of the resources that the Lord has graciously given for this work.

We seek that the Lord would indeed continue to be with those who so faithfully uphold the Society and its personnel in prayer (cf. Psalm 54.4); your prayers for the work are invaluable. We

also remain deeply thankful to all our members, supporters and friends for all their practical and financial partnership with us in this work. We also gratefully acknowledge receipt of anonymous gifts totalling £8,547.58 for the period July to September 2019.

Endnote:

1. Constitution of the Society, www.tbsbibles.org/page/SocietyConstitution

Mrs Ruth Berry

The oldest inhabitant of the Island of Guernsey, and almost certainly the oldest supporter of the Society, has recently been called home at the astonishing age of 109. Mrs Ruth Symons Berry maintained a great interest in the Society's work over many years, annually sending out hundreds of Golden Thoughts Calendars to many parts of the world and responding to letters of appreciation she received.

For over half a century Mrs Berry led ladies' Bible study meetings in dozens of churches throughout Guernsey, only retiring in her 101st year. Even at the age of 107 she was still remarkably active, offering a jar of her home-made jam (for which she had won numerous awards) to one of the Society's Deputation Speakers who paid her a visit. She was also well known for raising funds for various charities—a task that continued for forty years up to the year of her death.



Her love for God's Word was evident right down to the end. As vision grew dim, each day a calendar verse would be read to her three times over for her spiritual benefit. In one of her letters to the Society she concluded with the words, 'Thank you all for what you are doing for our Lord. God bless you all'.

It is with thanksgiving to the Lord that we honour this special lady in her home-going. 'And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them' (Revelation 14.13). We are very thankful that Mrs Berry's calendar work now continues through the dedicated labours of her daughter.

Graham Chewter, *Deputation Speaker*

The Word of God Among All Nations



Although certain phrases and expressions used in these letters may not be doctrinally accurate or in correct English, we reproduce the letters essentially as received, knowing that the Lord is using His Word to the glory of His Name and the furtherance of His Kingdom as the Scriptures are distributed among the nations of the world.



Europe



From Cornwall, England

The Royal Cornwall Show was held in July and we were able to continue our yearly ministry there. The show ministry

had a fall in the mud and am still feeling the effects in my left hip and arm. Although it was so cold we still had some serious talks with visitors often voicing their concern of just where our once Christian nation is going. These were not church members or even religious people but serious enquirers after the truth. The last day saw the weather warm again and five of us kept

busy speaking to individuals and small numbers. The free literature was taken and the little gold booklets were remarked upon by

several as being helpful, especially by the ladies who carried these in their handbags. A number of folk walked around the

Little Golden Books

display of TBS posters obviously reading these and at times

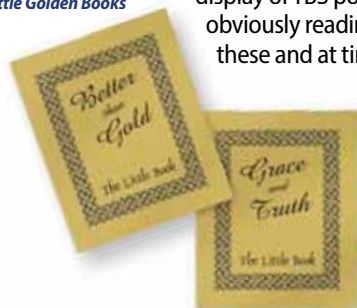


The ministry at the Royal Cornwall Show



Posters at the Royal Cornwall Show

has always been close to my heart and we now have a most reliable team of helpers; and we were also joined by Bible school students who were keen to share their faith with visitors to the show. Although children were kept away from our stand we had more adults who were ready to chat about spiritual things. The requests for Bibles from these people was in greater numbers than in any previous year. The first day was indeed an encouragement to each of us but the second day was one of the coldest and wettest that I had ever experienced. I



asked about a particular text which had been seen as a challenge or blessing. This also brought about serious witnessing and some even thanked us for being there witnessing so warmly. After over thirty years of witnessing with no support from any of the local churches I had wondered if this year might be my last but after such a blessed time God willing we shall be there in 2020. One farmer's wife sent me a letter saying how much she appreciated the witness and can't wait for the opportunity to be there next year. Let us pray that the Bibles taken may be used by the Lord to bring lost souls to faith in Him.

From a Christian college in Northern Ireland

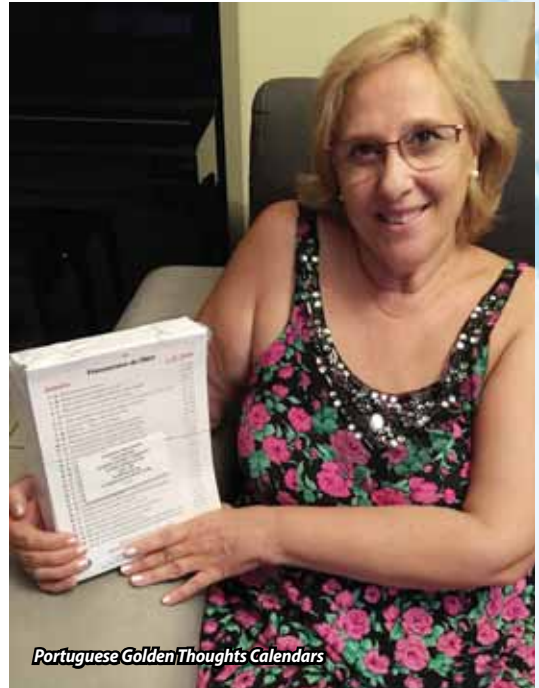
I acknowledge receipt of the free copies of Original Language Bibles and Westminster Reference Bibles kindly granted by Trinitarian Bible Society for our students. All year groups will receive a copy for use in the study of Hebrew and Greek throughout their three years with us. We greatly appreciate your contribution to each student in their study by providing these and I can assure you they will be an invaluable tool, both here and in their future ministry. Thank you for partnering with us in the training of God's people for ministry.

From the UK

I would like to thank you very sincerely for sending me the Scripture learning prize Bible. The child who received it was really delighted to get it and reads it regularly. Although we have no Sabbath School at present, she attends the services with her family. The Lord has promised that His Word will not return unto Him void but it will accomplish what He wants and it shall prosper in the thing whereto He sent it (cf. Isaiah 55.11). May the Lord bless your distribution of the Holy Scriptures.

From the UK

Dear TBS, thank you for my German Bible. I am trying to learn the German language in my lessons so it has been very good to have the Word of God in German. Thank you for all that the TBS do to translate and distribute the Word of God.



From Portugal

I have already started offering *some* calendars that I have kindly received from you. Last weekend I had the privilege of being in the city of Porto and took the opportunity to take some calendars with me. It was a busy weekend—I gave calendars that will go to churches near Aveiro, Porto, Braga, Senhora da Hora and Beja. As soon as I have more news to give you I will.



From Russia

Dear brothers and sisters! Welcome to you in love of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thanks for the literature you sent for the rehabilitation centre of drug addicts and alcoholics in which we are now serving. Five persons repented to God of their sins and took into their heart the Lord as the personal Saviour. We have distributed the Bibles which you sent. Thank God! We have lately many people who receive the Lord so we have a big need for Bibles in Russian language with large text, for people with bad vision. Please we ask for your prayers. We are praying for you. Let the Lord bless your service for God.



From Kenya

I am gratefully happy since I received your letter and the Golden Thoughts. I have already distributed these items to brethren. In particular we are happy because these grants items help people read the Bible every single day and this makes them better Christians. I will be grateful to hear from you and ask you to remember me for the 2020 edition of the Golden Thoughts.



From Nigeria

We are grateful for the very large quantity of Bibles received from TBS London. The distribution was first made in our church. We also gave out to pastors in the Reformed pastors fellowship. We also shared among many to our church plants, Sunday Schools, our Reformed



Africa



From Burkina Faso

Just a quick note to let you know what a blessing these calendars have been to us. We were able to quickly distribute them. You might know that our Christian schools are about 70 to 75% non-Christian students. Teachers were able to hand them out and some classes have one posted on the wall and read the verse for the day together. We also distributed them at local hospitals and in the military camp. We had teams going out on evangelism and they were so happy to have calendars to distribute. Burkina Faso needs the Word of the Lord and we thank you for this very kind gesture in making it possible for us to put the Word of God in people's hands. We feel it was timely that you chose us and we are praying that you will be encouraged to know the impact that you are having in this country. May our Lord Jesus bless your efforts!



Baptist Missionary International school, many of our neighbourhood churches and individuals who received them with joy.

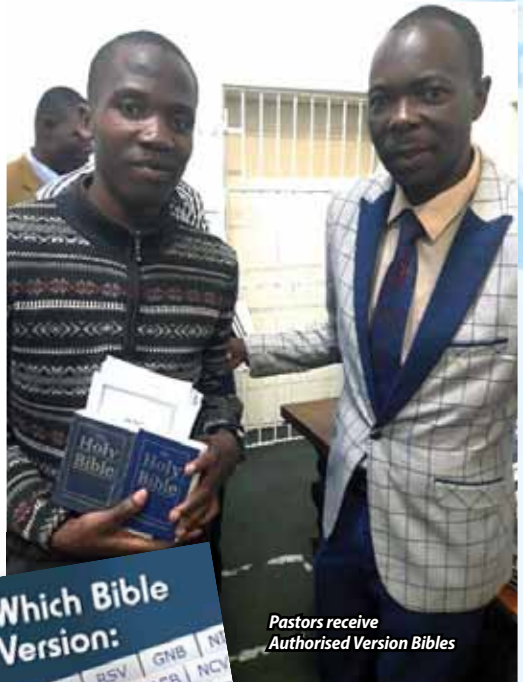


From Free Grace Evangelical Association in Zimbabwe

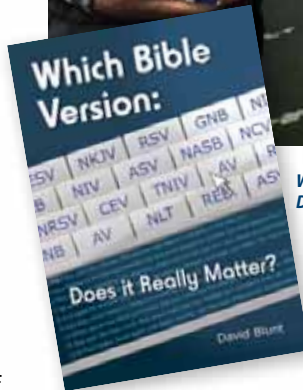
I am thankful for the Lord's gracious help and preservation throughout my recent mission to Zimbabwe. During the visit I spoke at meetings in Karoi, Kwekwe and Harare. These were areas not touched in my previous visit in 2017. The theme of each meeting was 'Building upon the foundation of true Biblical Doctrine'. These meetings were aimed at pastors and church leaders. Our burden was that of 2 Timothy 2.2: 'And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also'. At the end of each meeting those who registered received Trinitarian Bible Society (TBS) Ndebele Bibles, TBS Shona New Testaments, Bethel pulpit sermon booklets and TBS literature on Bible versions. A large quantity of English Bibles had arrived safely, but the process of gaining customs clearance had been too lengthy for their release to be in time. Therefore, allocations of KJV Bibles will be sent to each organising committee for distribution to the registered attendees.

The Lord's special help and presence was known, and it was very humbling to hear the testimonies given of the Lord's work in changing lives and ministries through the truth. One pastor spoke of how he is still using the KJV Bible received from the first FGEA meeting in Zimbabwe in 2010, as well as holding a very well-used copy of the TBS booklet *Which Bible Version?* He also spoke about how he had been using both the KJV and another modern version in the ministry until one service in which he was shown very clearly the Lord's way. He had prepared his message from the KJV

but at church he had the modern version in front of him. When he turned to a key text (first part of Luke 9.56), he found to his astonishment that his text was missing! He vowed after that only to use the KJV; and later when coming into contact with FGEA and TBS he then more fully understood why these modern versions were corruptions of the truth.



Pastors receive Authorised Version Bibles



Which Bible Version: Does it really matter?

Another had gone away from the February meeting and carefully searched out whether these things were so with a Berean spirit (Acts 17.10–12); on finding that they were indeed so he rejected the corrupt versions. He also said that the distribution of the TBS Scripture calendars had helped to bring a

discipline in reading the Bible within the church. At the meeting in Karoi a pastor stated that he had a congregation of 150 with various Bible versions, including that of the Jehovah's Witnesses. He requested help including extra copies of the TBS booklet *Which Bible Version?* to help in teaching the people about the need for a faithful version. During the Kwekwe meeting another senior pastor gasped in amazement when we studied Colossians 1.14 and he found the New International Version (NIV) had omitted the words 'through his blood'. These and other passages were used by God to open the eyes of many who had not realised the seriousness of the attacks upon the Holy Scriptures. We sought to testify of the great spiritual blessings from the pure Word and from the faithful teaching of the truth, as it is in Jesus.

Tens of thousands of TBS Bibles have been distributed across the Ndebele-speaking areas. Some pastors in outlying areas did not possess a Bible (or their only copy was incomplete) until FGEA distribution took place earlier this year. Some FGEA meetings in Matabeleland had 600 or more at each.



India



From India

Greetings to all in our Saviour Jesus Christ's precious and marvellous name. I have sent you a photograph with this letter. Last year I received less quantity of calendars so please I am expecting according to our needs 10,000 copies this year. Please also send Royal Rubys 100 and 50 big lettered Bibles. Previous stock which I received from you was distributed. I was admitted to hospital for one month due to

heat stroke. Our general election is completed; God give them good knowledge to rule. I remember you in our personal and congregational prayers. Please remember us in yours.

From India

Greetings from India. I received your Bible grant; thank you so much! God bless TBS. We are blessed by you so much and many will be blessed. Kindly grant more of your Bibles. Can you send more of your Hebrew/Greek and English Bibles as grants? I have received a calendar grant form and will fill it and send it to you. Please grant 300 English calendars, 200 Hebrew/Greek Bibles and many English Bibles for India. Since 2007 you are supporting work in India; it is so kind of you.



A woman receives Scriptures in India



The Hebrew/Greek Bibles have arrived



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Sort Code: 30-13-93

Swift ID Code/BIC: ARBUGB2L

Euro Account No.: 31529601

IBAN for Euro Account:

GB35 ARBU 3013 9331 5296 01

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The aims of the Society

To publish and distribute the Holy Scriptures throughout the world in many languages.

To promote Bible translations which are accurate and trustworthy, conforming to the Hebrew Masoretic Text of the Old Testament, and the Greek Textus Receptus of the New Testament, upon which texts the English Authorised Version is based.

To be instrumental in bringing light and life, through the Gospel of Christ, to those who are lost in sin and in the darkness of false religion and unbelief.

To uphold the doctrines of reformed Christianity, bearing witness to the equal and eternal deity of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, One God in three Persons.

To uphold the Bible as the inspired, inerrant Word of God.

For the Glory of God and the Increase of His Kingdom through the circulation of Protestant or uncorrupted versions of the Word of God.



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ISSN 0049-4712

