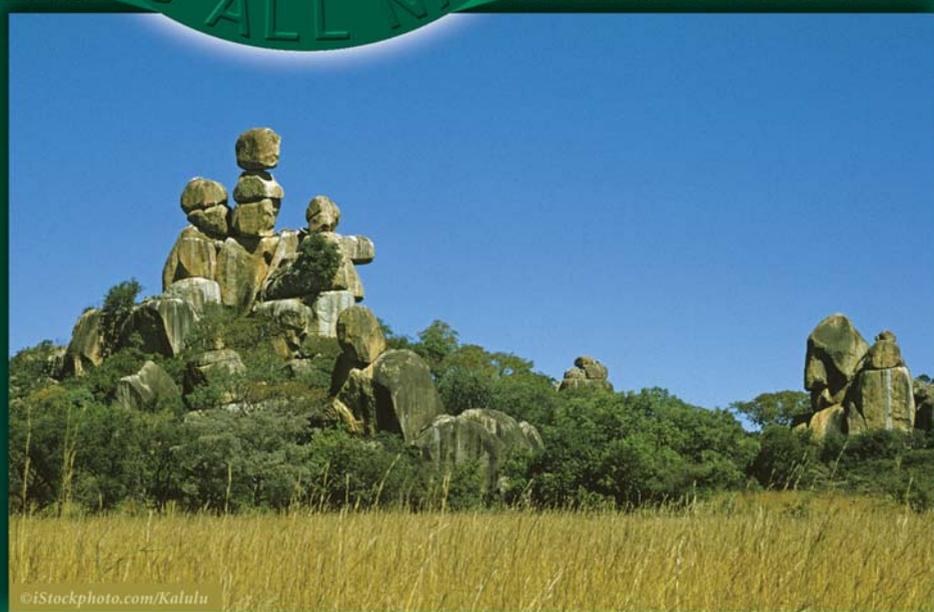


THE WORD OF GOD
AMONG ALL NATIONS



Quarterly Record



©iStockphoto.com/Kalulu

The Magazine of the Trinitarian Bible Society

JAN FEB MAR

2007





Trinitarian Bible Society

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

Officers of the Society

General Committee:

The Rev. M. H. Watts, *Chairman*

The Rev. B. G. Felce, M.A., *Vice-Chairman*

The Rev. G. Hamstra, B.A., M.Div., *Vice-President*

Mr. D. Oldham, *Vice-President*

Mr. C. A. Wood, *Vice-President*

Pastor R. A. Clarke, B.Sc., F.C.A., *Treasurer*

Mr. G. Bidston

Mr. G. R. Burrows, M.A.

Mr. G. D. Buss, B.Ed.

Pastor M. J. Harley

Mr. A. K. Jones

The Rev. E. T. Kirkland, B.A., Dipl.Th.

The Rev. J. MacLeod, M.A.

The Rev. D. Silversides

The Rev. J. P. Thackway

General Secretary:

Mr. D. P. Rowland

Assistant General Secretary:

Mr. D. Larlham

Editorial Manager:

Mr. G. W. Anderson

Office Manager:

Mr. J. M. Wilson

Warehouse Manager:

Mr. I. A. Docksey

Production Manager:

Mr. M. D. N. Thomas

Quarterly Record Production Team

General Secretary: D. P. Rowland

Assistant General Secretary: D. Larlham

Production Editor:

Dr. D. E. Anderson

Assistants to the Editor:

C. P. Hallihan, R. J. Cooper

Graphic Designer: P. Hughes

Circulation: J. M. Wilson



Quarterly Record

Issue Number: 578
January to March 2007

© Trinitarian Bible Society 2007
All rights reserved. The Trinitarian Bible Society permits
reprinting of articles found in our printed and online
Quarterly Record provided that prior permission is
obtained and proper acknowledgement is made.

Contents

Annual General Meeting - Advance Notice	2
The Treasury	2
From the Assistant General Secretary	3
A Word of Warning!	5
The Accuracy of the Authorised Version	8
A Temple of the Holy Spirit, part 2	14
The Love of the Truth: the 2006 AGM Sermon	17
Zimbabwe: Prayer for a People	30
The Ndebele Bible Revision Project	40
The New King James Version and the Song of Solomon	43
Membership Renewal	48
The Word of God Among All Nations	49

Advance Notice

176th Annual General Meeting

will be held, God willing,

at 1.00pm on Saturday, 22nd September 2007

at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Elephant and Castle,
London, SE1

B. A. Ramsbottom
Pastor at Bethel Strict Baptist Chapel, Luton
is expected to preach

Please note:

Copies of the Minutes of the Society's Annual General Meeting held on 23rd September 2006 have been despatched to Members. Should any other friends/supporters wish to receive a copy, please do not hesitate to contact: Mr. D. Larlham, Assistant General Secretary, Trinitarian Bible Society, Tyndale House, Dorset Road, London, SW19 3NN (d.larlham@trinitarianbiblesociety.org).

THE TREASURY

We warmly thank the donors of the following anonymous gifts which have been received since the previous *Quarterly Record* went to press: Inverness £20, eleven of £10, £5; North Wales £4; Nottingham £20; Durham £39; Morden £1.82; Culkein Stoer £20; Edinburgh £100, two of £20, £10, £5; Glasgow £50; Belfast £300; [Bibles] for people in Brazil £30; Charities Aid Foundation £128.21; Give as you Earn three of £15.67; Grace Baptist Trust Corporation £50; Church Donation three of £75; South West Charitable Giving three of £94.44; Stewardship Services £40, £20; Annual General Meeting collection £312; direct into the bank £30, three of £25, £10, £5; via Speakers £21.50, £17; other £10. **Total £2,028.86.**

From the Assistant General Secretary

‘The words that I speak unto you,
they are spirit,
and *they* are life.’

John 6.63

It is indeed remarkable to observe the power that resides in the Word of God. How often God spake and it was done! From the very beginning, when the worlds and all therein were formed by God’s fiat, and there was not any thing made that was made but by the Word personified, to the very end, when ‘he which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly’ (Revelation 22.20), the Word of God reigns supreme.

Satan deceived Eve, then Adam, by subtly altering God’s words, and death followed. How often did the last Adam speak life by His gracious words! Truly ‘death and life *are* in the power of the tongue’ (Proverbs 18.21). For example, the nobleman in John 4.46–54 besought the Lord Jesus Christ to come down and heal his son (v. 47), yet Christ merely spoke five words to him (six in the English; v. 50), and his son, some 20 miles away from Cana, in Capernaum, began to amend. Truly, ‘never man spake like this man’ (John 7.46)!

Furthermore, because of those five or six words, there was not only physical reviving granted to the nobleman’s son, but a spiritual quicken-

ing took place in the lad's heart, and that of his father, and the hearts of all in the house (v. 53).

Do we believe in the power of God's Word today? Do we really think that 'the entrance of thy words giveth light' (Psalm 119.130)? The General Committee and staff and members and supporters of this Society ought to and would indeed say, 'Yea' and 'Amen' to that, as we hold to the truth of that major tenet of our work, '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'.

It is all too easy to let this great truth slip when we feel overwhelmed by the immensity of the work, when projects seem to stall, when production plans languish, and when helpers are hard to find. Yet, there are always encouragements here and there, evidences of the eternal work being done as the Holy Scriptures are set forth in many languages. We never know the majority of the outcomes, for who would think to write to the publishers of the Bible when someone is gloriously saved through the faithful preaching of the Gospel of God within its covers? We would desire that all the glory be given to the Lord God Almighty, not the preacher, nor the publisher. Yet it is immensely heartening to hear now and again of souls being saved, or backsliders restored, through the distribution and effectual working of the Word of God.

In your prayers for the work of the Society, never stop short at the translation, printing and publishing of thousands of copies of the whole Bible, or a New Testament, or a smaller portion of the Holy Scriptures, but pray for the penetrative work of the Spirit of God, convincing of sin, righteousness and judgment, and calling many 'out of darkness into his marvellous light' (1 Peter 2.9).

As we commence this New Year, may the Lord grant each of us a renewed confidence in His ability to transform lives by the power of His precious Word, and, for our part, a renewed determination to publish nothing but the pure Word of God, accurately translated, that the hearers of it may be unable to resist it (Luke 21.15).

Assistant General Secretary



A Word of Warning!

The Society is an handmaid of the churches and as such it does not wish in any way to extend its role beyond the Scriptural boundaries that should both govern and direct its activities.

The Bible is the property of the churches (cf. John 17.14 and Romans 3.2), and it is rightly acknowledged to be their duty under God to maintain the authority of the Holy Scriptures as the plenary and verbally inspired Word of God. The churches are to preserve its integrity by not permitting anything to be added to it or subtracted from it. It is the churches' solemn task to maintain inviolate the Holy Word of God which (by the grace of God) they have inherited from their forebears, and which they are to proclaim publicly as the whole counsel of God, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear.

At a recent meeting of the General Committee of the Society, it was decided that the situation in the churches in the United Kingdom and in other parts of the English-speaking world was so serious that it was deemed appropriate to write a short article in the Society's magazine to warn both churches and the Christian public at large of the dangers that are inherent in giving way—even a little—to the relentless clamour being made by so many for new versions of the Holy Scriptures, which depart from the accurate translation of the Authorised Version based as it is on the most accurate and reliable texts divinely preserved.

This warning is being issued as so many churches have in recent years apparently abandoned their once-held convictions of adherence to the impregnable Truth of God and have allowed such new versions to be used either in their church services, in their Sabbath Schools, or in the homes of their members.

Often ministers, other church officers and Sabbath School teachers use arguments that they have heard from others as to why changes should be made, and whilst they may speak with sincerity and with a high spiritual motive, they are nevertheless merely restating old arguments that are based on either incorrect or false premises, and which—if they were to think a little more deeply—are seriously undermining the very Volume of Truth that they should be upholding!

The arguments used by churches for making a change in the Bible being used in the church services or in the Sabbath School are often promoted as being many and substantial, whereas to a very great extent they are few in number, relatively trivial in substance, and based on misconceptions rather than real facts. For the most part the arguments used are false and invalid, and owe their origin to the subtle and mischievous manner in which they have been promoted by those who do not tremble at the Word of God, who have not the fear of God in their hearts but (perhaps unwittingly) are willing to do the Devil's service in calling into question the very nature of the pure and holy Word of God.

It is often said that the 'modern' versions are easier to understand and that those who use them will be greatly advantaged by their usage. It is maintained particularly that those who come from outside Christian circles cannot be expected to understand the Authorised Version and that therefore alternative versions ought to be available to at least complement the existing Bibles that have been used by the church for generations.

However, if one were prayerfully to read and compare these other versions, they will be found not to be merely acceptable alternative translations of the Authorised Version that are provided as a help to understand the Word of God, but rather they are carefully crafted, subtly named and commercially promoted revisions that seriously call into question many fundamental doctrines and portions of the Holy Scriptures.

It is commonly thought that there are available today a number of different 'King James Bibles' that have been improved so that the essence of the Authorised Version of the Bible is retained whilst the difficult parts are replaced by wording that may be read and understood by anybody. This is how they are often promoted through the advertising material made freely available. A closer look, however, would reveal that this is far from the case. The name 'King James' is a good advertising ploy which many publishers have taken hold of to promote their revisions as rivals to the faithful and reliable Authorised Version. Sadly, many churches and Christians have been misled into thinking that the new 'King James' Bibles, from whatever publishing house they may come, are only slightly modified editions of the Authorised Version. They do not appreciate that these new (so-called) 'King James' editions of the Bible are very different from the Authorised Version, having many thousands of unnecessary changes made in them.

The arguments that are often employed are those that have gained currency over the years through the persistent repetition of those who have an agenda. Neither the world nor Satan has any interest in Truth. Consequently, publishing houses (which once were Christian but which are now secular, liberal or ecumenical) can promote their ‘New’ and ‘Easier to Read’ editions of the Bible without any real concern for fidelity to the inspired, inerrant and infallible text of the Word of God.

Of course, we must not forget that however clear and simple the text of Holy Scripture may be, and much of the wording of the Authorised Version is in simple Anglo-Saxon words of only a few syllables, ‘the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned’ (1 Corinthians 2.14). Unless God by His Spirit is pleased to enlighten the mind of the reader to a knowledge of the Truth of God, the reader will not benefit spiritually from the reading of the Bible however simple the wording may be. What need there is for all who would truly benefit from the inestimable blessing of the Holy Scriptures to pray with David, ‘Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law’ (Psalm 119.18)!

In this and future editions of the *Quarterly Record* we hope to publish papers detailing some of the pernicious means being employed to undermine the Truth of God, so that our friends and supporters may join with us in contending earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. By so doing, we would seek to assist others, especially the young, to appreciate the true nature of the battle for the Bible which is now raging in churches and chapels that a few years ago would not have entertained even the possibility of departing from the Authorised Version to another that is so much poorer as a translation of the Holy Word of God. The ‘new versions’ are invariably full of deceptive teaching in the text and in the footnotes: teaching that casts serious aspersions on the Divine Author and Preserver of the Holy Scriptures.

May the Lord be pleased to revive His work and grant that there may be throughout the world an appreciation of the need for truly faithful and reliable translations of the Word of God such as the English Authorised Version!

General Secretary

The Accuracy of the Authorised Version

Malcolm H. Watts

Chairman of the General Committee

The Trinitarian Bible Society does not believe the Authorised Version to be a perfect translation, only that it is the best available translation in the English language. There is therefore no need for us to answer every criticism of this version. However, some criticisms are ill-founded and unjustified and we believe such do require a detailed response.

■ Romans 5.11 –

Critics maintain that ‘atonement’ is a mis-translation. The Greek word is καταλλαγήν (*katallagen*). While it could have been rendered ‘reconciliation’, the Authorised Version rendering is not summarily to be rejected. Professor W.G.T. Shedd comments: ‘This important word is rendered “atonement”, in the English version. At the time when the version was made, atonement = at-one-ment, or reconciliation’.¹ Furthermore, Shedd argues, with reference to Athenaeus, that the true meaning of the Greek word is ‘satisfaction’; and he concludes: ‘Through Christ, the believer “receives the atonement”’: namely, that expiation for sin which settles the difference between God and

man. The result is reconciliation and harmony between the two parties’.²

Professor Moses Stuart of Andover confirms Shedd’s first point, writing, ‘The word means reconciliation; and such is the sense in which our English translators here used the word atonement (quasi at-one-ment)’.³

■ 2 Thessalonians 3.5 –

It is maintained that ‘patient waiting for Christ’ is a misrendering of the original. The Greek literally means ‘the patience of Christ’, and could mean ‘the patience which Christ exercised’ or, as in the Authorised Version, ‘the patient waiting for Christ’. C.F. Hogg and W.E. Vine acknowledge that the latter *is* a possible interpretation.⁴ Calvin endorses that interpretation, although he does concede the expression might be otherwise understood. He says, ‘I prefer to understand it as referring to the hope of ultimate redemption. For this is the only thing that sustains us in the warfare of the present life, that we wait for the Redeemer; and farther, this waiting requires faithful endurance amidst

the continual exercises of the cross'.⁵ Certainly, this supports the rendering of the Authorised Version and is in accord with the emphasis in the two epistles (1 Thessalonians 1.10; 2.19; 3.13; 4.16,17; 5.23; 2 Thessalonians 1.10; 2.8).

■ Romans 1.3 –

The phrase 'Jesus Christ our Lord' is said to be misplaced. In Scrivener's Greek Text it does indeed appear at the end of verse 4—'...resurrection from the dead of Jesus Christ our Lord'. The words between 'his Son' and 'the dead' were therefore regarded by the translators as a parenthesis. And surely the point is that the words *are* properly translated, although included *slightly earlier* for the sake of the sense and the right understanding of the two verses.

■ 1 Peter 1.2 –

The objection here is taken to the position of 'elect'. It is true that, in the Greek, this word appears in the first verse—'elect strangers'—and the epistle then proceeds 'Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father...'. The point is, however, that the word 'elect' *begins Peter's description of his readers*. The translators obviously believed (and rightly so, in our opinion) that the verbal adjective 'elect' governs the words which follow in the second verse ('according to the foreknowledge of God the Father'). If it doesn't, then what does? Dr. E.H. Plumptre concludes, 'The word "elect" or "chosen" belongs, as already stated, to verse 1, but the English sufficiently represents the meaning of the Greek'.⁶

■ Matthew 27.44 –

Exception is taken to the words 'cast the same in his teeth'. The word used here is *ὠνειδίζον* (*oneidizon*) which means to 'reproach' or 'to heap insults upon'. If we look at the original, it literally reads, 'And with the same thing also the thieves who were crucified together with him reproached him'. The Authorised Version (which follows Tyndale, Coverdale and the Geneva) understands 'reproached', quite correctly, as 'cast on him reproaches'. The Greek words *το αὐτο* (*to auto*), translated 'the same', indicate that 'something' was actually thrown—and the concluding word *αὐτῷ* (*auto*) indicates that it was thrown 'at him' (this being the indirect object of the verb). This is why the Authorised Version chooses to translate the verb—in this somewhat surprisingly accurate manner, although it is not widely used in English today—'cast the same in his teeth'.

Regarding Matthew 27.44, we may note Dr. James Morison's comment: 'An exceedingly graphic translation'.⁷

■ Mark 2.3 –

'Paralytic' is reckoned to be a better translation than 'sick of the palsy'. The problem is that the term 'paralytic' is the modern definition of a person with palsy. Dr. J.A. Alexander says of it, 'a word now in common use, but not at the date of our translation'.⁸ But leaving aside that fact, if 'palsy' means 'paralysis' (which it does), then we can surely assume that one 'sick of the palsy' is actually a 'paralytic'. Given that there was no such word

in common use in the 17th century, the Authorised Version has an excellent rendering of the Greek word.

■ **Romans 3.4** –

The exclamation ‘God forbid’ is considered far too free a translation. The Greek literally means, ‘May it not be!’ but since it is an exclamation of abhorrence, some scholars, like Professor John Murray, have defended the AV rendering. Murray writes, ‘It really needs the force of the expression given in our version “God forbid”’. In a footnote, Murray says, ‘*me genoito* corresponds to a Hebrew expression and actually occurs in the LXX of Gen 44:7,17; Josh 22:29; 24:16; 1 Kgs 21:3. The Hebrew expression is sometimes used with names for God (1 Sam 24:6—“The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master”. See also: 26:11; 1 Kgs 21:3; 1 Chron 11:19; Job 34:10)’. He concludes: ‘Hence our English expression “God forbid” has biblical precedent. The Greek *me genoito*, indicating the recoil of abhorrence, needs the strength of this English rendering derived from the Hebrew’.⁹

■ **Matthew 8.31** –

Here, and elsewhere, the word for ‘demons’ is said to be mistranslated ‘devils’. In the New Testament, ‘devil’ appears some thirty-five times, and literally means ‘slanderer’ or ‘one who trips us’. The Greek word, which could be translated ‘demon’, and which denotes ‘an evil spiritual being’, also occurs a number of times in the original—and it occurs in its verbal form, ‘demonised’ or

‘possessed of devils’. It is often maintained that there is one ‘devil’, but many demons, or inferior spirits, subject to him. Hence the devil is called ‘the prince of the devils’ (literally, ‘demons’) (Matthew 12.24). But this very title suggests that ‘demons’ are ‘*the same in nature with one another, also the same with their prince*’.¹⁰ Conceivably, then, it is quite acceptable to speak of ‘the Devil’ and also of ‘(lesser) devils’—which is what the Authorised Version appears to do. In fact, it is perhaps worth noting that the word ‘demon’ does not appear anywhere in that version.

■ **Revelation 4.6ff.** –

‘Beasts’ is considered to be a most unsuitable translation for ‘living beings’ or ‘living creatures’ (Revelation 4.6ff). In the Authorised Version, ‘beast’ appears as a general word for *creatures other than man*. The Greek word translated ‘beasts’ in the book of Revelation could certainly have been translated ‘living beings’—and perhaps it would have been better so translated (in keeping with Ezekiel chapters 1, 3 and 10); but it should be noticed that the term ‘beast’ is used in reference to forms resembling ‘a lion’, ‘a (bull) calf’, etc.: creatures that have mighty power (as the protectors of the throne of God), and that are meant to strike all observers—and readers—with real and deep fear.

■ **Matthew 3.11; Mark 1.8** –

It is argued that ‘with water’, in reference to baptism, is a mistake and inconsistent with ‘in Jordan’ mentioned elsewhere.

Now, Greek prepositions are notoriously difficult, because often they can be translated in many different ways. The Greek preposition ἐν (*en*) properly signifies ‘in’, and that is how it could have been rendered (which rendering would have no doubt pleased some); but, in all fairness, it must be said that, in Greek, this preposition (*en*) followed by the dative case (ὑδατι, *hudati*) can signify the instrument. Here are just two examples: ‘almost all things are by the law purged with blood’ (ἐν αἵματι, *en haimati*) (Hebrews 9.22); and ‘the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood’ (ἐν αἵματι, *en haimati*) (Hebrews 9.25). Given this indisputable fact, no-one can say that the Authorised Version’s rendering (in Matthew 3.11 and Mark 1.8) is a mistranslation, although some might have preferred the other rendering.

■ Matthew 6.10 –

The point made is that this verse should read ‘thy will be done on earth’, rather than ‘in earth’. The Greek preposition here is ἐπι (*epi*), literally ‘upon’; but, again, it is a preposition which can be variously translated, and when followed by the genitive, it can often mean ‘in’, as the following examples show: ‘Archelaus did reign in [*epi*] Judæa’ (Matthew 2.22); ‘in [*epi*] their hands they shall bear thee up’ (Matthew 4.6); ‘from whence can a man satisfy these *men* with bread here in [*epi*] the wilderness?’ (Mark 8.4); ‘there shall be two *men* in [*epi*] one bed’ (Luke 17.34); and ‘by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in [*epi*] earth’ (Colossians 1.16).

■ 1 Thessalonians 4.14 –

‘Sleep in Jesus’, some say, should properly be translated ‘sleep through Jesus’. Here the preposition is δια [*dia*], usually ‘through’, but consider the following: ‘build it in [*dia*] three days’ (Matthew 26.61); ‘a vision appeared to Paul in [*dia*] the night’ (Acts 16.9); ‘I have written a letter unto you in [*dia*] few words’ (Hebrews 13.22). If this is allowed, it will express the same truth as in 1 Corinthians 15.18 (although there it is with a different preposition)—‘they also which are fallen asleep in Christ’. However, if ‘through’ is still preferred, it will simply mean, as Dr. Barnes observes, that ‘his death and resurrection are the cause of the quiet and calm repose’.¹¹

■ 2 Peter 1.1 –

It is maintained that this phrase should read ‘in’ and not ‘through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ’. The preposition is indeed ἐν (*en*—literally, in), and if so translated (as by Wycliffe and Tyndale) it will be similar to ‘faith in his blood’ (Romans 3.25). But if ‘through’ be maintained—as in ‘sanctify them through [*en*] thy truth’ (John 17.17); ‘preached through [*en*] Jesus the resurrection’ (Acts 4.2); ‘consolation and good hope through [*en*] grace’ (2 Thessalonians 2.16); and ‘grace and peace be multiplied unto you through [*en*] the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord’ (2 Peter 1.2)—then, as Alexander Nisbet rightly remarks, ‘Faith... comes...through Christ’s righteousness, which is, His doing and suffering to pur-

chase it, and other saving graces for us'.¹² A slightly different understanding is supplied by Dr. John Lillie, who says, 'it may indeed be said that faith is "through" this righteousness, inasmuch as, had there been no such righteousness, there could have been no revelation of it, and consequently no faith'.¹³

■ **Luke 9.58** –

Fault is found on account of the omission of the definite articles in the expression 'foxes and birds'. The omission of the definite article in these two cases is a very small matter, especially as particular 'foxes' or 'birds' are not intended. A stronger case could be made for an improvement in **Luke 18.13** – 'God be merciful to me a sinner' (literally, 'the sinner'), as the publican *may* have thought of himself as the sinner above all others (cf. 1 Timothy 1.15). But this is *not at all certain*. Dean Alford says, 'There may be a stress on *to* (the Greek article) before *hamartolo*, "me the sinner". But see re ff., where, as probably here, the art. is generic. It seems to me that any emphatic comparison here would somewhat detract from the solemnity and simplicity of the prayer... The *to* (the article) rather implies, not comparison with others, but self-abasement: "sinner that I am"'.¹⁴ As for **John 3.10**, in the Greek it does indeed read, 'Art thou **the** master of Israel, and knowest not these things?' It is suggested that there is a contrast with verse 2, 'a teacher come from God', but this is not a view generally endorsed. Indeed, I cannot find it mentioned by any Commentator. **The** master of Israel' just may suggest that Nicodemus held some

special, high position; but, interestingly, Alford, in his *Greek Testament*, defends the Authorised Version's rendering here—'a master'—and on the grounds that 'the article is inserted as required by *tou* before *Israel*, which is expressed as giving a solemnity to *Isr.* as the people of God'. As an alternative reason for this rendering, he asks this question: 'Is it possible that "the master" may merely be meant as "one of the masters"?' He then concludes by saying, 'I prefer either of these reasons for the presence of the article, to supposing it to have any emphatic meaning'.¹⁵ I quote Alford here, not to suggest that he is necessarily correct in his interpretation, but to show that some Greek scholars (and Alford was recognised as eminent in this discipline) *support* the omission of the article in the translation because its inclusion would give an emphasis not intended. The conclusion must be that criticism of the Authorised Version at this point is quite unjustified.

■ **2 Corinthians 5.14** –

'If one died for all, then all died' is regarded as more in accord with the original than the Authorised Version, 'if one died for all, then were all dead'. Dr. Charles Hodge states that the verse has been 'variously explained'. One view (Beza's and others') is that it means: 'if one died for all, then were all subject to death', while another view (favoured by Hodge, and supported by the use of the aorist) is that 'the death of one was the death of all... The death of Christ was legally and effectively the death of his people'.¹⁶ This is perhaps more a matter

of interpretation than translation. The rendering in the Authorised Version could conceivably support both of these views, the point being ‘if Christ died for all, then all those were dead for whom he died’ (Dr. John Gill).¹⁷

The criticisms made do not, in any way, constitute a general and sustainable indictment of the Authorised Version. Indeed, on examination, they do not appear to be significant or even valid. The New King James Version, on the other hand, is lamentably deficient, containing not only many departures from the Received Text, but also a great number of palpable translational errors. It is our firm belief that the Authorised Version retains its honourable place as the most noble, worthy and accurate translation of the Scriptures in the English language.

Endnotes:

1. William G. T. Shedd, D.D., *A Critical and Doctrinal Commentary on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans* (New York, NY, USA: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1879), pp. 118,119.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
3. Professor Moses Stuart, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (London, England: Thomas Tegg and Son, 1838), p. 198.
4. C.F. Hogg and W.E. Vine, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians* (Glasgow, Scotland: Pickering and Inglis, 1914), p. 285. Cited by W.E. Vine in *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (London, England: Oliphants Ltd., 1966), p. 168.
5. John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries*, 22 vols.: *Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians* (Grand Rapids, MI, USA: Baker Book House, 1979), 21.351.
6. E.H. Plumpre, D.D., *The General Epistles of St. Peter & St. Jude* (Cambridge, England: The University Press, 1899), p. 92.
7. James Morison, D.D., *A Practical Commentary on the Gospel according to St Matthew* (London, England: Hodder and Stoughton, 1899), p. 594.
8. J.A. Alexander, D.D., *Commentary on the Gospel of Mark* (New York, NY, USA: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1864), p. 34.
9. John Murray, D.D., *The Epistle to the Romans* (London, England: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1967), p. 94.
10. James Henderson, D.D., ‘Demons’, *The Imperial Bible Dictionary*, edited by Patrick Fairbairn, D.D. 2 vols. (London, England: Blackie and Son), 2.145.
11. Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI, USA: Kregel Publications, 1966), p. 1098.
12. Alexander Nisbet, *An Exposition of 1 & 2 Peter* (Edinburgh, Scotland: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1982), p. 223.
13. John Lillie, D.D., *Lectures on the First and Second Epistles of Peter* (New York, NY, USA: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1869), p. 355.
14. Henry Alford, D.D., *The Greek Testament* (London, England: Rivingtons, 1874), p. 615.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 716.
16. Charles Hodge, D.D., *A Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (London, England: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1963), p. 136.
17. John Gill, D.D., *An Exposition of the New Testament*, 3 vols. (London, England: Mathews & Leigh, 1809), 2.789.

A Temple of the Holy Spirit

Part 2

by the Rev. G. Hamstra
a Vice-President of the Society

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God,
and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

1 Corinthians 3.16

In our previous meditation we considered the foundational truths regarding the saving operations of the Spirit of God. We saw that the entire work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of a sinner is founded on the finished work of Christ. Finite human resources cannot take away the insurmountable obstacles which are in the way of the Spirit's return to the human heart. The love of Christ, revealed in His atoning sacrifice, is the only foundation for the compassionate, merciful operations of the Holy Spirit.

The work of atonement was accomplished when Christ died. The everlasting righteousness was wrought. It is impossible to add anything to the perfection of the redemption accomplished by Christ. But the Spirit must needs apply

what Christ has purchased by His blood. The objects of divine mercy are regenerated by the Holy Spirit's grace. When the Spirit has renewed a sinner's heart, and united the heart to Christ, old things have passed away and all things have become new. (See 2 Corinthians 5.17.)

The Spirit of God takes His abode in the renewed and sanctified heart. It is necessary to emphasise that the Holy Spirit does not dwell in the understanding but in the heart. Indeed, He enlightens the understanding with the truth. This is important, but not the ultimate purpose of the Spirit. For by the enlightening of the understanding, He paves His way to the heart and makes the renewed heart His dwelling place.

Infinitely rich are the blessings related to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Biblical instruction on this subject is inexhaustible. We will limit ourselves to the following. Without the Holy Spirit we are most ignorant of spiritual matters. However, when He teaches us, we are humbled and realise our utter dependency on the Lord. This heavenly Teacher, by means of the Word of God, instructs in the truths necessary for our salvation. He teaches with much love, wisdom and patience. All God's children are taught of the Lord (Isaiah 54.13 and John 6.45).

The Spirit also influences the memory of the believers, so that they may utilise the precious truths taught in the Word of God (John 14.26). He unveils to them more and more the glory and beauty of Christ.

Furthermore, the indwelling Spirit graciously assists the believers when they approach the Throne of Grace. 'Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered' (Romans 8.26). The Spirit's assistance is invaluable when we draw near to God in prayer and supplication. The Spirit's wisdom makes us acquainted with our deepest need and causes us to plead the love of Christ.

How precious is the grace of the Holy Spirit, when He sheds abroad the love of God into our hearts and produces the cry, 'Abba, Father' (Romans 8.15 and Galatians 4.6). In the beginning of our spiritual life that cry may be faint. Yet it is a fruit of the indwelling Spirit and pleasing to God.

In Romans 8.16 the apostle develops this comforting truth a little further. He states, 'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God'. Paul teaches here that there is a joint witness. First, our spirit bears witness to the truth that we have become children of God. This in itself is also a fruit of the Holy Spirit's grace. Secondly, the Spirit of God bears joint witness with and to our spirit that we are the children of God. This is the more direct witness borne by the Spirit to God's people.

Thus Paul deals in Romans 8.15 and 16 with the witness borne by our own spirits in the cry which **we** utter, 'Abba, Father'. In addition he refers to the witness of the Holy Spirit **to** our spirits. It is therefore evident that the Word of God teaches here a distinction between the subjective consciousness of the believer and the more direct testimony of the Holy Spirit to our hearts. The latter is a seal of the Holy Spirit to the trustworthiness of the witness borne by our own spirits when confidence is uttered in the plea, 'Abba, Father'. It is important to observe that this work of the Holy Spirit, producing in the heart of God's people love, trust and assurance of their sonship, must never be viewed apart from the other saving and sanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit.

In conclusion, the Holy Spirit is a wondrous Comforter, when He shows a needy sinner that Jesus is the perfect Refuge for the oppressed. Whatever the trial may be, in Jesus is enough to satisfy the needs of the poorest among the poor.

*The Love
of
the Truth*

*the sermon preached at the
175th Annual General Meeting of
the Trinitarian Bible Society
23rd September 2006*

(slightly edited for publication)

by the Rev. D. Silversides

*Pastor of Loughbrickland Reformed Presbyterian Church
and a member of the General Committee*

*‘If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine,
whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.’*

(John 7.17).

Our theme is the love of the Truth. Our Lord Jesus Christ uttered the words in our text in a setting of dispute about the source of His doctrine. Thus in verse 12 we read, ‘And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people’. The Lord Jesus Christ denies that He is the source of His doctrine, but rather the Father that has sent Him. So verse 16, ‘Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me’. Again, in verse 18 we read, ‘He that speaketh of himself seeketh his

own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him’.

At first glance it may surprise us—since the Lord Jesus is the Second Person of the Godhead and was God manifest in the flesh—that He should say that His doctrine is not His, but is from Him that sent Him. But Christ’s denial here is to be understood, first of all, as referring to the fact that His doctrine did not have its origin in His human nature. He did not act as a mere human inventor of ideas. Then secondly, as the Second Person of the Eternal Triune Godhead, it was not His office but the office of the Father to ordain the way of salvation in His Son, the message of which was to be the means of the conversion of an elect people given to Christ by the Father in eternity. However Christ, as a Divine Person and with a human nature endowed with the Holy Spirit, was a true and faithful witness to that doctrine given by the Father.

In declaring this to be so, our Lord Jesus also states something that is true of those who receive His doctrine as the pure truth of God. He says, ‘If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God’. It is clear that this refers to a state of heart: a state of heart that distinguishes those who truly desire to do the will of God from those who do not. The former heartily recognise the truth as the truth of God, whereas the latter reject it and set it at naught. Not that the rejecters of the Gospel may not at times have convictions that after all His message is true, but they do not receive ‘the love of the truth’ (2 Thessalonians 2.10). Sometimes even those who are still in their sins (and who may never be converted to Christ) may tremble and have an awareness that this message is true, as Felix did while Paul ‘reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come’ (Acts 24.25). Yet they have no love of the truth; they wish that the truth was not true and they look for ways to convince themselves that it is not true.

So, whilst those who are opposers of the truth may occasionally be convicted and troubled that this truth, this Gospel, this doctrine that comes from God, may in fact be the truth, yet their trembling is no more a change of heart than the trembling of devils, who have an awareness of the truth but they still hate it. The damned in the world to come will be constrained to know that the truth is true but they will still hate that truth, though they are utterly subdued under the wrath of Almighty God. But only those with the disposition described in our text know the truth gladly and heartily. They love this truth, they embrace this truth, they are glad that it is true. Let us then look at the state of heart described.

~1~

Why The Truth Is Not Received

First of all, why is the truth not received? Our text says, 'If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God...'. This indicates that there are those who do know and heartily receive this truth, but there are others who do not. Why, then, do those who do not receive this truth not receive it?

Not Lack of 'Proof'

We can say absolutely that the reason is not because of a lack of so-called 'proof'. It is not that, if only the arguments were put better they would be received, or that there was not enough evidence given. Consider John 5, which records Christ healing the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath Day; and in verse 8, Jesus said unto him, 'Rise, take up thy bed, and walk'. In chapter 6 we have the account of the feeding of the five thousand in Galilee. Now in chapter 7, back in the temple, He teaches what we have now in our text.

Both in Jerusalem and in Galilee they had seen His divine power displayed, but they did not receive the truth. In Jerusalem they saw that this man who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years was healed, that he could walk. You would think that there would be great rejoicing, that this poor man who had been an invalid for all that time could now walk. But it meant nothing to the Jewish leaders. Why is it that a man being able to walk after thirty-eight years is of no account? It is because the Jewish traditions, their false impositions and additions and modifications of the Sabbath, had been violated and this is what really mattered to them.

Likewise, after the feeding of the five thousand, you might think that surely that will convince them, and after a fashion it did convince some of the people that here is the Messiah. But the Messiah they were looking for was a Messiah who would vindicate Israel as righteous before the nations and drive away their Roman oppressors. Christ did not come to be their kind of Messiah. Notice, however, that in John 6.30 we read, 'They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?' Christ has just fed the five thousand with the five barley loaves and the two small fishes and they are saying, 'What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee?' Ah yes, they are saying, He fed the five thousand; but we need something a little more. Just give us a little more to go on and we will believe; bread from heaven is what is needed. You are supposed to be greater

than Moses; well, let us have bread from heaven. But Christ did not give it. He does not pander to them. He never gave signs to order. Nor was the purpose of the miracles to overwhelm unregenerate men into grudgingly admitting that He was the Christ.

At the last day those whose hearts are still at enmity with Him will then know, all unwillingly, that He is the Christ: every eye shall see Him and the nations shall wail because of Him. They will be constrained, with hearts still filled with enmity, to bow the knee to Him and confess that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2.10–11). Christ did not constrain them in His first coming and He did not give them the sign that they asked for, because the problem was not outward testimony and light but, as we shall see, the state of their hearts.

The State of the Heart

What He did do is recorded in John 6.35–36: He said unto them, ‘I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not’. He declares Himself the bread of life. He declares that they had seen Him in His mighty power—they had seen His power in signs that, in measure, reversed the effects of sin and the curse by healing and relieving the miseries of this life—showing Himself to be the Saviour of sinners. They had seen the glorious sign that He was the bread of life, but still did not believe. ‘Ye also have seen me, and believe not’ (v. 36).

Our Lord Jesus goes on to show where the distinction between the believing and unbelieving arises; verse 37 says, ‘All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out’. In verse 44 He continues: ‘No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day’. The Lord Jesus is saying that the problem is in the heart. It is not, as they were maintaining, a need for a little more evidence, a little more proof; they did not need another sign, a bigger sign, a better sign, and they would believe. He is saying, they will not believe unless God in His Sovereignty changes their hearts and renews their wills; then they would see the desirableness of Christ and believe on His Name.

It is very similar to what Christ taught in John 3.7–8, ‘Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit’. This is referring to the Sovereign work of the Holy Spirit as that which makes the difference.

Some of us (in Northern Ireland at least) experienced strong winds a couple of nights ago, stronger than we have known for many years. Many trees were blown down, the branches were strewn across the road and windows were damaged. Can you control the wind? You can hear the sound, you can see the effects, but you cannot control it. So is everyone that is born of the Spirit. Christ declared the absolute Sovereignty of God in renewing the hearts of sinners as He pleases and making them willing to come to our Lord Jesus Christ. This Sovereign work of the Holy Spirit is what makes the difference.

So the problem was not as they claimed—lack of proof—but that they had sinful hearts at enmity with God and no matter what they saw they would not come to the Lord Jesus Christ that they might have life. Our text describes the effect of this new birth—a desire to do His will: that is the effect of the new birth. The heart is changed, the will is renewed, so that it points in the opposite direction to what it did before.

~2~

What It Is To Desire To Do the Will of God

That brings us, secondly, to ask what is it to desire to do the will of God? When Christ says, ‘if any man will do his will’, what does He mean by the will of God? It is clear that the term ‘the will of God’ in Scripture is used in two senses.

Decreed Will

First, it is used of what God has decreed will happen. It can refer to His foreordaining whatsoever comes to pass: that is God’s decreed will, and in that sense the will of God is always fulfilled. All that God has decreed to happen does happen. He preserves and governs all His creatures and all their actions. So in Ephesians 1.11 we are told He ‘...worketh all things after the counsel of his own will’. All things: nothing happens by chance, nothing happens outside or apart from or in contradiction of the decreed will of God.

So in Daniel 4.34–35 Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges, ‘And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom *is* from genera-

tion to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? The will of God, His decree, His plan, His purpose embraces everything and He performs all His pleasure. He has done whatsoever has pleased him (Psalm 135.6). He has made all things and for His pleasure they are and were created (Revelation 4.11). In that sense Cyrus or even Judas fulfilled the will of God, the determinate counsel and the purpose of the Most High (see Acts 2.23).

Preceptive Will

As well as being used of His decree, however, the term ‘the will of God’ is used of what we may call His preceptive will, what He tells men to do. His decreed will is His eternal determination of what shall happen, including the actions of men, but His preceptive will is what He tells men that they ought to do. He commands men, but this preceptive will is not always done. There is such a thing as sin. It is clear that the term ‘the will of God’ is used in this sense.

To give one or two examples, we go to the Gospel according to Matthew 7.21: ‘Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven’. Here it is clear that there is a distinction between those that do the will of God and those that do not do the will of God. As far as God’s decree is concerned, the will of God is always fulfilled, but here it is not speaking of God’s decree but of God’s preceptive will, what God tells men to do.

The same again is in Matthew 12.50, ‘For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother’. Here again the Lord Jesus is saying that there are some who do the will of His Father and there are some who do not do the will of His Father. That being the case, it cannot be referring to the decree of God because God works all things after the counsel of His own will in that sense. It is speaking of what God tells men to do.

In Matthew 21.31 we find in a little parable, ‘Whether of them twain did the will of *his* father? They say unto him, The first’. Here again, one did the will of his father and the other did not. The one illustrates those Gentiles who ultimately heeded the Word of the Lord, and the other those Jews who professed much but then did not after all obey the Word of the Lord. So the term ‘will of God’ can be used of what God has decreed that all creatures including men will do; and that is always fulfilled. But here in our text it is used, not of the decreed will of God, but of the preceptive will of God, what God tells men to do.

When Christ says, 'if any man will do his will', He means what God tells men to do. God commands men and yet He has not decreed that they will always be enabled to obey that which He commands. There is such a thing as sin. So here in the text it is speaking of what God tells men to do. There are those, then, who by the renewing work of the Spirit of God have a desire to do the will of God and others left to their natural sin and depravity who do not.

The First Effect of a Renewed Heart

The first effect of this renewing work of the Spirit of God is to believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ. In John 6.28–29, 'Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent'. So the first effect of the Sovereign work of the Holy Spirit in renewing the heart and will is that a sinner believes upon and trusts in Jesus Christ the Saviour, the One who bore the wrath of God in His sufferings and death as the substitute for guilty men and women. The first effect of the renewing of the Holy Ghost is a willingness to heed the Gospel and to believe and trust in our Lord Jesus Christ for acceptance in the sight of God.

~3~

A Sinner With A Renewed Heart Will Know The Doctrine of God

Thirdly, a sinner whose heart has been renewed by the Holy Spirit will know the doctrine of God. Our text says, 'If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself'. When the heart is renewed by the Holy Spirit, a sinner recognises the true Gospel, he sees beauty in Christ so as to desire Him. The sinner is willing by the Lord's power and grace to come to Him, to trust in Him and to rely upon Him as all his salvation and all his desire. He will then desire to honour and to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, to live to the glory of God; he will cleave to Him, not as a mere man with His own ideas, but as the very Christ of God.

Turning back to John 6.66–69 we read, 'From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God'. When God begins a gracious work in the heart of a depraved sinner,

He performs it until the day of Jesus Christ. When God regenerates the heart, that sinner trusts in the Lord Jesus Christ; but the God who renewed his heart keeps him and causes him to persevere in the faith. Even when he is discouraged and downcast he knows that there is no other way—‘to whom shall we go?’—and he cleaves to the Lord Jesus Christ. He may indeed wander, and there is ebb and flow in the strength of faith and devotion to the Saviour, but the seed of God remains in him and he is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time (see Philippians 1.6, 1 Peter 1.5, John 10.27–29, Jude 24, Romans 8.30).

~4~

What This Means For Us Today

What, then, does all this mean for us today? I want to give a few points of application.

The Irrelevance of the Question of Relevance

First of all, may I draw your attention to the irrelevance of the question of relevance. Within evangelicalism today, we often hear people saying, ‘we must make the Gospel relevant’. The true Gospel is relevant. What could be more relevant to sinners under the condemnation and wrath of Almighty God than to declare to them the Way of Salvation through God’s appointed Mediator between God and men, the Lord Jesus Christ! That is relevant; it does not need to be made relevant, it already is.

It may not seem relevant to ungodly people. The woman of Samaria at first had little grasp of the relevance of what Christ was saying to her when He spoke of the water of life. In John 4.10 He said, ‘If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water’. The woman replied, ‘give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw’ (v. 15). So little grasp of the relevance of what Christ was saying did she have that she did not understand what He was talking about at all. She thought, this sounds good; give me this living water. I am tired of coming to this well day after day. Our Lord Jesus Christ, of course, went on to show her that she was a sinner. ‘Go, call thy husband... I have no husband... Thou hast well said, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly’ (vv. 16–18). In the beginning this woman did not understand the relevance of what she heard. In fact, so irrelevant was what Christ was saying in her mind that she interpreted it in a way that she thought was relevant, but which was not what Christ was talking about at all.

Certainly we should make the Gospel as straightforward as possible, starting at the beginning as Christ did with the woman of Samaria. But that is not usually what is meant when people talk about making the Gospel relevant. What they generally mean is, we need to market the Gospel in such a way that those who see nothing in Christ will be lured in: in other words, we must entertain people. If the church starts entertaining people, do we really think that, without the renewing of the Holy Ghost, the Gospel will really become attractive? The entertainment might be enjoyable, although people can always get better entertainment somewhere else. But the Gospel without the renewing of the Holy Ghost will remain as unattractive to the natural man as it always has.

Certainly, a renewed desire to fulfil our Biblical responsibility to spread the Gospel by Biblically-approved means is a good thing: this is a fruit of repentance. But the invention of methods outside of Scripture is not the fruit of repentance; it is instead the fruit of pride. Who has required this at your hands? Has God charged His church to entertain people or to be inventors of techniques to secure results? If the Lord Jesus declined to give a sign, should we entertain people? These people said, 'what sign shewest thou?' and Christ could have given them a sign but did not: do we really think that the church therefore is to entertain?

There is also the endless clamour for new Bible versions. We do not judge the motives of all who desire them; that would not be right. Nevertheless, for some at least, it does seem to have to do with a certain inventiveness-cum-desperation. We are struggling; the church is struggling. We feel that we have our backs to the wall and the temptation is to scabble around for an answer, a package that will do the job. So the Bible versions keep coming.

We have no time now, but it is an interesting study to look at the publicity blurb of each new Bible version. Each one claims to do what apparently all the others have failed to do, even though sometimes one comes hot on the heels of another. It generally runs something like this: 'the Word of God in a fresh new translation readily understood by today's average reader'. In other words, the rest have failed but now we have done it. Constantly, the new translation is described as fresh. Does that mean that the Bible we have always used is stale? If it is, there is something wrong with us; there is nothing wrong with the Bible.

More generally, if we are not seeing the Lord's power displayed, is not the way to respond to humble ourselves before God? When the Lord went not forth with Israel's armies, was the need of the hour some bright new initiative to solve the problem? No, it never was. It was always instead to be humbled before God, seeking His face, seek-

ing His mercy, putting away sin, calling upon Him. In Revelation 2 and 3, in the letters to the seven churches, some of those churches are threatened by Christ. He does not rebuke them for their lack of unbiblical initiative and imagination and inventiveness. He rebukes them for unfaithfulness to Him and to His Word and to the discipline and doctrine that He has given. He says that, if they do not repent, He will take away the candlestick, He will spew them out of His mouth.

It is not a question of market forces, it is a question of what Christ will do, and that should be our concern. Is it not a provocation to the Lord that in our day of reproach and blasphemy we should think that the answer lies in our inventiveness?

Part of this wrong response to the present situation is a tendency to think that our problem is excessive distinctiveness. The idea seems to be that if the church becomes more like the world, this will really impress people and they will say, look, these Christians are not that different from us after all, we really owe it to them to give them a hearing since they are so normal. However, if we are not that different, why should they take any notice of us if the Gospel does not make much difference? Does the Scripture actually tell us to make sure that we do not look too different from the world? It is true, of course, that in following the Apostle's teaching in 1 Corinthians 9.22 to be 'all things to all *men*', we should avoid unnecessary oddness; but the whole tenor of the Scripture is aimed towards avoiding sinful conformity to the world. We must stand out where the world is at odds with Scripture. We cannot be too Biblical. In our churches, in our lives, in our homes, in our hearts, we can never be too Biblical, because the Bible is the Word of God.

The Myth of Human Neutrality

But then secondly, in these applications, let us notice the myth of human neutrality. Christ does not treat His hearers as neutral. Rather, He treats them as utterly prejudiced so that, without being born again of the Spirit or drawn of the Father, they will not come to Him. Now we should defend the faith against error, we should expose theological, philosophical, pseudo-scientific falsehood, but let us not think that logical argument will automatically produce Christians. We are all inclined to do that, are we not?

When the so-called 'Jehovah's Witnesses' come to the door you marshal the arguments, and rightly so: you must do that and show them why the Scriptures teach that Christ is God, that there is a doctrine of the Trinity. Perhaps in our folly we think we have done quite a good job, we have put the arguments clearly and surely; they will see it now. But they do not. And why not? Because they do not want to. Without the

renewing of the Spirit of God men cleave to that which is false; we must never flatter unbelievers into thinking that their problem is merely intellectual. It is not purely a matter of 'give me enough information and I will believe', because they will not. They must be born of the Spirit.

That is what the people in John 6.30 were saying. Give us the right sign and we will believe. But Christ did not give them the sign because the cause of their unbelief was the state of their hearts. In Romans chapter 1, the reason for pagan religion is traced not to men seeking after God but to men trying to forget God. They want to forget God as He really is. They hold the truth in unrighteousness. They push it down. They do not like to retain God in their knowledge and so they invent a god who is more agreeable to them.

Today the stress is on telling people that they are entitled to their views. However, they are not. No one before God is entitled to believe a lie. It is a sinful thing to believe what is false. You are accountable for your views. God never gave anyone the right to believe a lie. Those who are cast into the lake of fire include those that love and make a lie. As far as their consciences will suffer it, men want to find a religion that they are comfortable with.

A wrong view of God is idolatry. Furthermore, a wrong view of God, a wrong view of our state as depraved and guilty sinners and a wrong view of the way of salvation all go together. The liberal who thinks that more or less everyone will go to heaven does not believe in the same God as we do. The Roman Catholic who thinks that God will be persuaded with a mixture of grace and works does not believe in our God. The Hindu does not believe in the same God. What we believe about salvation is in line with what we believe about God. A wrong view of salvation is inextricably bound up with a wrong view of God. A right view of God as made known in Scripture and a right view of how God saves sinners through Jesus Christ and Him crucified go together. The true Gospel displays the glory of God as He really is (1 Timothy 1.11). So it is a sin to believe what is not true. These people did not believe on Him and it was a sinful unbelief.

This principle is very graphically illustrated in our current day by the Muslim suicide bombers. The suicide bombers are sincere, if by sincerity we mean acting through conviction. They are sincere to the point that they kill themselves. But they are sincerely wicked. What they believe is wicked. Their religion is wicked. It is a religion that produces self-righteous murderers. If you want to understand their unrenewed state, look at their view of paradise. These so-called martyrs believe they go to a paradise where they receive seventy-two virgins and other such nonsense.

They denounce the decadent West and kill themselves in the expectation of something in the world to come that is not much different from the seedy immorality of the West. This is because their hearts are not changed. They are prepared to wait for the full fulfilment as they see it of their depraved and filthy desires, but the desires themselves differ little from those of the Western infidel.

How different is the Christian view of heaven! The average unbeliever in this country, if he thinks about heaven at all, associates it vaguely with happiness. Some like these suicide bombers have a more distinct, grubby view of paradise. But what is the Christian looking for in paradise? Above all, he is looking for Christ. Of course, there are many other things, but Christ is there. The Scriptures hardly ever speak of heaven in the abstract. At the end of Ezekiel we are told that ‘The LORD is there’ (Ezekiel 48.35). The Apostle had a desire ‘to be with Christ; which is far better’ (Philippians 1.23): ‘absent from the body...present with the Lord’ (2 Corinthians 5.8). The Lord Jesus told the dying thief, ‘Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise’ (Luke 23.43). ‘The Lamb is the light thereof’ (Revelation 21.23). Unbelievers, including Muslim suicide bombers, have not the love of God in them.

The Western nations, having invested so much pride in toleration, do not know what to do with an intolerant Islam. They have their defence mechanisms, military skill, technical ability, but it is all geared really to the idea of dealing with enemies who would like to stay alive. The West does not really know what to do with an enemy that is quite willing to die, even wants to die. The best weapon is despised by the Western nations. It is the Gospel. It is the Word of God which tells the suicide bomber that, far from going to paradise—either the depraved idea of it that he has or the real thing—he will go to hell. But who is telling him that? Who of any significance on the world stage is telling these people that when they blow themselves up they will go to hell for ever? The Bible teaches it.

Man is not neutral. What he believes reflects what is in his heart, whether he is a suicide bomber or the indifferent unbeliever, and we must not treat him as neutral. We must tell him of his dependence upon God the Holy Spirit and His Sovereignty to give the new birth as He pleases.

The Work of the Trinitarian Bible Society

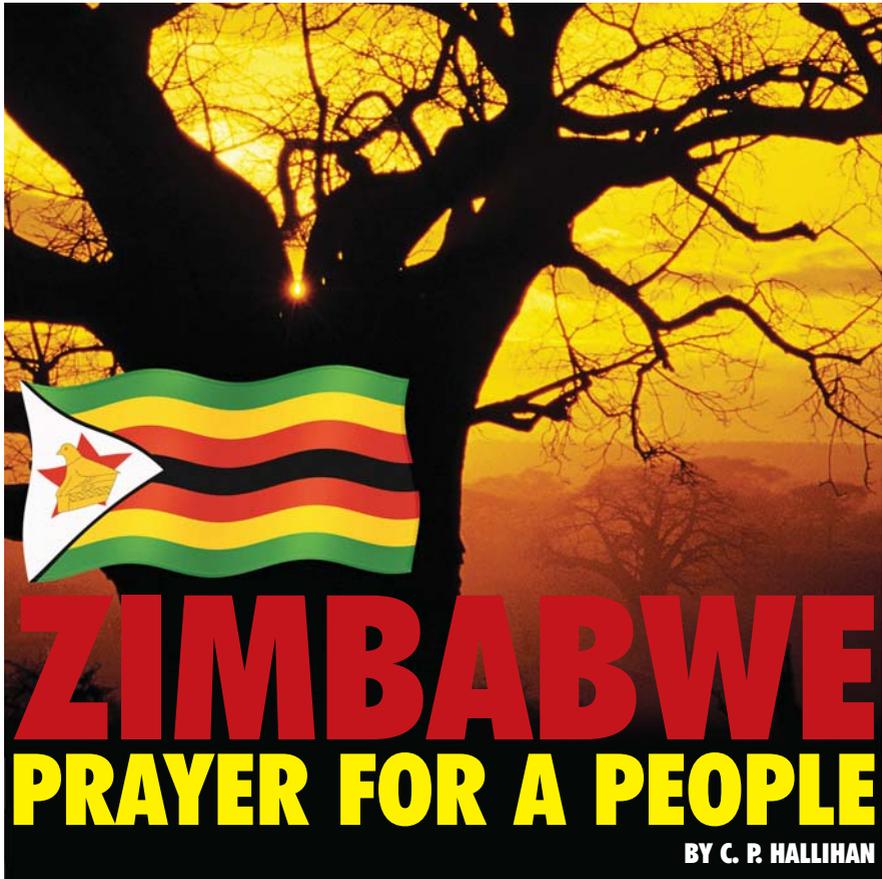
But then finally, let me say a little about the work of the Trinitarian Bible Society. One brief word to those of you who support the TBS, and perhaps especially to those of you who work at Tyndale House and outside of it in the work of

the Society. In the eyes of the world, what you are doing is not very impressive. Perhaps sometimes unconverted family members or acquaintances ask about your job. You reply, I work for the Trinitarian Bible Society, a Society that produces Bibles; we sell them, but for those who can't afford them we give them away. Perhaps the unconverted friend says, is that all? All you do is produce Bibles to send around the world?

But in the eyes of God and in the eyes of His people things are quite different. You send out Bibles. They contain God's Word to men—they contain the Gospel of salvation. They contain a message that not only can God use to nullify the temporal threat and danger of militant Islam, but the message that He uses to bring sinners into His everlasting kingdom. How we must pray the Lord will use the Arabic Bibles that the Society publishes to bring multitudes of Muslims to the knowledge of the Saviour! Far from harbouring ill-will to Muslims, we seek their true and lasting good and eternal happiness. How we should spread that Word heartily, praying that God, upon Whom we depend for all the increase, will use His Own Word, that He will renew the hearts of sinners so that when they read the Scriptures they 'shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God'! God can do that.

It is a high privilege, in dependence upon His grace, to have any instrumental part in making known the Word of God among all nations. God uses this Word by the renewing of His Spirit to bring men and women into possession of a complete and everlasting salvation. That is the argument in 1 Corinthians 15, that the kingdom into which God brings His elect people—by His grace through belief of the truth—is an everlasting kingdom with an everlasting and therefore a complete salvation. That salvation must ultimately extend to the body as well as the soul, and therefore there must be a resurrection from the dead, with Christ the first fruits of them that sleep. Take courage. However despised of men, the spreading of the Word of God is the cause of God and Truth.

I leave you with 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'. Amen.



General Overview

Zimbabwe is a land-locked country of south-central Africa, bounded on the north by the Zambezi River, with the thunderously magnificent Victoria Falls, Lake Kariba and the Kariba Dam. The Limpopo River marks out the much shorter border 404 miles (650km.) to the south. The game-rich parkland of these river valleys ascends through hill farmland to a central savannah woodland plateau.

Technically tropical, Zimbabwe's elevation makes for a drier and cooler climate than might be expected—but neither strictly dry nor cool!

North of the Zambezi is Zambia,¹ to the east is Mozambique,² to the south is South Africa and west is Botswana. Bulawayo is the chief town of the western part of Zimbabwe, still identified on some maps as Matabeleland. Harare, the capital, is further north and east, at the

centre of Mashonaland, and on a similar latitude to Brasilia in Brazil, La Paz in Bolivia, and Cairns in Queensland, Australia. In an area of over 390,000 sq.m. (1 million sq.km.) there is a population of about twelve million, projected to reach fifteen million by 2025. Some authorities say that the Aids-related death rate is such that the 2025 figure will be nearer nine million.

There are over forty different peoples in Zimbabwe; the largest group is the Shona at 71%, then the Ndebele³ at 14%. English is the official language, but there are about twenty languages spoken in the country, including Afrikaans, and some surprises, such as Gujarati: Shona predominates in the east, Ndebele in the west. Mining accounts for 40% of exports, chiefly gold, but coal, copper, and others abound. Two-thirds of Zimbabwe's population depend on agriculture, mostly subsistence farming. Corn, cotton, wheat, coffee, sugar cane, tobacco⁴ and peanuts are cultivated; cattle, sheep, goats and pigs are raised. Light and heavy industries combine with tourism to contribute to the economy, but the highest Aids infection rates in the world, together with political, and economic instabilities, seriously hinder present use and future development of all these resources.

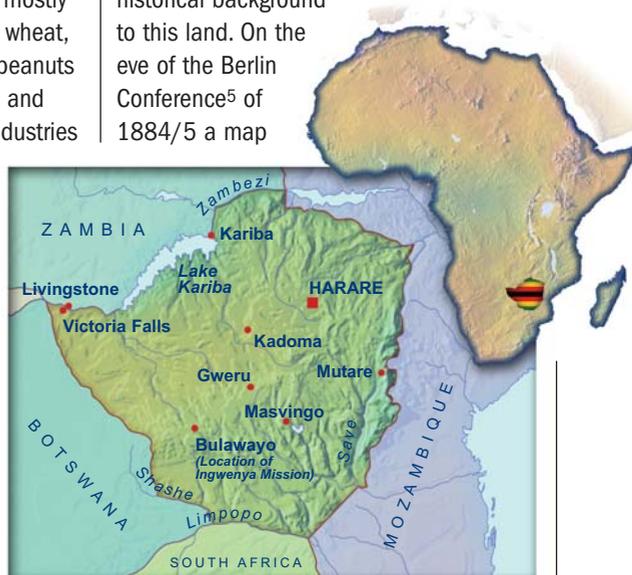
No sketch of Zimbabwe can ignore the Baobab tree, Arabic *bu hobab*—'fruit has many seeds'. Giant specimens are

reputed to be one thousand years old, and honey from Baobab-frequenting bees is a great delicacy, even known in ancient Egypt. And then the elephants! At 2001 figures there were 65,000 of them, a lure to tourists, safari seekers and ivory poachers from time immemorial. Profitable as the famous parks are, the elephants (and, especially, the black rhino) must regard them as counter-productive!

★ History

★ Preamble

It is important to accept that the names of modern African nations can rarely be related to maps published before the late 19th century. General areas of occupation, agriculture or nomadic activities by tribal peoples, their interactions, wars and movements, are the historical background to this land. On the eve of the Berlin Conference⁵ of 1884/5 a map



of southern Africa could only ‘indicate’ Ndebele and Shona peoples between the Zambezi and the Limpopo Rivers, Lozi and Ngoni north of the Zambezi, Sotho and Zulu south of the Vaal, and so on, not ‘countries’ in our now-conventional way. Most of the peoples south of the Sahara knew themselves as just that—The Peoples, or Ba-ntu—and their languages we group as Niger-Congo.⁶ The main exception is the Khoisan peoples of the south-western deserts—Namibia, Kalahari and Karoo—although their distinctive click sound has migrated to some of the contiguous Bantu tongues.

Early European missionaries went to regions and peoples, rather than to countries, and the people did not always stay in one region! The Ndebele people, for example, under Mzilikazi, detached themselves from the Zulu people of the

south-east coastal land, and settled along the Vaal and Marico Rivers in the early 1800s, before challenging the Shona north of the Limpopo, not very long before the word Rhodesia began to appear on maps and the Matabele Wars flared.

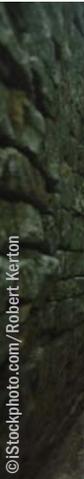
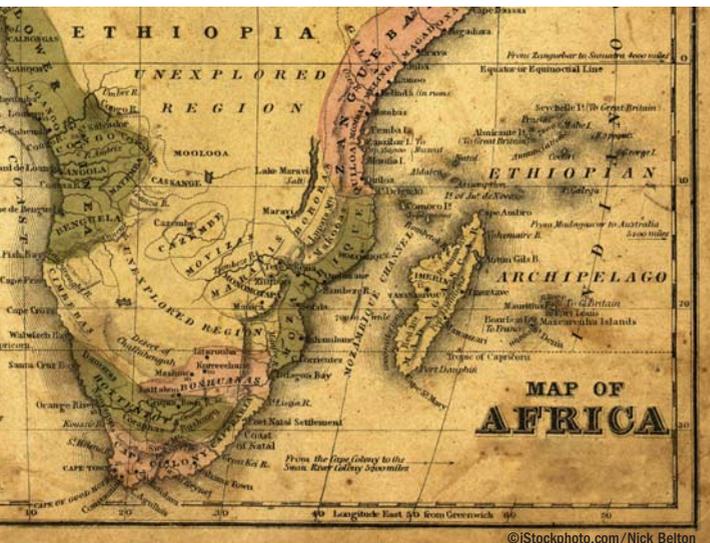
★ **Pre-Colonial:**
Great Zimbabwe and the Shona

The name Zimbabwe is taken from the stone enclosures of ‘Great Zimbabwe’⁷ near the modern city of Masvingo. These massive ruins, built between 1200 and 1450 by ancestors of the Shona people, were abandoned over five hundred years ago. Great Zimbabwe itself was the all-encompassing hub of a large and thriving early Shona state, which had eclipsed an earlier culture centred on Mapungubwe, where the Shashe River joins the Limpopo. By 1400 the builders of Great Zimbabwe

were building elaborate stone structures, without the use of mortar, of such height as to be unique in the whole of Africa. Their management and engineering of water resources were also remarkable.

When the Great Zimbabwe culture waned—too many people, not enough salt, goats or firewood—the Mutapa people separated and settled north and east of Great

19th-century map identifying the then-unexplored regions



©iStockphoto.com/Robert Kerton

©iStockphoto.com/Nick Belton



Passageway in the stone enclosure of Great Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe. This Mutapa state was the principal Shona power when Portuguese traders, excited by the coastal Swahili-speaking traders' tales of fabulous wealth in the Zambezi hinterland, came seeking their fortunes.⁸ From this time the Zambezi became the more weighty influence in the region than the Limpopo.

Large birds carved in soapstone were found in the ruins of Great Zimbabwe, and are now incorporated in the national flag. Everything that made Europeans—from

Portuguese in the late 15th century to Rhodes and the 19th-century 'scramble' for South Central Africa—covet the region, was known and used by the earlier great cultures. As with the Victoria Falls, they were there and known long before they were 'discovered' by European explorers. There was farming, cattle-keeping, ivory-hunting, mining of copper and gold. The Limpopo, Save, and later, Zambezi, Rivers, provided routes to the east African coast and trade with Arab dhows from the north and ships from India.

★ **Colonial:
Lobengula and Rhodes**

Several hundred years of people-movement in Africa had been from north to south responding to Arab and Muslim pressure. After the 16th century the Portuguese seeding of the west and east

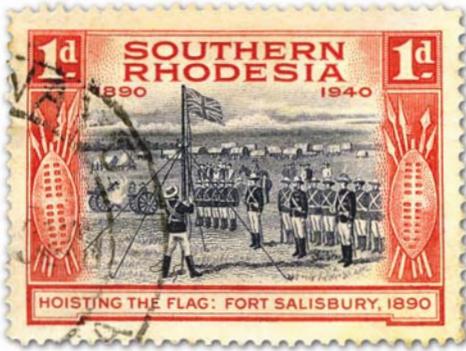
coasts introduced another pressure, as well as the beginnings of Angola and Mozambique. The late 17th century saw Dutch and English settlements beginning to flourish in the Cape region. Their hunger for land and for control of resources, together with their own mutual antagonisms, put enormous pressure on the indigenous peoples, both to resist and to move in a north and central direction. The Orange and Vaal Rivers provide distinctive markers of this process, as do the Khoisan Wars, the Xhosa Wars and later the Zulu and Matabele Wars.

The groundswell north-to-south movement had long brought the Shona to the Great Zimbabwe region; now the coastal pressure from the Portuguese, and this epochal thrusting of the Dutch and English from the south, gathered strange and fiercely unlikely associates in the cauldron of South Central Africa. While the Shona of Mashonaland were squaring up to the incoming Matabele, the English, under the impassioned yet calculating

leadership of Cecil John Rhodes, had an eye to the possession of the land and control of its rich resources. They were convinced that European management and technology alone could realise the mining potential. Lobengula, the Matabele king who had succeeded Mzilikazi, was the greatest single obstacle to this

Cecil John Rhodes





Stamp showing Fort Salisbury in 1890

endeavour. In a transaction which many believe to have been deliberately misleading, he made agreement with an agent of Rhodes in 1888. Expecting only a handful of prospectors, he found the heavily armed Pioneer Column setting about the colonisation of the whole land. Lobengula's capital, Bulawayo, fell to the Maxim guns of the Column in 1893, and despite attempts by the Shona and the Matabele to combine and resist, the land became part of a new country. This began under the management of the British South Africa Company, and was eventually to be colonial Rhodesia.

★ **Modern:
Smith and Mugabe**

Fort Salisbury was a tent town when it became the capital of the new country; then, known simply as Salisbury, it was the seat of a white minority government for ninety years. Resistance and resentment were ever present, and in 1957 limited political rights were extended to the African majority population. The Ndebele people generally

supported Joshua Nkomo and the Zimbabwe African People's Union, whilst the more numerous Shona formed the Zimbabwe African National Union, subsequently led by Robert Mugabe. A brief attempt to make a federation of both Rhodesias with Nyasaland (Malawi) failed, and the Rhodesian Front party, led by the white politician Ian Smith, pressed for independence from the British Crown under continuing minority rule. It was not given under such a manifesto, and former fighter pilot Smith announced his Unilateral Declaration of Independence. Bitter and cruel guerrilla warfare ensued.

After fierce conflict, in which 27,000 people were killed and 150,000 displaced, an all-party conference was held in London, England, followed by free elections in Southern Rhodesia, in

February 1980. On April 18th Robert Mugabe, an avowed Marxist, became President of the newly independent Zimbabwe: the one-hundred-year-old capital Salisbury became Harare, named after a 19th-century chief, Neharawa.

Robert Mugabe



We have now reached what are current affairs; and the continuing distress, injustice and oppression, the political and racial tensions which rend the country, are never far from news reports. The cities swell with hundreds of thousands of rural migrants looking for non-existent jobs, and

poverty-packed township settlements multiply. This country is potentially an industrial and economic powerhouse, and yet Zimbabweans are 60% poorer now than in 1980. *Operation World* reports⁹ that the Aids calamity in Zimbabwe is one of the world's worst cases. A combination of government neglect, lack of health care resources, promiscuity and social reluctance to face up to the drastic measures required are the root causes. Over 25% of all adults carried the virus by 2000; the number of orphans had risen to nearly one million (9% of the population). Deaths rose to seven hundred a week and the economy and life expectancy has plummeted. Nevertheless, throughout the last two hundred years there has begun, and abides, a rich Gospel history, Christian testimony, and record of much good works.

Mission and Scripture

Let us accept that the 19th century in Africa was particularly a time of excited European exploration, of unquestionably dedicated missionary labour, and of colonial settlement, and that the lines between these things were never clear. Some missionaries necessarily became administrators, some civil servants were better Christians than they were administrators, and all pioneer work attracted commercial follow up.¹⁰

Zimbabwe and the Victoria Falls probably bring the name of David Livingstone [1813-73] most readily to mind in a missions context. However,



Robert Moffat (1795–1883)

www.WholesomeWords.org

Matabeleland was for him more a corridor of passage from Bechuanaland (Botswana) to regions north of the Zambezi (Fort Salisbury a convenient mail post), than a sphere of service. His father-in-law, Robert Moffat [1795-1883], London Missionary Society worker in South Africa and Bechuanaland, is of more interest for Zimbabwe. An instrument of salvation amongst the Hottentots and translator of the Bible into Sechuana, he also made Gospel forays northward into Matabeleland, and on such travels wrote extensively to his wife: the *Matabele Journals of Robert Moffat 1829-60* record this correspondence. Moffat's friendship with King Mzilikazi was the only thing

which kept his party from destruction on more than one occasion.

His younger associate, William Sykes [1829–1887], reduced the Ndebele tongue to script in about 1860, and the Gospel of Matthew was published in 1884, followed by the New

Testament. In the Wars of 1893/4 the Matabele warriors seized hundreds of copies of the New Testament and wore them as headgear!

Dear to the memory of the Shona people is the name of John White [1866–1933] of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society. We note his publication of the Gospel of Mark in 1898, leading to the New

Testament in 1907—but they also note, for instance, his distribution of maize at his own cost in the famine of 1922.

But where do we stop? No one then serving the Gospel in southern Africa could miss the influence, direct or indirect, of Andrew Murray [1828–1917], son of a Scots minister in South Africa, Dutch educated in Utrecht, then for forty years pastor and itinerant evangelist in Transvaal. He was a co-founder of the South Africa General Mission in 1889 (now Africa Evangelical Fellowship), which reached out into Swaziland and Zimbabwe, then Zambia and Malawi. Allen Gardiner [1794–1851] felt called to

South America, but was first used mightily of God in the 1830s amongst the Zulus and in the salvation of King Dingane (Dingaan).¹¹ And what about Fanny Jackson Coppin [1837–1913], born a slave in Washington, DC? She was bought

and freed by an aunt, graduated from Oberlin College in 1865 and represented African

Methodist Episcopal missionary interests at the London Missionary Conference in 1888.

Between 1902–04 her husband was a bishop of the AME in South Africa, and they certainly travelled as far as Bulawayo. Back in Philadelphia she promoted mission work by African Americans in Africa.



Fanny Jackson Coppin

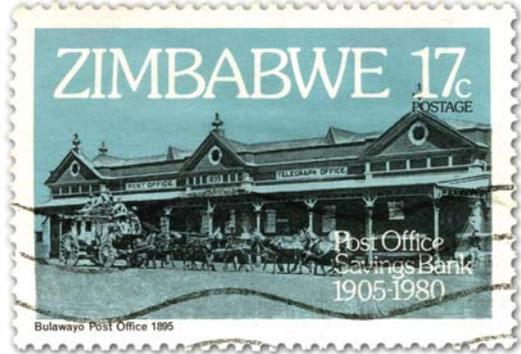
Current reports from Zimbabwe insist that there are Christian congregations in all of the indigenous peoples of the land, Bibles in eleven languages and portions in six more. It would be impossible here to recount or review them. Instead, let's focus on one work that will be of particular interest to many readers of the *Quarterly Record*.

 **The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland Mission in Zimbabwe¹²**

The mission was begun by John Boyana Radasi, a Fingo from Transkei in South Africa. The Fingo, a Bantu people

of south-east Africa, were much harassed by the Zulu and the Xhosa in the early 19th century, but protected by the British. There has been a strong and influential Christian tradition ever since. Rhodes had even invited a group of Fingo people from Cape Colony to settle at Bembesi in Matabeleland. John Radasi had travelled to the United States as a member of a choir, and there he was converted. In a remarkable unfolding of Divine Providence he came to Scotland, and into contact with the Free Presbyterian Church, becoming ordained amongst them as a minister. His desire was to go as a missionary to Matabeleland and he arrived in Bulawayo on 21 December 1904.

Speaking to an African Wesleyan minister standing on the railway platform, Radasi announced that he was looking for a place to begin mission work. A young Fingo porter overheard this and told his father in Bembesi, whereupon a group of Fingos, some of them Christian, invited John Radasi to settle among them, if the Ndebele Chief Ngege allowed. Ten acres of land were granted, and a church, a school and a home were constructed, to become the Ingwenya Mission. Reporting to Scotland he wrote, 'Our main object in keeping a school is that people may learn to read their Bible, for it is there that they can learn the doctrine of ruin by the Fall, redemption by the blood of Christ and regeneration by the Holy Ghost. These are the doctrines of absolute necessity to be taught to the heathen for salvation'.¹³



Stamp showing the Bulawayo Post Office in 1895

Government resettlement policies were overruled of God to the furtherance of the Gospel when, in 1923, Chief Bitisani with his people were moved about eighty miles northwards from the Ingwenya region to Nkayi. The chief requested of John Radasi a preacher and a teacher for his people. John Mpofo and his son Alexander went, and so the F.P. mission extended to the Shangani Reserve, a beginning of great expansion. In 1924 a Scottish minister, John Tallach, arrived in Bulawayo to join the work. On arrival he was greeted with the news of John Radasi's death, accidentally killed by a train at Bembesi Siding. The work continued and more mission stations were added to Ingwenya—Zenka Mission and Mbumba Mission.

'Kraal schools', as they were called, were opened in different communities and in 1954 a Teacher Training Centre was started at Mbumba by Rev James Fraser. A 1965 report listed thirty-one schools run directly by the Mission, 144 teachers and 5,120 pupils. During the war for independence most of these schools were

closed, and on reopening were taken over by African councils in the community. The Mission still maintains the secondary school called John Tallach Secondary School at Ingwenya Mission and five of the primary schools. Preaching at the original school stations has continued, not now in classrooms but in their own church buildings.

The John Tallach School at Ingwenya Mission is a boarding school with a day stream for locals; it has up to six hundred pupils on average with twenty-nine teachers. Students have the regular teaching of the Scriptures in school and regular preaching services. When pupils first arrive in school they are each given a TBS Authorised Version Bible and a Westminster Shorter Catechism. Boarders come from a wide area and each year they are issued with the TBS Golden Thoughts Calendars to take home with them (see the letter on page 56).

The F.P. Church mission extended to Mashonaland in 1981 when P. Mazvabo was ordained and inducted to work among the Shona people, based in Zvishavane. From there the work has branched out to cover ten congregations. Pastoral work in the Matabeleland area of Zimbabwe remains central to the mission. There are two congregations in Bulawayo: Ingwenya Mission, and Mbuma Mission and Zenka Mission with their outstations. Medical work and child care have developed strongly—both reflecting the impact of Aids on the community.

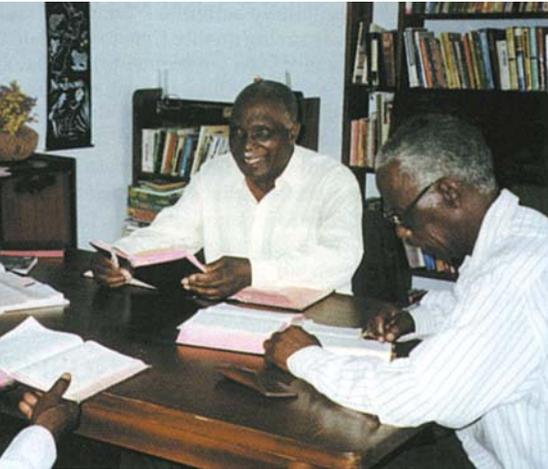


There is a Reformed bookroom in Bulawayo which stocks TBS English Bibles and Bibles in local languages, along with religious books, educational materials and stationery. *Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan in Ndebele is there, recently translated by the translation team. This team is currently involved in the revision and translation of the Ndebele Bible (for more on this, see pages 40-42). The New Testament is expected to be published shortly by the Society, who also assist in giving advice in connection with difficulties in translation.

And so the Word of God is sounded forth at over forty centres on Sabbath days by the ministers and elders of the Free Presbyterian Church throughout Zimbabwe. Golden Thoughts Calendars in English, Ndebele and Xhosa are gifted by the Society and so distributed to all these congregations.



Some current TBS publications in Ndebele



Bible study in Zimbabwe home

Finally, Brethren...

What more can be said than 'Pray for Zimbabwe'. Give thanks indeed that in all the turmoil and tumult amongst so many peoples there has been a well-diffused sowing of the Gospel and the production of several Scriptures. Praise God that Marxist Mugabe still insisted that Christian religion be taught, by Christians, in schools. In your prayers remember that, although the Muslim presence in Zimbabwe is small and mostly among the Gujarati, their influence and economic power is not. Pray for the provision of sound Scriptures, and the appearance soon of our revised New Testament. Pray for the maintaining of congregations committed to wholesome doctrine, and for the Lord's own labourers sent into a field of such rich history. Remember 'the fatherless and widows in their affliction' (James 1.27) as their numbers increase.

Endnotes:

1. *Quarterly Record* no. 548, July–September 1999.
2. *Quarterly Record* no. 538, January–March 1997.
3. Tabele, Matabele, Sindebele, amaNdebele and INdebele, all appear in literature and cartography.
4. It is ruefully suggested that Zimbabwe's national slogan could be 'Thank you for smoking' as 10% of the population derive a livelihood from tobacco. The Tobacco Sales Floor in Harare is huge, and Zimbabwe is the world's largest exporter.
5. A caucus of European nations convened to agree the 'spheres of influence' in the African continent.
6. Similarly we speak of 'Caucasian', but do not mean a specific nation, nor is there a specific 'Caucasian language'.
7. 'Zimbabwe' is from the Shona *dzimba dzamabwe*, 'stone buildings'. There were several lesser 'zimbabwes', that is 'stone-towns', as distinct from 'GREAT stone town'.
8. They also brought maize from the Americas, tobacco and tomatoes, to become part of everyday life in those parts; and lemons from India, from which is derived the Mazowe fruit squash.
9. *Operation World*, '24-7 Prayer: Zimbabwe', www.24-7prayer.com/ow/country.php?country_id=52 (9 November 2006).
10. Which, being interpreted, means that I am aware of the problems, but see no need to pursue them here.
11. His later dying efforts to reach Patagonia with the Gospel seemed to fail, but the publication of his journals brought into being the South American Missionary Society.
12. Grateful thanks are due to Catherine Macaulay of the F.P. Mission in Zimbabwe for help here.
13. Jean Nicolson, *John Boyana Radasi: Missionary to Zimbabwe* (Glasgow, Scotland: Free Presbyterian Publications, 1996), p. 71.

Ndebele Bible



In Bulawayo, the translation team meets in the house of the Benschop family.

The following details of the Ndebele Bible revision project are taken from an edition of *StandVastig*, the journal of the Gereformeerde Bijbelstichting in The Netherlands, published last year, and is here printed in translation (with slight amendments) with their kind permission.

GBS supports the Ndebele Bible Project

'We want to express our gratitude to the GBS for the financial support for the Ndebele Bible project', said Teus Benschop, who is working as translator

for the mission of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

The committee of the GBS pays the salaries of both indigenous workers. Both elders Nathaniël Mpofu and Buthi Mziya work daily on the revision and translation activities. Furthermore, translator Teus Benschop has a full day's work on this extensive project. The fourth team member is Miss Katie Macaulay, who returns shortly to Scotland. She will continue to work on the project from a distance via e-mail.

We had a conversation with Teus at our offices in Leerdam. He was at that time on furlough with his wife, Jannette, and their daughter Hannah (3) in Elst (Utrecht), staying with Jannette's parents.

Zulu Language

At the outset, Zulu was the original language of the inhabitants of Zimbabwe. Later, the Ndebele language developed. At the present time, there is a Bible in Ndebele available from the Bible Society of Zimbabwe. However, according to Teus the original Hebrew and Greek texts are not closely adhered to. Moreover, the translation philosophy employed in the translation is not correct.

For the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, these were reasons to begin work on an accurate revision of the Ndebele Bible, with the assistance of the Trinitarian Bible Society.

The activities began a few years ago. Teus Benschop was connected with the work from the beginning. He comments: 'Originally, our work consisted of an accurate verification, and where necessary, adjusting of the text. Later it appeared that far more fundamental changes were necessary. Now it can be the case that we have to translate whole passages afresh'.

The Bible translation is worked on daily. Each meeting is begun with prayer and the reading of the Scriptures. The meeting is also concluded with prayer. Prayer is of real importance in this work.

Examples

Teus Benschop gave some examples of the changes that have been made to the

Old Testament of the Ndebele Bible (these are 'back translations' into English from the Ndebele):

Job 19:26

Existing text: If I may see my witness at my side, if I may see my advocate, God Himself.

Changed to: If this is destroyed after my skin, then in my flesh shall I see God.

The differences between this translation and the Statenvertaling are a consequence of the influence of the English Authorised (King James) Version.

Isaiah 9:6

Existing text: For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; unto Him shall power and government be given, and he shall be called: Wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting father, the Prince of Peace.

Changed to: For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

New Testament finished

Whilst work continues on the Old Testament, the text of the New Testament is finished. This New Testament will shortly appear in print from the TBS.

Furthermore, the new text is already in use at services in around ten mission stations in Zimbabwe. The Bible text has

been printed on durable paper with good lettering. The durable paper has been bound in a simple binding.

The translation team is now hard at work on the Old Testament. 'We have now begun with 2 Samuel', said Teus Benschop. The activities are carried out in the office area of the home of the Benschop family in Bulawayo. There is electricity in the town, so that computers can be used. Contingency plans need to be made, because on several occasions recently the electricity has been switched off for a time. This is a consequence of the poor economic situation in the country.

Haak Bible

Which published works are being used in the translation? Benschop mentions a number of works: the Hebrew text, the Authorised (King James) Version, the Statenvertaling, the Haak Bible (the English translation of the Dutch Annotations Bible), the present Ndebele Bible and the Ndebele translation that is in use in South Africa.

Local Bibles are also used in order to find the correct words. These are the translations in Zulu, in Xhosa and in Shona. The last two languages are in use by neighbouring tribes.

In addition, the commentaries of Matthew Henry and John Gill are employed. In the case of difficult translation questions, the help of the TBS

is sought. If necessary, the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland makes the final decision.

Other projects

Besides the translation of the Bible, the team has also worked on other projects. Benschop mentioned the following:

- There were many mistakes in the Metrical Psalms. They have been accurately revised, and once more republished.
- In addition, Bunyan's *Pilgrims Progress* has been translated and printed.
- The Shorter Catechism has been revised and also once more reprinted.
- The Westminster Confession of Faith has been thoroughly corrected. Reprinting is now underway.

We at the GBS may grant assistance to this fine project by means of financial support. We wish the translators God's blessing in their work for the benefit of the people of Zimbabwe.

J. de Koning

God willing, it is hoped that when the work on the complete Ndebele Bible is finished, work will be commenced on revising the Bible in Shona, another language widely spoken in parts of Zimbabwe.

—
'GBS steunt project Bijbel in Ndebele',
StandVastig, 41.2, June 2006, pp. 16-17.

THE
NEW KING JAMES VERSION
AND THE
Song of Solomon

*An evaluation of the modern approach to
the Song of Solomon in the New King James Version*

by the Rev. G. Hamstra

A Vice-President of the Society

The Song of Solomon is a most excellent song; it is superior to and excels all other songs. This is clearly expressed in the title of the song contained in its first verse: ‘The song of songs, which is Solomon’s’. The phrase ‘song of songs’ is a Hebrew way of stating that the Song has been compared to and preferred above every other composition similar in nature. The human author, Solomon, was not only a wise king and ruler, he also excelled as a judge and counsellor, as an architect and builder, as a botanist and zoologist, and especially as an author and poet. The secret of his wisdom was a life in close communion with the Lord. The Song is highly figurative and poetical; the linguistic beauty of its original Hebrew is unsurpassed.

This book, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is an eminent portrayal of the most precious heavenly love and the unending, constant care of Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom, for His Church, His earthly bride, and likewise, of the responsive and ardent love of the Church for Christ. This latter love is a fruit of the former. The fountain of all love to Christ is His love to His people. The blessed fruit of His compassionate love is a humble and fervent love for Him. ‘We love him, because he first loved us’ (1 John 4.19).

In the past, the majority of Christian expositors have regarded the Song of Solomon as a symbolic exhibition of the special and intimate relationship between Christ and His people. In the 17th century, the Godly Scottish minister James Durham (1622–1658) prayerfully composed a most valuable and edifying exposition on the Song of Solomon. This commentary betrays the unusual Godliness and great learning of its author. It is written in simple and attractive English and it soon became a classic. Dr. John Owen highly recommended this exposition. Samuel Rutherford and John Flavel, who were contemporaries of Durham, also often portrayed the beauty of Christ by means of sermons on and quotations from the Song of Songs.

In the 18th century, Thomas Boston and Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine, who preached a rich Christ for poor sinners, followed in the same footsteps. Their attractive sermons on the Song encouraged the needy and helpless to flee to the all-sufficient Saviour for refuge. In 1724, the Godly and learned Dr. John Gill preached a series of sermons which were published on a later date (1728) with the title ‘An Exposition of the Song of Solomon’. This book ‘presents us also, with rich and charming displays of the glory of Christ’s person, the freeness of his grace to sinners, and the tenderness of his love to the church.’¹ In 1971, The Sovereign Grace Publishers produced a new edition of this valuable commentary.²

In the 19th century, the famous German preacher F.W. Krummacher (1796–1868), a faithful defender of the Truth as it is in Jesus, wrote a series of sixteen sermons entitled ‘Solomon and Shulamite’. These well-written, Christ-centred sermons were translated into various other languages. A recent English edition (1994) with an excellent translation was published by Pietan Publications³ and is highly recommended. Of the Scottish ministers of the same century, whose views on the Song were similar to those of Durham, we want to mention only for brevity’s sake two of their most outstanding men: Dr. Hugh Martin and Dr. John Kennedy.

Until the 19th century, very few have ever opposed the view held by the above-mentioned authors. In various ways, the ‘higher’ critics advanced the opinion that the Song is merely a human love song. At first, this approach met with widespread disapproval. However, gradually this viewpoint found more acceptance among the Biblical scholars. The results of this modern

interpretation have been rather negative. On the one hand, some have written in such a manner that this Bible book, so rich in contents, has been considered as having little or no attraction and significance. On the other hand, others, who are of the opinion that the poem provides Divine insight and instruction regarding sexuality, have explained the Song in a rather degrading and distasteful fashion. Such an approach dishonours God and makes a sincere believer weep with indignation.

It is quite apparent that the translators of the New King James Version have followed the path of those who are of the opinion that the bridegroom and the bride in the Song of Solomon are not Christ and the Church or the believer, but they are two human lovers.

In the first place, this is evident in the changes made in regards to the headings above the various chapters. Now it must be said that these chapter headings are not found in the original Hebrew; they are added by the translators or publishers. Their function is to help the Bible reader in understanding the subject matter of the chapter under consideration. Thus these headings are not part of the inspired Word of God. They are often an indication of the theological viewpoints of the translators or publishers. In the NKJV, the chapter headings of the Song of Solomon do not contain the name of Christ. For instance, the heading of chapter two in the Authorised (King James) Version is 'The mutual love of Christ and his church'. This heading is replaced in the NKJV by 'The Beloved's Request'.

An additional new feature in the NKJV is that the translators are indicating who the speakers are of the various sections of the Song. What is so surprising and disturbing is the manner in which this has been done. For instance, the fourth verse of chapter one has been divided into four parts!

- The Shulamite is the speaker of 'Lead me away!'
- The Daughters of Jerusalem are the speakers of 'We will run after you.'
- The Shulamite is the speaker of 'The king has brought me into his chambers.'
- And again, the Daughters of Jerusalem of 'We will be glad and rejoice in you. We will remember your love more than wine.'

The NKJV is the first and only English Bible translation that has thus separated ‘Draw me’ from ‘we will run after thee’.

This unnatural and forced approach to the text gives clear evidence that the translators of the New King James Version wish to make it known to the readers of the Song of Solomon that the Song is a mere human love song and without room for Christ and His Church. This gives us another reason to conclude that the NKJV is a new translation and not as its publishers have stated, a new and updated edition of the Authorised (King James) Version.⁴ Moreover, we are confirmed in our opinion that the NKJV is not a worthy replacement of the Authorised Version.

We firmly believe that the Song of Solomon points us to Christ and His Church. All of Scripture reveals Christ and the Song forms no exception to this truth. The explanation of a divinely-inspired Old Testament book such as the Song of Solomon does never come to its own until it has been considered in the light of the fuller Divine revelation of the New Testament.

With the Song in mind we may turn to the latter part of the fifth chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians. The Apostle Paul makes there a comparison between the intimate marriage tie, to which he alludes as a great mystery, and the mystical union between Christ and His Church. So does the Song of Solomon point us to the rich relationship of love between Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom, and the Church, His earthly Bride. This conclusion is plainly confirmed by indications offered in the Song itself.

The highly figurative language, the sudden changes in the scenes, the rapid transitions and the various striking situations, render a literal exposition truly dubious. The sudden changes in the pronouns also support our view. For example, in chapter one verse four we read, ‘Draw me, we will run after thee; the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee’ (emphasis added).

The names of the two principal characters, Solomon and the Shulamite, have their origin in two Hebrew words that are closely related. The way in which these two words are related is significant and by design. In the case of the name Solomon, the root word is the noun *shalom*, meaning ‘peace’.

Shalom points to a life of peace and friendship with God and our neighbour; its essential characteristic is wholeness. The name Solomon (*Shelomo* in the Hebrew) means the peaceful one or the peace-provider. It should be observed that the feminine equivalent of Solomon is not Shulamite, but Shelomith. The name Shelomith occurs among others in Leviticus 24.11, ‘and his mother’s name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan’. The word Shulamite (*Shulammith* in the Hebrew) is derived from the word *shulam*, a passive form of the verb *shalam*, and means reconciled one, one restored to peace and happiness. The Shulamite is one that is reconciled or restored to peace and favour. Solomon is the prince of peace and the Shulamite the daughter of peace.

Although the names do not frequently occur, the thought of peace is present throughout the entire Song. Moreover, there is progression in the Song. In the beginning of the Book the bride has a deep desire and longing for peace. When the Song closes she has found peace. ‘Then was I in his eyes as one that found favour’ (Song of Solomon 8.10). The word translated here as favour is *shalom* in the original. Therefore the translation of the Geneva Bible of 1560 is perhaps here to be preferred as it reads, ‘then was I in his eyes as one that findeth peace’. How appropriate is then the Song’s representation of Christ as the peaceful one, the peace-bringer, and His children as the partakers of His peace.

Endnotes

1. James Hervey, *Theron and Aspasio, or a series of Letters upon the most important and interesting Subjects*, 3.145; taken from *A Summary of the Life, Writings and Character of the Late Reverend and Learned John Gill, D. D.* www.pbministries.org/books/gill/Sermons&Tracts/summary.htm, 16 November 2006.
2. These publishers, originally in Grand Rapids, MI, USA, have moved to Indiana and no longer appear to publish this commentary, but it is available in a reprint from The Baptist Standard Bearer, Inc., Number One Iron Oaks Drive, Paris, Arkansas 72855, USA.
3. Pietan Publications, 26 Green Farm Road, New Ipswich, NH 03071, USA.
4. *Holy Bible: NKJV* (Nashville, TN, USA: Thomas Nelson Inc., 1990), p. vii.



Membership Renewal

Membership subscriptions for 2007 are now due

Once again we invite friends and supporters of the Society to take this opportunity, if you have not already done so, to affirm or reaffirm your prayerful association with the Society by renewing your membership or becoming a member perhaps for the first time. This may be done either by completing the enclosed* form or by completing one online at www.trinitarianbiblesociety.org under 'Membership'.

Membership in the Society runs from January to December and is renewable annually. However, applications/renewals received after 1st October are deemed to count for the following calendar year unless the supporter requests otherwise.

Each person desiring membership must complete the Membership Form in full for each year of membership. Husbands and wives may use one form, but both must

complete and sign. Online, however, each member must complete the form individually. Many supporters make regular donations by standing order direct into the Society's bank account, and one of these can be counted as a subscription. However, in that case a Membership Form still needs to be completed and we would ask such supporters to make a note on their form that they wish part of their regular standing order to be used for their subscription. A letter of acknowledgement and thanks will be sent once the completed form is received and matched with a standing order payment.

Life Members are reminded that a Membership Form must be completed and signed by them to reaffirm their continuing agreement with the aims and Constitution of the Society. A subscription need not be paid. (Life Membership is no longer available.)

The enclosed Membership Form, if used, may be returned directly to the Society's International Headquarters or to your National Branch Secretary or Local Auxiliary Secretary. Our *Quarterly Record* magazine, which is free upon request, is sent automatically to all of the Society's members.

If any of our friends would like to begin or renew membership but have not received a Membership Form, we would invite you to contact the nearest Branch at the address on the inside back cover.

* The Membership Form was mailed with the October to December 2006 *Quarterly Record* to the great majority of our overseas supporters.

The Word of God Among All Nations



'The field is the world,'
'The seed is the Word of God'

Europe

From Croydon, London, England

This is a picture that I took on East Croydon station. The posters were at the end of Platform 1 and are in a good position on a busy platform.

TBS poster at East Croydon Station

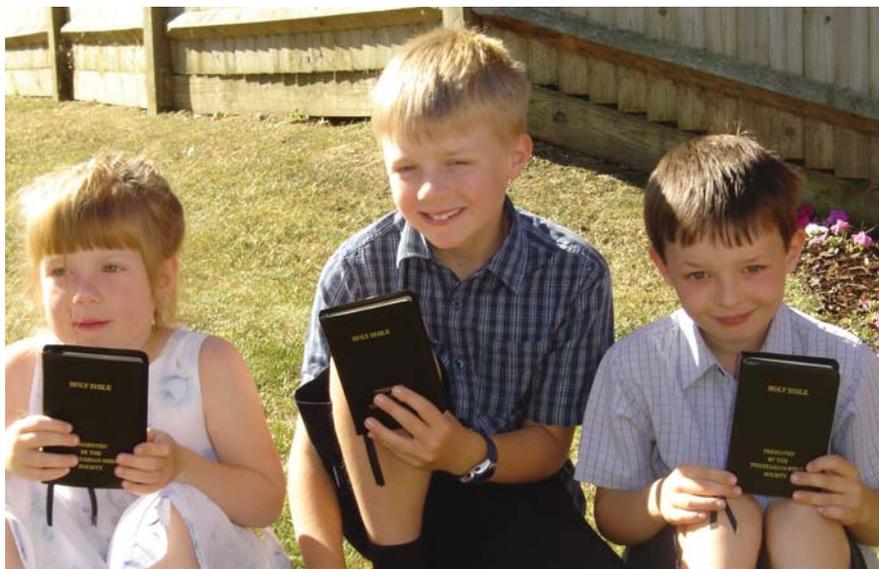


From Southsea, Hampshire, England

Thank you for sending the Sabbath School Learning Prize Bibles so promptly. It is our intention to present the Bibles to the girls on the last Lord's Day of this month. I'm sure they will be delighted with them. They have worked so hard over the last eighteen months learning the Scriptures and also studying them in our little Bible School. May the entrance of God's Word give light to their souls (Psalm 119.130), and may the Lord be pleased to bless your work and labour of love.

From Ashford, Kent, England

Thank you for the gift of Bibles for the memory verse prizes. We attach some pictures as requested. I hope they are helpful. *[For more information regarding the Sabbath School Learning Prize Fund, please contact Miss Anne Newman at Tyndale House. More photographs can be found in the Fund announcement in QR577, page 48.]*



Children in Kent with their SSLPF Bibles

Middle East

From Jerusalem, Israel

Thank you for the Bibles received. We have given some of your Bibles to interested persons. The reference Bible is especially useful here to show the unity and harmony between the Old and the New Testaments. A young man who is studying English at the Hebrew University is showing interest and has been given a TBS Hebrew Bible and a Reference Bible. We hope and pray that the Lord Himself will draw him and bless His own Word. There is some demand here for the Hebrew/English (complete O.T. and N.T.) Bible. Could the TBS consider producing a Hebrew/English Bible?

North America

From Boise, ID, USA

I wanted to add my thanks to TBS and enthusiasm for your collection of children's colouring books based upon Scripture texts, the Commandments, books of the Bible, etc. I have a drawer full of them and keep them on hand for those who visit on the Lord's Day with young children. They are a great aid to helping others understand some of the things we might engage children in doing while keeping the Lord's Day, and they are small and affordable enough that I can easily give the children each their own outright, to take home with them. I know they are for use any day of the week, but I just

wanted to add my plug for them as good Lord's Day activities since they are based upon the Word of God, and contain no offensive use of icons such as are found in so many items sold for children at some so-called 'Christian bookstores' here.

South America

From Cordoba, Argentina

Many thanks for the consignment of literature that you sent us. Earlier Christians from Australia visited one of the churches here. They were astonished to see that in the whole congregation there was only one Bible. Cordoba is in the centre of Argentina. In Argentina there is freedom for the cults, but we have a difficult process to go through in order to get the literature from the post. The Customs Office demands all the legal paperwork and certificates from us. We have all the paperwork ready for the next consignment, but this time we had to pay a fine of \$95. The material was obtained and is of much blessing. The literature that you sent is of much use. In November we distributed 1,500 tracts, and we are seeing conversions from this work. Glory to God. Thank you.

From Asuncion, Paraguay

Thank you very much for these Bibles (Spanish Bibles, New Testaments, and Gospels of John). All arrived in perfect

shape. These Bibles will be used in our ministry with young people. There are always some who attend, who need a Bible. Three young men have made a profession of faith. We will share some of this literature up and down the Paraguay River, but they surely could use a shipment of their own if possible. There is still very little regular support for the river boat ministry. Pedro Juan Caballero is a border town with Brazil. We can use and distribute any amount of literature in Portuguese. There is a great need.

From San Juan, Argentina

Thank you for the consignment of Bibles and other literature that you sent us; we distributed them to children and young people who are very poor materially, but are spiritually rich, as they know the Lord Jesus and now walk in His ways, in His love and grace. Our work, for many years, has led us to work in areas where there is much poverty. We take them clothes, food, shoes, but the most important is that they know the Lord and walk in His will. The literature that you sent arrived in good hands and hearts thirsting to know more of the Word of God. We would be grateful if you could send us literature whenever you can. If you send me more than two parcels a year, please vary the name that the parcel is addressed to. Customs allow each individual to receive two parcels a year, but for any extra parcels we have to pay Customs taxes!

 **From Bartica, Essequibo River, Guyana**

Many thanks for the Bibles which you have so kindly sent. I have started to distribute them free of charge to Indian converts in the interior of Guyana. Some of them have never seen a Bible before. They are eager to read and study your Bibles.

 **India**

 **From Dowlaiswaram, East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh**

Hearty greetings in the precious Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is a big demand for the Bibles. I have distributed the booklets [‘Believe Not Every Spirit’, MTB6] in public centres. I have received some letters from idol worshippers. They have repented and are asking me to give them baptism. Through your literature some of the lost souls are receiving Jesus into their sinful lives. I thank you very much for your kind help in the Lord’s work. I am appreciating your kind love and help. I paid 30 Rupees for the Customs Duty for the parcel! We are praying for your Bible Society and the Lord’s work. Due to lack of camera, I cannot send pictures at present.

 **From Rajahmundry, East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh**

Hearty greetings to you all in the most worthy and precious Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is

coming very soon. Thanking you so much for your parcels which were sent to us with prayer and love. After a word of prayer we knelt down and opened the parcel. We were so happy about your New Testaments, greetings cards, and ‘Better than Gold’ booklets. If possible, please send us some more literature and Bibles, for giving to Hindu people, because in our area, all are idol worshippers. Please pray for our Gospel ministry. Daily we are all praying for your ministry. Kindly remember us in your love and prayers.

 **From Anaparthi, East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh**

I express our gratitude to our beloved friends at the Trinitarian Bible Society. We are overwhelmed with joy. Thanks for your love and affection for us. I distributed the Scriptures along with my co-workers prayerfully and carefully in schools, hospitals, factory farms, and prison cells. As a result, one young man who was a terrible drunkard has got rid of the alcohol and smoking, after he read the Scriptures. He is now attending my church. A young girl, who was an atheist, has changed her wicked heart since she gave her life to Jesus Christ. Many have given their lives to Christ from the wicked world. My work is done mostly in the remote rural areas where the majority are Hindus and Muslims. We are preaching the Saviour Jesus Christ among the unreached millions of heathen idolaters.



Bibles for Indian women

From Aminjikarai,
Chennai (Madras), Tamil Nadu

Greetings in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We received all three parcels safely and have distributed your Scriptures very carefully, and free to the new brethren of our Lord Jesus Christ, coming from different places and religions, Hindus and Muslims. One of the men, who was a drug addict, is now saved through your Scriptures. Please note that I am unable to contribute towards packing and distribution because at present my income is just one dollar a day only. When the time comes, I will send a contribution to you without fail. Let the Lord Jesus Christ bless your Society abundantly.

From Pithapuram, East Godavari
District, Andhra Pradesh

Thanks for your prayers. Last week we did outreach ministry for three days. We covered twelve villages neighbouring Pithapuram. Women received the Gospel with gladness. Nearly one hundred people accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour. They are unable to buy Bibles. They are the poorest of the poor.

From Ongole, Prakasam District,
Andhra Pradesh

My Christian love and greetings to you all in the mighty Name of Jesus Christ. Thank you so much for the most valuable grant of English Holy Bibles.

When I started distribution, several non-Christians accepted a copy. One brother said, 'This Bible is the most beautiful thing on this earth. I love it'. Some people have requested Telugu Bibles. Please try to send Telugu Bibles, too.

From Kudankulam, Tirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu

Greetings to you in the sweet Name of our Lord Jesus Christ! I would like to express my heartfelt thanks for the four parcels of Scriptures (English Bibles and Tamil Gospels of John). Everyone in our congregation is helping to get them into the hands of hungry sinners. We have a definite burden for the lost. We want to win them for Christ. I have given the literature to the hospitals, schools, colleges, and railway junctions. Our Lord is working mightily here in south India, and souls are coming to Him in deep repentance and faith in Christ. Our hearts were thrilled as they were distributed and we heard of many coming to Christ. May God bless you very richly as we labour together for the extension of His Kingdom and the salvation of precious souls.

Asia

From Mindanao, the Philippines

Warm and happy greetings in the matchless Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I confirm that the grant, which you have sent for the Lord's work, has

safely arrived. One of my friends, a member of the Latter Day Saints 'Mormon', I gave him one Ruby Text Bible, while I explained to him about the Gospel of Salvation in Jesus Christ alone! The Cebuano Tribe needs Cebuano Bibles due to the reason that some of them could not understand English Bibles.

[Many of the world's tribal languages are yet without the Word of God. Pray that the Lord will raise up translators skilled in the Biblical languages and the target language, and direct such to the Society.]

From Dumaguete City, the Philippines

God works in mysterious ways! We waited for the parcels for almost four months, and it was our great joy to receive them just at the time we needed them. We were having our soul-winning training course; we desired to give each trainee his or her Bible, so we waited and just the day before we left, the Grant Notice arrived. Thanks be to God for His perfect way and timing. Thank you as well for the labour of love given to us. We are so blessed to know that God has been using you to bring many people near to the heart of God through His living and infallible Word. I may not see you on earth, but I am glad I can pray for you all. God bless you all.



Zambian Christians with their new Bibles

Africa

From Ekiti State, Nigeria

Calvary love and Christian greetings to you all in the mighty Name of Jesus Christ. This letter acknowledges the receipt of Golden Thoughts Calendars. Honestly speaking the edifying content of these materials are worth to us more than a trillion US dollars. I cherish these writings a great deal, because the contents are a cornucopia of God's blessing to us. May God continue to bless and prosper you all, for reaching out to us and numerous others through the gospel literature in the mighty Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From Kitwe, Copperbelt, Zambia

We received the box of Bibles. We gave them to the young Christians in

the church, who are not able to afford to buy the Scriptures, but also are exhibiting that deep love for the Scriptures. In the church there is a deep love for the King James Version among the youth. We deeply appreciate your help. There are many people in the outlying areas of our city where I go to minister. They are very much in need of Bibles.

From Katete, Zambia

I wish to thank you very much indeed for your favourable kindness and steadfast love toward us all. I received all three parcels and I checked all Golden Thoughts Calendars, they were very clean and smooth, and no damages. I distributed them free of charge to people. This Golden Thoughts Calendar has been very helpful even to widows to cool their hearts. I was impressed by a woman,

when she talked about her late husband (a magistrate), that he liked this Calendar very much. It was his daily life. Before he died, he instructed her how to read it daily to guide the whole family.

 **From Bulawayo, Zimbabwe**

Again we write you to acknowledge receipt of another year's supply of Golden Thoughts Calendars in Ndebele and Xhosa—fourteen parcels: 2,400 English, 2,800 Ndebele and 100 Xhosa. And we pray with you that the Word written in them may be blessed to those who receive them. This year they arrived in good time. At first, we thought there would be a problem in collecting them as there was a new Customs ruling that we had to have them cleared by Customs, filling in forms, etc. However, that was soon overcome. The lady at Customs had had two children in our school, so it was obvious to her what the boxes contained, and that the calendars were not for sale. (All the pupils in our secondary school receive an English copy of GTC to take home.) We got a clearing agent to clear them. The calendars have now been distributed to the ministers in charge of congregations, and then will be given out in time for the new year. For many households, this will be their only calendar. So we hope that as they look up the dates, the Word of Life will be blessed to them. We have need of the Lord's blessing on the land as so many of the younger generation are dying.

 **From Harare, Zimbabwe**

I am sending this e-mail to you passing great appreciation for the Bibles that I managed to order while I was there in England during my last visit. I kept some of them and little did I know that there was going to be some problems in our country whereby many people were found homeless and this has resulted many to lose their properties including Bibles, books, and all other materials that are useful in their work of ministering. It is now very hard to rediscover all those materials because many of the properties were set fire and it's no more. With the few Bibles that I had I was able to help a few people understand the language. I am so happy that I was able to help in such a manner. We also gave food and blankets and some cooking oil as this is yet another opportunity where I was able to share the Gospel to these needy people and provide them with some Bibles and some leaflets and means of encouraging them. I pray you will look into these things and will be a blessing if you are able. As God leads I will be able to make sure that I will forward some donations towards this order. Though we are suffering I feel we must learn to be a blessing, too.

Although certain phrases and expressions used in these letters may not be doctrinally accurate or in correct English, and for reasons of space letters may have to be edited, 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.



Trinitarian Bible Society

International Headquarters

Tyndale House,
Dorset Road,
London,
SW19 3NN,
England

Telephone: (020) 8543 7857

Facsimile: (020) 8543 6370

e-mail: TBS@trinitarianbiblesociety.org

Web site: www.trinitarianbiblesociety.org

Office Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Registered Charity Number: 233082

V.A.T. Registration Number: GB 215 9219 67

Auditors:

Jacob Cavenagh & Skeet

Acorn House,
2 Greenhill Crescent,
Watford Business Park,
Watford, Herts. WD18 8AH

Solicitors:

Bates, Wells & Braithwaite

2-6 Cannon Street,
London,
EC4M 6YA

Bankers:

Barclays Bank PLC

7th Floor, United Kingdom House,
180 Oxford Street,
London, W1D 1EA

Sterling Account No.: 70023531 **Sort Code:** 20-32-29

IBAN Sterling Account No.: GB34 BARC 2032 2970 0235 31

Euro Account No.: 72732599

IBAN Euro Account No.: GB85 BARC 2032 2972 7325 99

International Branches

Australian Branch

President & National Secretary: Mr.M.F.Stuart
Trinitarian Bible Society (Australia),

G.P.O.Box 777

Sydney 2001, Australia

Tel.: 1300 303 827

Fax: 1300 783 827

e-mail: TBS@trinitarianbiblesociety.org.au

Brazilian Branch

President: The Rev. Dr. T. L. Gilmer

Sociedade Bíblica Trinitariana do Brasil,
Rua Julio de Castilhos, 108/120

Belenzinho

03059-000 São Paulo, SP

Brazil

Tel.: (011) 6693-5663

Fax: (011) 6695-3635

e-mail: sbtb@biblias.com.br

Canadian Branch

Canadian General Secretary: Mr. G. den Boer, B.A.

Trinitarian Bible Society (Canada)

259 - 7610 Evans Road

Chilliwack, B.C., V2R 2Z5, Canada

Tel.: (604) 858-2354

Fax: (604) 858-8326

e-mail: tbs@caylix.com

New Zealand Branch

Secretary: Mr. U. Haringa

Trinitarian Bible Society (New Zealand),

17 Heatherlea Street,

P.O. Box 740, Gisborne,

New Zealand

Tel. & Fax: 06-863-3700

U.S.A. Branch

President: Mr. J. Stehouwer

Trinitarian Bible Society (U.S.A.)

927 Alpine Commerce Park,

Suite 100, Grand Rapids,

Michigan 49544,

U.S.A.

Tel.: (616) 735-3695

Fax: (616) 785-7237

e-mail: tbsusa@sbcglobal.net

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.

For introductory literature and catalogue please write to the Society at the address given.

ISSN 0049-4712



9 770049 471000 >



**Rocky outcrop, Matopos Hills,
near Bulawayo, Zimbabwe**



Trinitarian Bible Society

*Tyndale House, Dorset Road,
London, SW19 3NN, England*

*e-mail: TBS@trinitarianbiblesociety.org
www.trinitarianbiblesociety.org*