



Quarterly Record



The Magazine of the Trinitarian Bible Society

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2007



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Trinitarian Bible Society

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

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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 NEW KING JAMES VERSION

The Society is increasingly concerned at the growing popularity of the New King James Version, even amongst its supporters and supporting churches. A new article is in the final stages of preparation concentrating upon many of the inadequacies of this Bible. It is hoped that the article may be available at the Annual General Meeting in September.

From the Assistant General Secretary

What is the benefit of the Word of God?

All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. 2 Timothy 3.16, 17

Blessed *be* the Lord, *who* daily loadeth us *with benefits*, even the God of our salvation. Selah. Psalm 68.19

What shall I render unto the LORD *for* all his benefits toward me? Psalm 116.12

For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard *it*. Hebrews 4.2

I had occasion recently to attend a day-long seminar in connection with the recent enactment of the new Charities Act for England and Wales. One of the main features of this piece of legislation is that for the first time, hundreds, if not thousands, of charities will be obliged to demonstrate that they provide a public benefit if they are to retain their privileged status. Amongst these are all the religious charities, many of which, like the Society, have been around for much more than a hundred years. Hitherto, **the**

advancement of religion has been automatically assumed to confer public benefit, but in future every religious institution that wishes to retain or establish charitable status, with all its tax and ancillary advantages, will have to set out in its Annual Report in a few paragraphs the ways in which it benefits society. Peripheral or incidental benefits, however ‘worthy’ or long conferred, will not count towards the primary objective.

Thus I was gathered with some two dozen other ‘religious’ charity representatives, together with a similar number of charity lawyers specialising in religious charities, and during several hours we wrestled with the concept of ‘public benefit’, and how it can be demonstrated. I made the point that, at least in much of the developed Western world, churches and other Christian charities that seek to present the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ are in the anomalous position of having a wonderfully beneficial commodity to give away, but which hardly anyone wants! How would that affect the overall concept of conferring ‘public benefit’? Just what proportion of the public would have to be keen to have what we long for them to receive for it to be judged by (inevitably, at least at the present time) secular and ungodly authorities that a benefit has been conferred? How, if at all, can such benefits be measured?

Happily, for the Society at least, there is (as yet) no restriction on the geographical area where benefit is conferred. Furthermore, the stated intention of the Government is that it should not be ‘onerous’ for a religious charity to satisfy the new requirements. We shall see.

The irony, of course, is that whereas the precious Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is of incalculable benefit to all mankind, most shun it or, worse, oppose it vehemently. On the other hand, the ‘benefits’ supposedly conferred by other religions and religious bodies, and those ‘Christian’ institutions that fall far short of any true understanding of the definition of Christian in accordance with Holy Scripture, would in the judgment of most right-thinking people of God amount to absolutely nothing—indeed that hideous word coined from Scottish charity law which seems to have caught on in the minds of the legislators, i.e., ‘disbenefit’, comes very much to mind in that context.

All this, of course, steers comfortably clear of that major bone of contention these days, that the activities of certain religions and their adherents and their charities do tremendous damage at incalculable cost to society, through terrorism and other linked activities, where God’s people are often targeted and made to suffer. One can imagine that one of the most delicate

issues to be faced by the Charity legislators and their Charity Commission is precisely that, of determining where the activities of a minority of a certain persuasion or of a particular organisation are so destructive as far to outweigh any 'benefits' said to be conferred, even those conceived by the secular world, and thus to debar those bodies from any award of charitable status.

It was very apparent from some comments made at the seminar that there will be a great deal of denial and pretence about such issues.

Unlike many Christian charities, and certainly unlike churches with their good works done in the name of Christ Jesus, this Society does not engage in general 'charitable' acts, or even, by the general understanding of the term, in 'the advancement of religion'. Our main aim is to distribute the Word of God to as many people, of as many tongues, and in as many countries, as we are enabled by the Lord. It is the Word of God that can then confer the most remarkable and unsurpassed benefits, when read, preached, received and mixed with faith in the hearts of the hearers. Such is the work of others, and predominantly of course, in terms of the effectual work in the heart, of the Holy Spirit.

This all set me thinking upon the immense benefits to be derived from the Word of God. That well-known couple of verses from 2 Timothy 3, shown at the head of this article, declare the truth of this in unsurpassable words. The key word, of course, is 'profitable'; the Word of God is always 'able to profit', as the Lord God sees fit, but it is not an automatic thing. Hebrews 4.2 proves that clearly. Faith is required, that faith that 'cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God' (Romans 10.17). That faith is in itself a gift of God (Ephesians 2.8). All we can do—and it is an enormous contribution in the light of the Word of God—is to provide the tools, and to do our utmost to ensure that those tools are fashioned as accurately as can be achieved, by reference to the 'blueprint' of what the Lord God originally said, as recorded for us in the best available copies of the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts.

Within this edition of the *Quarterly Record*, you will find a detailed account of the methods employed by our friends who labour on the Society's new edition of our Spanish Bible. Such meticulous attention to detail and awareness of the smallest nuances of the original languages is that which the translation of God's Word deserves, and requires. It is no ordinary

task. We are handling something at once very delicate and very powerful. How dare we ignore or gloss over or presume to change that which the Holy Spirit of God has decreed? To paraphrase an analogy employed long ago by Mr Spurgeon, we desire to let loose a lion to accomplish his overpowering work, not a muzzled cat scarcely retaining any of its strength or sharpness.

This brings me, in closing this brief meditation, to a strange dichotomy that seems to exist between believers in this country and in other countries of the developed world, and believers in those lands where poverty and squalor prevail, where false religion often exerts its baleful influence, and where the Word of God is precious, i.e., scarce, as in Samuel's day.

Whereas many of our friends and supporters in the comfortable West often have several Bibles, those in the Third World typically have none. Those in the first group may sometimes contact us to buy a Bible, or more frequently we deal with the intermediary, a bookshop or a church for example, which will acquire Bibles for its customers or its congregation or perhaps its outreach. It can all seem so matter of fact. It is a commercial transaction, and often conducted as such. We do not receive many letters begging us for Bibles from the shires or the cities of England, for example. Occasionally we hear from the destitute, the imprisoned, the outcasts of society, and they may be more impassioned than the rest, but in the main there seems little **hunger** for the Word of God in these prosperous lands. Could it be, paradoxically, that there is actually a famine of the **hearing** of the words of the Lord in these places, even where Bibles, yes, even Authorised Version Bibles, are relatively abundant—as **Amos 8.11** predicts?

Conversely, how many letters we receive from the Third World that are pleading with us to send Bibles, or even a Gospel or a tract, anything they can get their hands on of the Word of God! Of course, these people can afford little if anything in payment. We rejoice that we can supply so much free of charge, but it is only a fraction of what we are asked for. Absence makes the heart grow fonder; familiarity breeds contempt.

I am reminded of those chilling words of our Lord Jesus Christ in **Matthew 11**: he was speaking to multitudes concerning John the Baptist, and used the remarkable expression in **verse 12**: 'And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force'. In **Luke 16.16** He uses a different expression in that same context, which helps us to appreciate more fully what He means: 'The law

and the prophets *were* until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it’.

So, our Lord appears to be alluding to three distinct eras (or groups of hearers):- firstly, that era before John the Baptist commenced his ministry (**Matthew 11.13**, ‘For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John’); secondly, that era of no more than a few months, in all probability, from when John began to prophesy of the coming of Christ until the time of this discourse—characterised by the extraordinary events described in **Matthew 11.12** and **Luke 16.16**; and finally, the period of Christ’s own immediate ‘generation’ of hearers, to which He turns His attention in **Matthew 11** verses 16–19.

There, the Lord Jesus Christ likens these hearers to children in the marketplace that would not respond either to music or mourning, that refused to react in the way of the former generation that had flocked to the Lord under the preaching of John.

It seems that these words of our Saviour could well describe the apathy that seems to prevail towards the Word of God in our day and generation too, whereas in many other lands, as described above, there is a holy violence in the rushing to hear the preaching of the Gospel of God, a craving for His Word, a burden for the lost.

May I ask you how much you relish God’s Word? How much do you appreciate its benefits? How avidly do you feast upon it day by day? Are you receiving it, are you hearing it, are you doing it as well, as **James 1.22–25** teaches? Do those verses from the Psalms at the head of this article thrill you, and apply to you?

In these dark days for the cause of Christ one of the tell-tale signs is a lack of appreciation for the Holy Scriptures. The wholesale departure from the Authorised Version to other more popular but less accurate and faithful editions is an evidence of the very famine that Amos mentions. Those from other lands who crave the Bible often write to us asking specifically for the Authorised Version. They have no trouble understanding it, with the help of God’s enlightening Spirit. Those who are more ‘educated’ often use their earthly wisdom against God, it seems, and cut themselves off from the best translation of what God originally said.

Please join with us in praying not only that we may be enabled to meet more of the demand for Bibles from abroad, in many other languages than

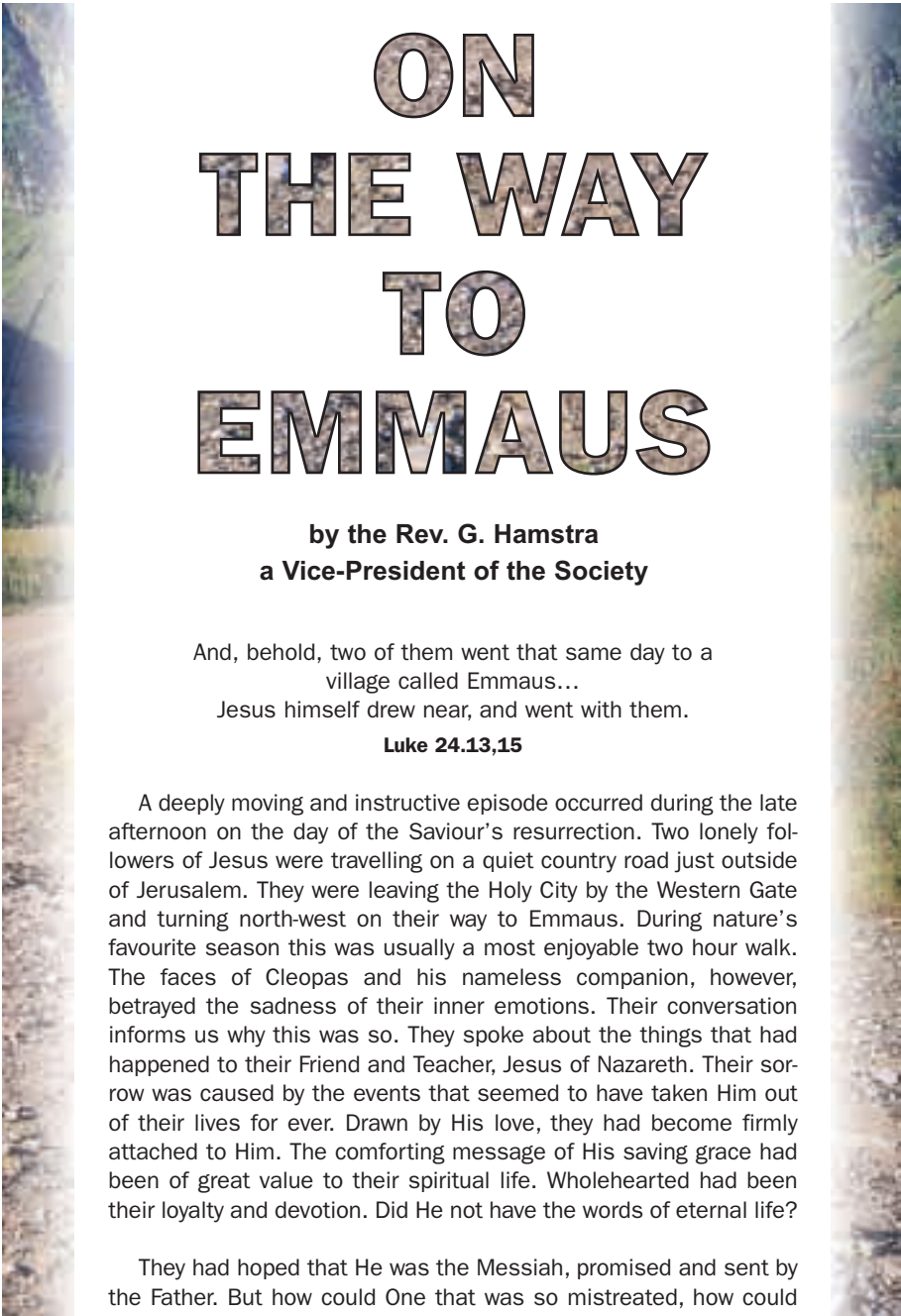
English, too, of course, but that we will receive a welter of requests from churches and individuals and bookshops in this land, Europe, Australia, Canada and the United States, as the Holy Spirit convicts many of their need, hunger and thirst for God's true Word, and causes them to beg us to supply it. May it be so, for His glory! Then will even the world have to acknowledge that the distribution of the Word of God confers undeniable benefits upon men, women and children, even upon governments and authorities, and upon the whole foundation and fabric of society.

Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin *is* a reproach to any people.
Proverbs 14.34.

Finally, it would be remiss of us not to mention our immense gratitude to the Lord for sparing our dear friend Mr. Mark Wilson, our Office Manager. Recently diagnosed with a form of lymphoma, he underwent a long and quite dangerous operation, and we rejoice that the malignant material no longer seems to be present (though Mark is 'assured' it is still within); far from facing many months of painful chemotherapy he is well enough to resume work, initially on a part-time basis as he recovers his strength. We are most grateful to the many of our supporters who were aware of Mark's illness, which had been developing unseen within him for many months, and who sought the mercy of the Lord upon him at the Throne of Grace. Please continue to pray that Mark will know a full recovery and be able to resume the work he loves at full capacity.

THE TREASURY

We warmly thank the donors of the following anonymous gifts which have been received since the previous *Quarterly Record* went to press. Reigate £236; Edinburgh £100, £30, £10; Kent two of £50; Keighley £250; by hand £20; postal orders £5; cash £10; Charities Aid Foundation £128.21, £104.80; Give As You Earn £55.27, £35.94, £26.34, £20.47; church donation three of £75; South West Charitable Giving three of £94.44; Stewardship Services £100; The Sharon Trust £250; direct into the bank £46,800, £30, three of £25; via Speakers £30, £20; via Auxiliaries two of £5; other £100, £20. **Total £49,075.35.** We have also received a donation direct into our London bank account of CHF10,000 in Swiss Francs, another CHF10,000 direct into the TBS (Australia) bank account, and a third for Can\$9,310.14 into the bank account of our Canadian Branch.



ON THE WAY TO EMMAUS

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

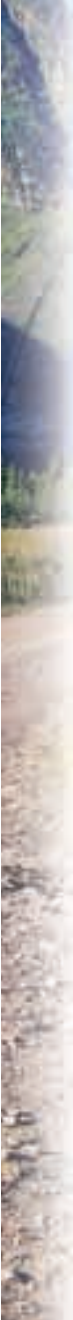
And, behold, two of them went that same day to a
village called Emmaus...

Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

Luke 24.13,15

A deeply moving and instructive episode occurred during the late afternoon on the day of the Saviour's resurrection. Two lonely followers of Jesus were travelling on a quiet country road just outside of Jerusalem. They were leaving the Holy City by the Western Gate and turning north-west on their way to Emmaus. During nature's favourite season this was usually a most enjoyable two hour walk. The faces of Cleopas and his nameless companion, however, betrayed the sadness of their inner emotions. Their conversation informs us why this was so. They spoke about the things that had happened to their Friend and Teacher, Jesus of Nazareth. Their sorrow was caused by the events that seemed to have taken Him out of their lives for ever. Drawn by His love, they had become firmly attached to Him. The comforting message of His saving grace had been of great value to their spiritual life. Wholehearted had been their loyalty and devotion. Did He not have the words of eternal life?

They had hoped that He was the Messiah, promised and sent by the Father. But how could One that was so mistreated, how could




One that was crucified, be the Redeemer of Israel? They were sorely disappointed. The rumours about the empty tomb and the absent body of Christ only added to their perplexity. Yet, the longing for His nearness remained alive. They missed Him and could not live without Him.

How wondrous was the love of the risen Saviour! As the Good Shepherd, He searched for His longing and wounded sheep; they needed Him. On account of their lack of understanding, they could no longer hope in Him, neither could they seek or find Him. Therefore in their helpless grief, **He** sought and found **them**. How precious is this Saviour! On this lonely road to Emmaus He joined their company, acting as a stranger. While they were still grieving and not aware of His presence, He was already with them. By divine purpose and wisdom their eyes were holden that they would not recognise Him.

When He questioned them about their conversation, they could hardly imagine how anyone, even a stranger, would not have known about this supremely important occurrence. The inquiries He made were for no other purpose than that they would unburden their hearts and make known to Him both their sorrow and their ignorance. They needed this opportunity to speak about the anxious concern of their hearts. Revealing their sincere affection, they told Him about the One who had shown Himself a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people. Now this great One was taken away from them and crucified by His enemies.

He gave them a sympathetic ear and at the same time He rebuked them. Yet His reproof was their consolation. They were corrected concerning their misunderstanding of the sufferings of Jesus. They had failed to grasp what the Old Testament Scriptures teach regarding the nature of His Messianic office. Their Lord and Saviour realised that His instruction was urgently needed. He taught them by His Word. From the Prophets and the Psalms, He showed them that Israel's promised Redeemer had to suffer before He could enter into His glory. What happened to Jesus of Nazareth—what the adversaries had done to Him—was not a tragedy. It was according to the Father's will and purpose. His sufferings were required as the ransom price to redeem His guilty people. This humiliation needed to precede His exaltation. They should not have been so amazed at His sufferings. Had they known and understood the Scriptures, had they given heed to His instruction, would they not have expected the Servant of the Lord to suffer? Would they not have rejoiced at the message of the



empty tomb? Would they not have welcomed the angelic announcement that He was risen?

As He unfolded the rich treasures of so many well-remembered Scripture passages, their fainting, drooping hearts revived. He enlightened their minds regarding the wonderful purpose of His sufferings. Their hearts began to burn within them. They felt so familiarly drawn to this unknown Companion. Time passed quickly; before they realised it, they had reached their destination. The Stranger appeared ready to travel on. In their pure and unaffected love they could not part with Him. By faith and love they constrained Him: "Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent" (vs. 29). He favourably answered their petition. They expressed a desire still known to sincere followers of Jesus. He allows the loving heart, longing for His abiding presence, so to constrain Him.

He entered the home and became their Guest. It appeared as if He would remain with them for the night. The evening meal was quickly prepared; the table was set. They reclined for dining according to their customs. No one was surprised that the Stranger became the Host. He took the bread, blessed and broke it. While He was giving it to them, almost imperceptibly their eyes were opened. They saw Him whom their souls loved. How memorable a moment! They knew Him, Jesus their Saviour. Then He vanished out of their sight. His purpose had been fulfilled. Their hearts did overflow. They abounded in joy and happiness. Jesus was alive and they had met Him: an overwhelming reality, yet infinitely precious.

The entire conversation of the afternoon was in harmony with their experience around the dining table. How wondrously did He teach them! The effect was expressed in the well-known words: 'Did not our heart burn within us?' (vs. 32). The valuable instruction of the Saviour made it all plain to them. The Scriptures teach the beneficial and saving power of the suffering and exaltation of the Messiah. These precious truths made their hearts so warm within, warm with renewed faith, hope and peace. No one could speak like that, but He.

Immediately they returned to Jerusalem. Their weariness had disappeared. They had to share the good news with their fellow believers. When they arrived, they were met with the triumphant greeting: 'The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon' (vs. 34). The two men from Emmaus then related their experience. It was another confirmation of the good news of the Saviour's resurrection.

Turkey



A land of Christian turmoil

by C.P. Hallihan

'To confess Christ in Turkey, and to endure there, needs much grace.'

So began the last short paragraph of the article on Turkey in *Quarterly Record* no. 561, October to December 2002. Five years on, in the midst of a marked lack of attention to Turkey in the general media, my e-mail inbox is filling with accounts from Christians in several countries of the atrocity perpetrated in Malatya on April 18th this year.

Malatya is a town (and a province) in the south-east of Turkey, east of the Taurus

Mountains, just west of the Euphrates. It is the beginning of a region still labeled, in faint print, as Kurdistan on my desk atlas.¹ The town is some two hundred miles north-east of Tarsus, and about the same distance north of Antakya, site of the ancient town of Antioch, where the disciples were first called Christians. On Bible maps of Paul's journeys the province approximates to the region of Cilicia.

In Malatya is a thirty-strong evangelical church where Necati Aydin was pastor. On Easter Sunday Pastor Aydin had arranged an evangelistic meeting for an invited

congregation in a local hotel conference room, which five young men known and accepted as 'seekers' attended. On Wednesday April 18th² the same young men attended a further Bible Study in the hotel. After the reading of Scripture these young men assaulted, tormented and slaughtered Necati Aydin, a fellow labourer Ugur Yuksel, and a German missionary translator Tilmann Geske.³ The assailants were members of a *tarik*, an association of 'faithful believers' in Islam. On present information all are in custody, and will be brought to trial as terrorists.

A Christian missionary in Ankara wrote:

This was a significant event for the church in Turkey. We've known this country is difficult and we've known it was dangerous, but this was a new thing for us. A friend who used to work in Pakistan was surprised that this was the first case of martyrdom for the modern Protestant church in Turkey and that reaction made me realize how fortunate we really have been. But that doesn't change the shock or pain of it all. After all, we are a minuscule community of less than 3,000 people.

In the past we have had believers beaten up and nearly killed. We've had people threatened and held at knife point. We've had lots of rocks thrown at church buildings along with bomb threats and some more violent protests. There was even a small bomb at a Christian stand in

a book fair a number of years ago. All of this had made me realize that one day there would be something uglier—that the church will spill blood one day. So on one level at least this wasn't a surprise.

Even though we were aware of the dangers and could predict that there would one day be killings, it still came as a shock when it happened.

Malatya is a small town and the believers there have had threats. It's a town known for its over-weening nationalism so it's a logical place for something like this to happen. But the manner in which it was done and the ugly reality of it still caught us all off guard.

The church here has responded very well and with great maturity.⁴

The testimony of the wounded church and families receives much commendation, as believers and pastors from elsewhere gathered to share the burden and the sorrow and to relieve the families of some of the legal and media issues. In



Necati Aydin



Ugur Yuksel



Tilmann Geske

face of an attempt to block the funeral of Tilmann Geske in Malatya with the rumoured ‘impropriety’ of any Muslim digging such a grave, the men of the church in Adana (just by Tarsus) came with shovels and accomplished the task, publicly. Necati Aydin was buried in his home town of Izmir (New Testament Smyrna, and 19th-century birthplace of Dean John Burgon); Ugur was buried by his Muslim family in his hometown of Elazig, across the Euphrates from Malatya.⁵

Before going further along the path of testimony it may help to consider the context of this anti-Christian violence. In 2002 I wrote:

Although Ottoman Turkey was never a thoroughgoing religious state, the reforms of the 1920s declared the new republic officially to be a secular state. More recently Islam has become much more of a factor, and freedom for non-Muslims, though supposedly guaranteed, has become an uncertain thing. Certainly there is the deep rooted cultural expectation that to be Turkish is to be Muslim.

And then again:

The UK-based Barnabas Fund reported in February of this year [2002] that as many as forty different churches had been threatened with closure since December. Christians believe that anti-Christian television and radio

programmes prompted the crackdown. Evangelicals are not distinguished from cults and terrorists in the Turkish media or mind.

Since 2001, and stepped up in 2005, there has been a steady campaign of high-placed and high-powered anti-Christian influence, so much so that one Turkish Newspaper, *Radikal*, calls it hypocrisy on the part of the authorities to denounce these slayings, which have been fomented by the subtle and poisonous affirmations made by politicians across the political divide. Other (brave) journalists query whether the sale of a few Bibles and the conversion of a few hundred Turks to Christianity really justifies the climate of fear which prepared the way for the Malatya slaughter. Some have drawn attention to the fact that in Europe, and Germany in particular, Turks are not hindered in their observance of Islam, and are allowed to build mosques.

Many newspapers apparently put the testimony of Tilmann Geske’s widow Susan on front pages; none of the accounts that I have read are identical, but the firm reference to Luke 23.34—‘forgive them; for they know not what they do’—is plain to see. One columnist wrote ‘She said in one sentence what 1,000 missionaries in 1,000 years could not’.⁶ However, it must be acknowledged that the greater part of media coverage has scarcely moved away from the ‘red-alert missionary-hunt’ of recent years. The funerals in Malatya and Izmir were videotaped by security forces, who parcel evangelicalism with terrorist

groups such as Al Qaida and would be glad of such an identity parade!

Why address this in our *Quarterly Record*? Tilmann Geske was working on the preparation of a Turkish study Bible there in Malatya⁷—how difficult will this make Scripture distribution in Turkey generally; how hard to find the right people to do more work in getting our own project beyond the Gospel of John? Perhaps, though, it will mean more help, even refugees from Turkey coming to the UK and offering to help. 'There is a lot of sorrow and a lot of anger still in the church [in Turkey]. Some are afraid, but they are the minority. Most have been filled with a renewed courage and determination to see the church grow.'⁸

We drew attention to the growing distress and great need in 2002, and asked for your prayers—

To confess Christ in Turkey, and to endure there, needs much grace. Brethren, pray for them, and for the abundant provision of reliable Scriptures so that saints may grow, and that preachers may gain wisdom and authority in their ministry.

May this event stir up much prayer for the churches and Scriptures in Turkey! Think of the places named with active churches, such as Malatya with thirty in the church. When I first met a Turkish brother some years ago he remembered a time when there were not that many believers known in all Turkey! Pray that the

water of the tears and the blood of the martyrs in Malatya shall be owned of the Living God to bring forth fruit a hundredfold to His glory and praise and the saving of souls through faith in Jesus Christ His Son, and the rewarding of the suffering saints in Turkey. Pastor Fikret Bocek of the Izmir church says, 'Please pray for the church in Turkey. Don't pray against persecution, pray for perseverance'.

Endnotes:

1. Kurdistan, as recent troubles have brought to world attention, runs on east through Iraq and Iran.
2. Golden Thoughts verse for that day—Fight the good fight of faith!
3. Several e-mails give unnecessarily graphic accounts, and there is some question as to what exactly happened, so these details will not be repeated here.
4. Owing to the current difficulties, this missionary must remain unidentified.
5. He was given a Muslim burial, which his Christian friends were not allowed to attend. The missionary wrote: 'One of the newspapers commented that even in death Ugur's family wouldn't even allow him to be a Christian. The good news is that the family really has nothing to do with it now—Ugur is in a much better place today'.
6. Quoted by Bob Unruh, 'Faith Under Fire', *WorldNetDaily*, www.wnd.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=55426, 28 April 2007.
7. Nothing is known of its provenance at this time
8. Again, from the missionary in Ankara.

The French, Romanian & Spanish Revision Projects

*An Update by
the General Secretary*

The work on the revision of the French, Romanian, and Spanish Bibles continues. Considerable progress has been made on each of the projects, and we eagerly await their completion. However, as with all projects of this nature, our concern must not be primarily with speed but with accuracy. Work of this nature is not a task that can be completed within a short period of time. These revision projects will be completed as soon as is possible. We want to provide the French, Romanian, and Spanish peoples of the world with faithful, reliable, and accurate translations of the pure and unadulterated Word of God. For these peoples, there could be no better or greater

activity in which we could be engaged. We ask for the prayerful support of all our friends in these projects, that the Lord's blessing may attend the work being done, and that the Spirit of God may accompany these copies of His Word when completed, published and circulated, that they may be the means of much spiritual light, life, and liberty to many in the coming years.

French

A team of supporters of the Society is working upon the preparation of the French Bible for publication by the Society. The work will be a minor revision of the 1712 David Martin, itself a revision of the 16th-century French Reformation Bible by Robert

Olivetan, subsequently revised by John Calvin and Theodore Beza. This revision by David Martin (his last of several) was undertaken in The Netherlands on behalf of the Synod of the French Reformed Church in exile. David Martin and thousands of other Huguenots had had to flee the Roman Catholic persecution in France arising from the revocation by Louis XIV in 1685 of the Edict of Nantes. When Henry IV of France had issued the Edict of Nantes in 1598, it had given religious freedom to the French Protestants.

Romanian

The Romanian Bible is being further revised by our dedicated team of revisers in Romania. The Bible is being based primarily on the Iasi (pronounced Yash) Bible, an old edition of the Bible based on the correct Hebrew and Greek texts. There will be many similarities with the popular Bible prepared by Cornilescu in the 1920s, but not where accuracy is at stake. It is hoped that this revision will result in the availability of a Bible in Romanian that will be even more faithful to the Hebrew and Greek underlying texts and yet preserve many of the distinctive features of the beautiful language

of the Cornilescu Bible. We are indebted to others working in Romania for their help in drawing attention to areas of specific difficulty.

Spanish

The work on the revision of the Spanish Bible is being undertaken on the edition of Reina-Valera 1602 Reformation Bible known as the Reina-Valera 1909 Bible. It is being carefully compared with many other editions of the Reina-Valera, including that of 1865 and others of more recent date, and with the original Hebrew and Greek texts. A separate article on the methodology behind the Spanish Bible Revision Project will be found on page 18.

Prayer is sought for all engaged in these great tasks, that they may be given much of the Lord's gracious help, day by day, in the work they are seeking to accomplish in His fear, and for His glory. They, with all of us in the Society, echo the question penned by the Apostle Paul, 'and who is sufficient for these things?' (2 Corinthians 2.16).

Why the Need For a Revision



of the Society's Reina-Valera 1909 Spanish Bible?

by W. Greendyk, General Secretary, TBS (USA), (pictured above)
(formerly headmaster of a mission school in Bolivia)

As the Society's logo states, its principal goal is that of distributing the 'Word of God among all nations'. This implies producing, as God enables, the most accurate and faithful translations of His Holy Word in as many languages as possible, with the prayer that the Holy Spirit might bless God's Word to the salvation in Jesus Christ of sinners from among all nations. Over the course of the Society's long history, and as the Lord has given light, on various occasions it has been deemed necessary to revise certain translations if it was discovered that the existing editions did not meet the criteria of the Society's Constitution. As mentioned in a recent article in the *Quarterly Record*,¹ this has been found to be the case with the Spanish Bible that the Society had published for many years.

More than four hundred million people in more than twenty countries speak Spanish, making it the world's fourth most commonly spoken language and the second most common for international communication.² Over the past half-century, interest in the Bible has increased enormously in Latin America—an area where for centuries only the clergy and the educated minority read God's Word. As illiteracy is gradually being eradicated across this immense area, readers young and old are increasingly reading the Scriptures. It is the Society's goal, then, with God's help, to

make available to the Spanish-speaking world a translation that is at once faithful to the original tongues and understandable to the present-day Spanish reader.

| The Society's revision of the Spanish Bible

The Society's revision of the Spanish Reina-Valera 1909 Bible, commonly referred to as the RV 1909 Bible, is well underway, and several books of the Bible have undergone the first phase of revision. As we prayerfully proceed with this most worthwhile project, we are occasionally faced with scepticism and even criticism from some quarters. This was not entirely unexpected, and to a certain extent initial misgivings regarding any 'new' revision of the Spanish Bible that had been published by the Society for almost one hundred years are not completely unwarranted. In these few paragraphs, then, we wish to address some of the concerns that have been expressed.

| The need for a revision of the Spanish Bible: translational changes

Perhaps the most common apprehension regarding the revision of the Spanish Bible has been a concern that the Spanish used in the original translation will be 'modernised' or 'simplified'. This is quite simply not the case. On the contrary, the beautiful Castilian Spanish employed by Casiodoro de Reina and Cipriano de Valera in their Spanish translation is being retained in the entire text, with few exceptions. The only instances where translational changes are being made are where specific deviations from the original Hebrew or Greek text were found, or where the Spanish word used in a particular verse has taken on a decisively different meaning, resulting in a possibly confusing interpretation of the passage in question. This can be explained in no better fashion than by citing specific examples.

The RV 1909 Bible renders the last part of Hebrews 3.1 as follows: '...considerad al Apóstol y Pontífice de nuestra profesión, Cristo Jesús.' An English translation of this passage would literally be: '...consider the Apostle and Pontiff of our profession, Christ Jesus.' The dictionary of the

Real Academia Española defines the word ‘pontífice’ as ‘1) bishop or archbishop of a diocese; 2) the supreme prelate of the Roman Catholic Church; 3) a priestly magistrate who presided over the religious rites and ceremonies in Ancient Rome.’³ In Latin America and Spain, which have been predominantly Roman Catholic for centuries, even the most uneducated person would undoubtedly know to whom the word ‘pontífice’ refers—the pope in Rome—much the same as the word’s English cognate, ‘pontiff’, is used almost universally to refer to the pope. The Greek lexicons all concur that the word in the original language, ἀρχιερεύς (archieurus), is defined as ‘chief priest’ or ‘high priest’. In Mark 14.47, as well as in various additional instances where this word is found in the New Testament, it has been translated as ‘sumo sacerdote’ (high priest). In other instances, the same Greek word has been translated, most often in a plural context, as ‘príncipes de los sacerdotes’ (chiefs of the priests; e.g., Matthew 2.4) or ‘principales sacerdotes’ (chief priests; e.g., John 7.45). Thus, in Hebrews 3.1 and in the numerous additional instances where the word had formerly been translated as ‘pontífice’, it has been substituted with the word ‘sumo sacerdote’ (high priest) or ‘principales sacerdotes’ (chief priests) depending on the context, for translational accuracy, clarity and consistency. In the RV 1909 Bible, a clear distinction had been made between sinful men who held the office of high priest and Jesus, the Greater High Priest, by capitalising the word ‘Pontífice’. Hence, where the word in the original refers to Jesus Christ, specifically in the book of Hebrews, the term ‘Sumo Sacerdote’ has been capitalised in the revision.



*The 1569
Casiodoro
de Reina
Bible*

It is important to point out that in this instance, as is the case with many other changes that are being made to the RV 1909 Bible, no new word whatsoever is being introduced. Rather, the word or words from the original translation that are believed to be the most accurate and faithful

renderings of the original, as well as the most understandable to all Spanish readers, are being chosen and used more consistently throughout the Bible translation.



A fair number of the translational changes that are being made to the RV 1909 Bible involve a change in verb tense or mood to agree more suitably with the original Hebrew or Greek. To illustrate one example of such a change, we shall examine the translation of the first part of Psalm 35.9. The RV 1909 Bible has translated this as follows: ‘Gócese mi alma en Jehová’, which can be translated into English as ‘May my soul rejoice in Jehovah’. However, the original Hebrew verb translated in this instance as ‘Gócese’ is not in the jussive mood (a directive mood that signals a speaker’s command, permission, or agreement that the proposition expressed be brought about⁴), but is in the simple imperfect tense, which usually signifies incomplete, and thus future, action. This phrase has been changed accordingly in the Spanish revision to express the simple future tense in Spanish: ‘Mi alma se gozará en Jehová’ (My soul shall rejoice in Jehovah). The reader will agree that these two verb usages carry a substantially different connotation. Hence, utmost care is being taken to ensure that not only the proper verbs are employed, but that the tense or mood in which they are rendered most accurately and faithfully translates the verbs in the original languages. Here again, no simplifying or modernising is employed, but rather, with God’s help, an accurate translation is sought in every aspect.

In various instances, the Greek words σωτηρία (sōtēria) and σωτήριον (sōtērion), defined by W. Bauer,⁵ J. Thayer,⁶ and most other Greek lexicographers as ‘deliverance, salvation’ and ‘saving, delivering’ respectively, have been translated as ‘salud’ in the RV 1909 New Testament (e.g., Luke 1.77,

Acts 28.28), while in other instances these same words have been translated as ‘salvación’ (e.g., Luke 1.69, Luke 2.30). The final clause of Ephesians 5.23 had been translated as follows: ‘...y él es el que da salud al cuerpo’. Wherever Spanish is spoken in the world today, the word ‘salud’ signifies ‘health’. Hence, this Biblical phrase could erroneously be understood to read ‘...he it is who gives health to the body’. While we fully recognise and agree that the Lord indeed is He who gives health to our bodies, the context of this passage clearly manifests, as confirmed by the Bible commentators, that what is referred to here is ‘He who gives salvation, or deliverance’ to the ‘body’ of the Church. The original Greek word translated in the RV 1909 Bible as ‘el que da salud’ (he who gives health) in the above-mentioned phrase is σωτήρ (sōtēr), which is defined in the most widely-used and well-known lexicons as ‘one who rescues; saviour, deliverer, preserver’. Consequently, the translation of the phrase ‘el que da salud’ has now been rendered ‘Salvador’ (Saviour), thus removing any possible ambiguity in this context. Much the same as the English word ‘health’ formerly had ‘salvation’ as one of its meanings in some older dictionaries of the English language, the Spanish word ‘salud’, as defined by the latest edition of the RAE’s *Dictionary*, has as a fifth and somewhat obscure meaning ‘salvation; the obtaining of eternal glory’.⁷ In an online consultation, a member of the Real Academia Española confirmed that the word ‘salud’ has ‘fallen into disuse when referring to salvation’.⁸ Thus, in each instance where ‘salud’ had formerly been employed in the RV 1909 Bible to denote salvation, the word ‘salvación’ (or ‘Salvador’ where applicable) is being substituted in the revision. This word unequivocally and universally means ‘salvation’.

For those who may be concerned that such changes to the Spanish Bible will remove the beautiful eloquence of the old Castilian Spanish, we would simply propose that the word ‘salvación’ is no less beautiful than the word ‘salud’; we would even suggest that this word, with its unambiguous and unequivocal meaning—salvation—is perhaps even more gloriously eloquent than ‘salud’—a word which unquestionably refers to physical ‘health’ in the Spanish-speaking world today. It has been pointed out by some that in Acts 27.34 of the English Authorised Version, the Greek word σωτηρία (sōtēria) has also been translated as ‘health’. It is clear from the context in which this word is used, however, that in this sole instance where the original word has been translated as ‘health’ in the AV, the Apostle Paul refers

to precisely that—physical health—when he urges his fellow seafarers, who had been fasting aboard their storm-tossed ship, to ‘take *some* meat: for this is for your health’. The context of this passage clearly indicates that the Apostle is not referring to the salvation of the soul, but to the health of the body! In the forty-two other instances of this same Greek word in the AV, it has been translated thirty-eight times as ‘salvation’, three times as ‘saved’ or ‘saving’, and once as ‘delivered’. This very example from the English Bible, then, only serves to underscore the importance of making an equally clear distinction between the Spanish words for ‘health’ and ‘salvation’. Furthermore, the RV 1909 Bible translates this same Greek word as ‘salvación’ ten times; once again it should be pointed out, then, that the use of this word in the revision in no way represents a ‘modernisation’ or ‘simplifying’ of the original Spanish. Rather, by substituting the word ‘salvación’ in place of ‘salud’ wherever the original word most clearly means ‘salvation’, doctrinal accuracy and faithfulness to the original Greek are more consistently employed and, as a consequence, all ambiguity is removed for Spanish readers worldwide.

| The need for a revision of the Spanish Bible: the Spanish language

The overwhelming majority of changes being made to the RV 1909 Bible, however, do not involve translational changes, but rather involve changes in syntax (the order in which words are placed in a sentence) and grammar that reflect the norms established by the Real Academia Española, the universally recognised body governing the Spanish language and its usage. The RAE periodically releases updated dictionaries and other publications outlining proper Spanish grammar, orthography and additional linguistic norms. (The RAE’s most recent dictionary represents its 22nd edition!) In turn, most Latin American countries have their own Academia de la Lengua (Academy of Language), which regularly publishes the norms regarding present-day Spanish usage as established by the RAE, along with some of that particular country’s specific regionalisms and other linguistic idiosyncrasies.

Some of the syntactical anomalies employed by the RV 1909 translation are no longer understood or easily read by a vast majority of Spanish

speakers in the world today. Thus, many of the changes being made in the revision do not involve any change at all to the words used, but rather to the order in which these words are placed in the text. Such changes will produce a Bible translation that is accessible to millions of Spanish speakers—particularly in Latin America—who had previously struggled with the syntax employed by the RV 1909 Bible and who, for this reason, had either never used the RV 1909 Bible at all, or had formerly used the RV 1909 Bible but had since resorted to reading one of the numerous modern and corrupt translations that have more recently been made available to the Spanish-speaking world. By carefully employing many simple changes in word order, while not relinquishing any of the reverence in the original Spanish translation, the RV 1909 Bible will be transformed from a Bible which was once considered difficult or impossible to read by millions of Spanish readers, into a Bible that will be understandable to every Spanish reader. One example will suffice to illustrate clearly this most important point.

The RV 1909 Bible makes frequent use of what are termed ‘enclitic pronouns’. This involves the placement of unstressed personal pronouns (sometimes referred to as ‘clitics’) acting as the direct or indirect object of the verb, and which are attached to and follow the verb. Perhaps the most common example of such a construction in the RV 1909 Bible is the word ‘Díjole’ ([He/she] said [un]to him/her), where ‘dijo’ is the third-person past tense of the verb ‘decir’ (to say), and ‘le’ (him, her) is the personal pronoun employed as the object of the verb. Most Spanish literature from centuries past included this grammatical structure. However, the use of the enclitic pronoun began to decrease over the past century, and in present-day Spanish the use of the clitic pronoun attached to and following the verb (rendering it an enclitic pronoun) is restricted to only a few specific grammatical constructions.

Concerning the use of enclitic pronouns, the RAE states the following in its most recent publication, *El diccionario panhispánico de dudas* (*The Panhispanic Dictionary of Doubts*): ‘The placement of the unstressed pronoun before or after the verb is not arbitrary, but is subject to certain rules which have varied over time. These are the norms by which the placement of clitics is governed in general educated Spanish...’⁹ In subsequent pages, the rules concerning the placement of unstressed pronouns are then



The 1602 Cipriano de Valera Bible open at Psalm 23

explained in detail. In summary, these norms state that unstressed pronouns may only take on the enclitic form (that is, be attached to and follow the verb) when the verb is in the simple form of the infinitive (e.g., Voy a leerlo [I am going to read it]) or gerund (e.g., Llevo horas leyéndolo [I've spent hours reading it]), or when the affirmative imperative (e.g., Léalo [Read it!]) or subjunctive exhortative mood (e.g., Leámoslo [Let's read it]) is employed.¹⁰ All Spanish readers will easily understand any of the grammatical structures above, since they make up a significant part of their written and spoken language.

Any other use of the pronoun attached to the verb and following it, however, is considered obsolete and grammatically incorrect. Moreover, the RAE's scholars affirm: 'In present-day usage, clitics [unstressed personal pronouns used as direct or indirect objects of the verb] are always placed before the simple indicative form [of verbs]... In written language, at times they appear after [the verb], generally at the beginning of a sentence or

after a pause. The expression then acquires an archaic tone that is only justified if the intention is to recreate the language of ages past'.¹¹

The assertion has occasionally been made that the use of the many archaic grammatical structures in the RV 1909 Bible provides the Spanish Bible with an eloquence and reverence in much the same way that 'thee', 'thou' and other such pronouns and their corresponding verb constructions lend an elegant and reverent language style to the English AV Bible. This comparison is neither fair nor valid, however. First of all, no reverence is lost whatsoever when, in keeping with the current rules of Spanish grammar, the position of a pronoun simply changes from that of following the verb to preceding it! Secondly, as the RAE tacitly affirms in the preceding paragraph, the use of these archaic enclitic pronoun structures is only justified when the writer is specifically intending to 'recreate' the language of former ages. Benjamin and Butt, in what is considered by many to be the best and most comprehensive English explanation of Spanish grammar, *A New Reference Grammar of Modern Spanish*, state: '[While] in pre-twentieth-century literary style, object pronouns were often joined to verbs in finite [indicative] tenses...this construction is now extinct for practical purposes. [It] is still occasionally found in burlesque or very flowery styles'.¹² Furthermore, no English linguistic authority or Academy of Letters, to our knowledge, has ever officially stipulated that any of the linguistic or grammatical constructions used in the Authorised Version are grammatically incorrect. Thus, while the RV 1909 Bible is replete with grammatical constructions involving the archaic use of the enclitic pronoun, many of these structures are not familiar to the average Spanish reader. A combination of factors contributes to this phenomenon.

| The need for a revision of the Spanish Bible: literacy

As a whole, the Spanish-speaking populace of Latin America—which does not include Brazil, where Portuguese is spoken—has made great strides in the past decade in improving literacy levels. UNICEF reports that in 2005 the average adult literacy rate in Latin America was 90%—a relatively high percentage when compared with a world average of 89%.

When examined more closely, however, these figures reveal that approximately 85% of primary school entrants in Latin America reach Grade 5, and only 44% of males and 51% of females attend secondary school.¹³ Thus, while the majority of Latin Americans can indeed read, and although Latin American countries, as a whole, are continuously improving their literacy levels, the statistics above reveal that the average reading level of Latin Americans is not higher than primary-school level. Furthermore, Spanish grammar is taught according to the norms established by the RAE; hence, the archaic manner of employing the obsolete enclitic pronoun structures is no longer taught in traditional Latin American educational systems.

It should be noted, however, that the above-mentioned statements in no way imply that the revision of the RV 1909 Bible is at all a result of comparatively lower literacy levels in the Spanish-speaking community. Nor is the revision of the Spanish Bible in any way geared to a readership with only a primary-level reading ability. If, however, the revision of the RV 1909 Bible for translational and grammatical accuracy inherently results in a Bible translation that is far more understandable to Spanish readers throughout the world, how much more should we rejoice, since the principal and prayerful goal of any Bible Society should obviously be that of reaching as many people as possible with the pure, uncorrupted and unsimplified Word of God.

The need for a revision of the Spanish Bible: an example

Because a very significant number of the changes being employed in the word order of the RV 1909 Bible revision involve obsolete and archaic enclitic pronoun structures that do not follow the norms as stated above, it is fitting to offer here, by way of explanation, a specific example of the changes being made, and at the same time to reinforce the fact that by subsequently changing the word order in the RV 1909 Bible revision to conform to the linguistic norms governing both written and spoken Spanish today, the original words of the Spanish translation are in no way being simplified or even replaced. Rather, by simply changing the order in which these words appear in the sentence, the revised RV 1909 Bible will

effectively be a translation that is much more accessible and understandable to readers of all ages, social status, and literacy levels in the entire Spanish-speaking world.

The first part of John 10.7 in the RV 1909 Bible reads as follows: ‘Volvióles, pues, Jesús a decir...’ (Then Jesus said [un]to them again...). In this phrase, the pronoun ‘les’ (them) acts as the indirect object of the verb ‘decir’ (to say). However, the position of this enclitic pronoun, apart from being completely contrary to the rules of Spanish grammar (the archaic word ‘volvióles’ is unfamiliar to the average Spanish reader), is also distant, relatively speaking, from the verb it modifies, and is attached to the verb ‘volver’ (the phrase ‘volver a’ means ‘to do [something] again’), which it does not modify. By simply changing this phrase to read: ‘Volvió, pues, Jesús a decirles...’, the entire meaning of this phrase becomes much clearer for the reader, since the construction ‘decirles’ (to say [un]to them) is very common in everyday written and spoken Spanish. The verb ‘decir’ is in the infinitive form here—one of the specific instances where the current norms of Spanish grammar allow the enclitic pronoun. This example clearly illustrates the type of change being made in numerous places to the RV 1909 Bible. The discerning reader will see that no new vocabulary is introduced, no simplification of the language is undertaken, and the eloquence and reverence of the original Spanish is completely maintained. A relatively small but important part of this phrase—the object pronoun—has simply been moved to ensure grammatical accuracy and fluidity. The result is a commonplace Spanish phrase that will be understood by any Spanish reader!

| The need for a revision of the Spanish Bible: doctrinal faithfulness

One final type of change that is being carried out in the revision of the RV 1909 Bible has to do with ensuring that the Bible is doctrinally faithful to the meaning of the original languages and, as much as is possible, free from ambiguous or confusing passages. There are relatively few of such changes, but one example will illustrate what this type of change entails. Psalm 37.7 in the RV 1909 reads as follows: ‘Calla a Jehová, y espera en él’. This states: ‘Silence/quiet/be still/be silent [to] Jehovah, and put your hope

in/trust in him'. The Hebrew lexicons¹⁴ concur that the word translated as 'calla' is defined as 'be still, keep silence, be silent'. Dr. Gill writes that the original Hebrew signifies 'Be silent to the Lord'.¹⁵ The present translation in Spanish does not clearly convey this meaning, however. The *Diccionario panhispánico de dudas* affirms that 'lately, the transitive use of the verb "callar" has been extended to include the causative meaning of "hacer callar"',¹⁶ (to make or to cause [someone] to be silent]). Thus, this passage could even be misconstrued as a command to 'quiet' or 'silence' the Lord! When the original Hebrew word is taken in the context, however, it is clear that the Psalmist is exhorting to be patiently and submissively silent before the Lord. Thus, the preposition used in this text has been changed, and the text now reads: 'Calla ante Jehová, y espera en él' (Be silent/be still before the Lord, and put your hope in/trust in him), effectively removing any possibility of confusion or ambiguity.

The need for a revision of the Spanish Bible: conclusion

In conclusion, then, it can be emphatically and unequivocally stated that the revision of the RV 1909 Bible is in no way an attempt to simplify or modernise the Spanish Bible. Rather, a prayerful revision is being carried out to ensure that the Spanish Bible is, above all, faithfully accurate to the Biblical language texts. At the same time, the language of the Bible is being modified only when this does not conform to the present-day rules of proper Spanish grammar, spelling, syntax and semantics. The Society requests your prayers for the revision of the Spanish Bible, as well as for the many other revision and translation projects underway. May the Lord give wisdom and light to those involved in these labours, and may the blessed fruits of the Spirit of the Lord be evident in the lives of all those who read and hear His precious Word.

Endnotes

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9. RAE, Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española, *Diccionario panhispánico de dudas* (Bogotá, Colombia: Distribuidora y Editora Aguilar, Altea, Taurus, Alfaguara S.A., 2005), p. 527.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 527–530.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 527.
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15. John Gill, *The New John Gill Exposition on the Entire Bible*, Psalm 37.7. www.studylight.org/com/geb/view.cgi?book=ps&chapter=037&verse=007, 16 May 2007.
16. RAE, Asociación, p. 111.

Exhibition Lognes 2006

by J. Cook, Foreign Sales

Our journey by Eurostar to Paris, and then to Lognes by *Réseau Express Régional*, was entirely without problem or delay. We found our hotel easily, which was a different one from last year—the *Hotel Mercure*—only a five-minute walk from the exhibition centre.

It made life easier being so close to the exhibition centre, since it is necessary to get up early on Monday morning and to be there by 7.30 a.m. in order to set up the stand by 8.45 a.m. At that time they close the exhibition halls to permit everybody to attend the morning prayers and Bible reading. Only a short time is allotted to find tables to make up the stand and to open four boxes, prior to sorting and arranging the items in order on the stand.

We managed, however, to prepare in time for the ‘onslaught’ once prayers were finished. It did not happen this year as it did in previous years! Instead, there was a steady flow of visitors all day, and the Monday proved to be our busiest day by far, with the majority of our catalogues distributed to interested customers.

We had advertised the *Textus Receptus* and the *Hebrew/Greek Bible* (the *Bible in the Original Languages*), and we received many enquiries, with people referring directly to our advertisement, though at the end of the exhibition we had sold only one *Hebrew/Greek Bible*. The exhibition is run by two Bible colleges and one would expect much interest. There were several requests for bilingual

French/Greek copies of the *Textus Receptus*, and also for a small Greek Bible. But again it was our calendars in various languages that outsold the rest, and there were some surprises, such as a young unemployed Hungarian man who was delighted to see our *Károli* version of the Hungarian Bible, which he snapped up. Undoubtedly, the absence of the French and Spanish Scriptures this year affected the total volume of sales enquiries.

There were many interesting characters who came to our stand, such as a couple of pastors, one from Russia and the other from Ukraine, who purchased all the Russian calendars we had left and would have also purchased many in Ukrainian had they not already been sold. Another visitor to the stand was a young American man representing a printing company which had done work for the Society.

An elder from an assembly in the north of Paris visited us and purchased the Authorised Version Bible on CD MP3. He had a French mother and an English father, and had spoken only French in the home since his mother only knew French; as his father never spoke

English, it was necessary for him to learn English outside the home, and he speaks it well. We often visit the same assembly on the Lord's Day when we are in Paris, and had intended buying CDs of the French Bible so as to improve our ability to speak French; these we obtained from the *Christian Literature Crusade France* stand.

There is a wide spectrum of organisations attending the exhibition, ranging from one for deaf Christians (*Association des Sourds Chrétiens*), to a company selling insurance, and even a travelling theatrical company! Yet the great majority are missions, bookshops, and publishing companies, directly involved in the work of spreading the Word of God.

We encountered many old friends, one of whom was Jean-Luc Pierét of *Esaie 55*, who was there for the first time in many years. We had first met him in Marseille, just prior to the terrible events of September 11th. There on his stalls, under a notice saying *Société Biblique Esaie 55*, were the TBS *Louis Segond* French Bibles, an edition which we used to publish; we had agreed when we withdrew the edition to transfer its publishing rights to him.

Other friends we met included a French brother who mans a stand called *La Joie de l'Éternel* and who always buys our *Pensées Précieuses* (Golden Thoughts) calendars. There were Baptist missionaries who were staying in the same hotel as we were, and other missionaries from Arras.

After experiencing a very hectic day on Monday, during which we handed out the majority of our catalogues, we thought that there would not be enough for the following day. Tuesday, though, turned out to be a very quiet day.

Many people, however, came and spoke to us, especially when they realised we were from England; it seemed they wished to practise their English. Everybody we talked to was extremely friendly, and the exhibition was very well organised.

Our hope for future exhibitions is that the French Scriptures, and the Spanish, will soon be available, especially in those formats most in demand in French-speaking countries, and that these editions will represent a great improvement on those currently available, to the glory of God.



*The TBS stand
at the Lognes
Exhibition*

THE ABORIGINAL EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP BIBLE COLLEGE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA:



a report from Down Under

The Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship Bible College (AEF/BC) commenced its teaching ministry on the 2nd February 1985 in a little Brethren Chapel in East Victoria Park, a suburb about six kilometres south of Western Australia's capital city, Perth. Previously the college teaching ministry was in the country town of Gnowangerup approximately 330 kilometres south of Perth, under what was then the United Aboriginal Mission, which started with a couple of students coming to study from time to time in 1959. We are now situated on our own property in Forrestdale, about fifteen kilometres south-west of Perth in a partly rural area. Our goal is to train pastors,

evangelists, teachers and Christian leaders for the church of God among aboriginal and non-aboriginal people. Most of our students are of aboriginal descent; however we do get the non-aboriginal student coming to study from time to time.

The college principal, Pastor Clive Hayden, is aboriginal and is responsible for the teaching ministry of the Bible college as well as to the college council for the everyday running of the college. The principal also oversees the teaching staff of the Bible college. Because we are training men and women in the Lord's work, he must ensure that lecturers are grounded in



the Word of God. The reason for this is because we believe that the whole of the Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments as originally given, are the verbally inspired Word of God, supreme in authority and completely free from error. As the Apostle Paul said in 2 Timothy 3.16, 'All scripture is given by inspiration of God'. The second epistle of Peter 1.21 adds, 'For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost'. Thus, with Jesus we seek the Lord to 'sanctify [our students] through thy truth: thy word is truth' (John 17.17).

The King James Version is the only edition of the Bible used in the college and all college lecturers, whether on staff or visiting, must be men who use the King James Version. Many of our aboriginal people still hold dearly to the King James Version and find it to be the best translation to read and from which to memorise Scripture. We find it difficult to use any of the other modern translations because we can see holes in them. Revelation 22.18,19 tells us,

The Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship has as its vision:

» To seek to be available to God, so that by His Holy Spirit He will call out from among Aboriginal and Islander people, a people for Himself (Acts 15.14)

» To encourage Aboriginal and Islander Christians to take their God-given role within the church

» To turn Aboriginal and Islander people from being a mission field to becoming effective in Christian ministry

» To foster and maintain links with similar International Bodies'

One way in which the AEF is seeking to fulfil this vision is through the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship Bible College of Western Australia.

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the



plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Second Timothy 3.16,17 says of the inspired Scriptures that they are

profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

Many modern translations are being used to get people into the ecumenical movement, which we seek to avoid.

At this point in time we are building a new lecture and administration block on the thirteen acres that we own, which will enable fifty to seventy students to study at the Bible college at one time. It will also allow us to have evening classes to encourage people from our local churches, both in the suburbs and cities, to attend. It is

going to cost approximately Aus\$600,000 (about £250,000) for the building to be completed, but the benefit of it to the church among our indigenous people will far outweigh the financial expenses. This Bible college needs prayer and financial assistance and we also need the support of like-minded Christian bodies like the Trinitarian Bible Society.

We are very grateful for the generosity extended to us by the Trinitarian Bible Society London, in sending us the gift of copies of the *Holy Scriptures in the Original Languages* for our students to use. We have also received from Mr. Malcolm Stuart, the President of the Society here in Australia, many Bibles for distribution among our people. When the students go out on field trips during college vacations to outlying aboriginal communities within this vast state of ours, TBS Bibles find their way into many homes.

Thank you for your prayers, encouragement and interest in this vital work among our people, for the Lord's greater glory.



An Update from TBS (Australia)

Greetings to you in the name of our Covenant God.

I will be passing on to the college twenty Bibles shortly, as they will be needed when they go up to the Kimberly region in the far north of this state in a few weeks time. Last Friday night I gave a box of thirty Bibles to one of our aboriginal pastors for use in his church.

On the front page of many newspapers in February was a report of the extensive bush fire we had. The fire, which was deliberately lit by an arsonist, burnt for three days. All the residents in the area had to evacuate, including those from the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship Bible College. At 2.00 a.m. the college staff and students stood at a safe distance praying that the Lord would spare the college. As the fire went straight through their entire property, their hearts failed them. 'Not our will but thy will be done,' they prayed, knowing that everything must have been burnt; nothing could possibly survive that raging fire.



The next morning they were allowed to return to see what was left. To their great joy, not a building, not a vehicle, not any of the college equipment was damaged. The lawns were still green, the flowers in the garden were still colourful and, although trees all round were burnt, one group of trees behind the swimming pool was untouched. Everything that did not matter was burnt-out, but everything of importance was spared. God controlled the spread of the fire around the property: an immediate answer to prayer!

Mr. M.F. Stuart
President & National Secretary

1. Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship, *AEF's Vision Statement* (www.aef.org.au/Vision1998.html, 18 May 2007).

Images from the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship Bible College Newsletter.



The Word of God Among All Nations



‘The field is the world,’
‘The seed is the Word of God’

Europe

From Cheshunt, Hertfordshire, England:

Greetings in the lovely Name of our Lord and Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. We do trust you are well and knowing much of the Lord and His goodness, both personally and within the Society. The time has come round again, to request we be considered for a grant of Bibles for this year. We are very grateful for the Society’s kindness in previous years and would not presume upon your generosity. If possible, we could use forty Emerald Text Bibles, with red and blue hardback covers. As formerly, we shall be holding a number of missions and Holiday Bible Clubs where we shall use the Bibles as prizes and also hand out copies of the Scriptures to pupils at schools in the area. For your interest, I would say, that a few of the young people who received the Bibles, have asked for more information on Christian matters, one or two have joined the postal Bible School and a local school encouraged pupils to request a personal copy. Please pray with us, that these and other contacts will come to know the Saviour.

Telephone call from a Chaplain to a Special Hospital in England:

Initially the Chaplain rang for a Hebrew Bible for one of the patients, a West Indian learning Hebrew. We had a good conversation and he told me of a Muslim nurse who really wanted a Bible, and he was able to give her one; she hugged it and was so happy to have one, she always wanted one! Another man had a Bible which the Chaplain believed would have been one of ours, but the man used it as cigarette paper. He got through a good bit of the Gospels, and then started reading the pages and was soundly converted. The Rastafarians love the Authorised Version and will accept only the black covered ones, and they do read them. The Chaplain goes around the charity shops to buy Authorised Version Bibles as, sadly, he says that is where he finds many.

From Ulster, Ireland:

The photo is of our New Testament distribution in 2006 in Nepal. Friends from Bristol and Ulster visited churches in Nepal, and took a large supply of TBS Nepalese New Testaments for free distribution.



 **From Sfântu Gheorghe, Romania:**

The calendars and Bibles become again a blessing for our churches and for the people of Romania, Hungary, and Ukraine! They were again a powerful tool in the attempt to reach sinners for Christ. Most of those who received calendars and Bibles in the years before were already waiting for the new calendars. Many people who had no Bibles were very glad for the possibility of getting free copies of the Holy Scriptures. We pray that our Lord will bless the seed of the Word, in order to bear fruits for the glory of God and for the good of His people. In Ukraine the calendars were distributed in Badalo, Beregszasz, Rafajna, Zapszony, Gat and Izsnyete, where our missionaries are trying to reach people with the Gospel. Most of the people were glad for the calendars and even nonreligious people hung them on their walls. In Budapest, Hungary, calendars were given to relatives, but also to neighbours, people at the Post Office, a printing company, and the customers of a carwash! In

Distributing the New Testament in Nepal



Romania, the gypsy children learned by heart all the Bible verses from the calendars, in spite of the fact that they can hardly read.

 **From Bordeaux, France:**

This is how a typical French student was described in the eighteenth century: *'an atheist in religion, and experimentalist in morals, a rebel to authority'*, and nothing much has changed today. A lot of this is due to the strong influence of French philosophers such as Voltaire (1694–1778) who defied God, declaring that, within a few years, the Bible would pass into *'the limbo of forgotten literature'*. The Bible has little to no credibility in French society, but we know that *'the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand for ever'* (Isaiah 40.8), and it is the only power unto salvation. It is our privilege to do all our work with that confidence and emphasis on the Word of God. It is wonderful to give many Bibles away (kindly donated by the Trinitarian Bible Society), when we do questionnaires on the campuses and invite people to study the Word with us.

 **From northern Serbia:**

I just wanted to let you know that the parcels with the thousand calendars arrived and we are already busy distributing them. Our most current distribution was in the south of Serbia where we handed out the calendars along with humanitarian aid at several refugee camps. Every visit there is quite an emotional experience. We are located in the north of Serbia, which has the most evangelical churches. The Centre has as its primary focus ethnic minority groups although we



The calendars arrive in Serbia

by no means exclude the majority Serbian population. But if I may be so bold, it would be better to have these calendars some time in the fall, starting with the month of October. We could, for example, when we visit the International Book Fair in Belgrade, have many more calendars ready to be handed out to people who pass our booth. I do want to express our appreciation and thankfulness for providing these lovely evangelistic tools for reaching this country for Christ.

Middle East

From Manama, Bahrain:

I would like to order ten copies of your Golden Thoughts Calendars. I like them very much. It is very useful for me and some of my Hindu friends. It doesn't have any pictures or anything, and they

can keep them in their handbags without drawing attention of others. They can memorise the verses and be strengthened in their spirit.

India

From Kerala, India:

Greetings in the precious Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. With thankful heart again I am writing this letter to thank you for the kindness in sending the Holy Bibles in Arabic and English. A group of Muslim friends discussed with me and heard the Word of God. Some questions were raised regarding the Bible and the Koran. I presented Arabic Bibles, which they very gladly received. After some days I followed them up individually, and one of them said, '*I am reading the Bible every day with my family*'. We are praying for their salvation. Muslim converts are also witnessing for Jesus Christ, boldly saying that Jesus Christ is the only One who came from heaven to save Muslims and Hindus. They give the Bibles to them.

From Nagercoil, India:

Greetings in the wonderful Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are in receipt of your package of Royal Ruby Text Bibles, Tamil John's Gospel along with Tamil leaflets, and we thank the Lord for the valuable Word of the Lord which will direct sinners to the light which is in Christ Jesus alone. We thank you for helping us to spread the Gospel in India. We are targeting colleges and educational institutions in order to reach the younger generation. We are in need of bulk quantities of Gospels, tracts, and Bibles. There are 18,474

students studying in these colleges and 125,986 students are in the technical and high schools. In order to bring our country to Christ we need to concentrate and target young people. Once again we thank you and appreciate your help in reaching the unsaved people. May the Lord bless you and keep you, and help you to help many to find Christ.

South-east Asia

From Bulacan, the Philippines:

Greetings in Christ's precious Name. Your good office is a big blessing to us in distributing the Bible free to our contacts. They are all happy because your Bible is easy to handle, and it nourishes their spiritual life. I distribute free, because most of our student members and

contacts cannot afford to buy the Bible in Christian bookstores. They are glad and praising the Lord because of your ministry in the Lord. Your Bible that is given to them makes them mature and strong in serving the Lord. I request more Bibles to reach more lost souls for the Lord.

Africa

From Kakamega, Kenya:

Greeting to you all in the Wonderful Name of Jesus Christ. I am so happy to receive the two parcels of Bibles that were sent to us. They have been a very great blessing to us. Some have never had their own Bible, and now they have a Bible for the first time free of charge. Praise be to the Lord. If I were to write all the testimonies, then it would take a whole book!

New Bibles in Kenya



 **From Accra, Ghana:**

Sir, I am a boy of sixteen years of age and just converted from Islam to Christianity. I hope in the near future that my family will be converted, too. At the moment I shall be very happy if you would help me with a Holy Bible. Since I am a student and my parents are not converted, they are not willing to give me money to buy one. I therefore have the honour, most respectfully to request the Bible. I hope this my humble request shall meet your kindest consideration.

 **From Accra, Ghana:**

Distribution of Bibles has been part of our ministry focus and we do give out a lot of Bibles around Christmas. Whilst many will be giving and receiving gifts such as money, food, drinks, clothes, etc., we will be presenting the greatest gifts ever presented to mankind: the BIBLE, that will change lives and bring eternal blessings. Next year March 2007, Ghana will be celebrating her Golden Independence Anniversary. We will launch Ten Thousand Jubilee Project. The project aims at distributing ten thousand Bibles to street kids and persons with disabilities in all the ten regions of Ghana, as our spiritual contribution to the nation's development. As part of the celebration, school children across Ghana will also receive free Bibles. Trinitarian Bible Society has already donated half [over six thousand] of the needed ten thousand towards the Jubilee Project.

 **From Kitwe, Zambia:**

Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Your gifts of the Bibles have been distributed prayerfully. We started with a few of

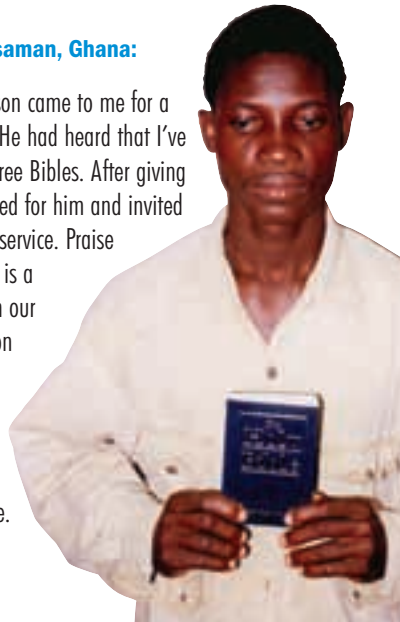
our members who did not have any. However, we are making a house-to-house visitation of our community distributing the Holy Scriptures, and the response has been overwhelming. We also distributed a few to the Post Office staff through whom we got the parcel. A few we gave to the Orphans and Vulnerable Children Community School Staff Room. Many people are coming to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is expensive here to get good quality Bibles like the ones you sent; that is why many people cannot afford. There is still a great need here and we pray more will be available soon.

 **From Marshalltown, Republic of South Africa:**

I must admit, your Golden Thoughts Calendar is more like clothes to me, without one I feel a bit naked! Therefore, I am requesting to have one every year. It does wonders to my being, and I praise the Lord for that. Thank you. God bless you all.

 **From Amasaman, Ghana:**

One fetish man's son came to me for a copy of the Bible. He had heard that I've been distributing free Bibles. After giving him a copy, I prayed for him and invited him to our church service. Praise the Lord, today he is a serious Christian in our church and has won other brothers for Christ. The Bibles are a real blessing, and we actually need more.





***Studying the Word
in the Biblical
languages***

 **From Agbor, Nigeria:**

As usual, I distributed the Bibles to the converts that do not have Bibles and are desperately in need of God's Word. One of the most exciting things about the Scriptures is that it has the message of eternal life. One of the recipients of these Scriptures sent his own copy to his mother who is a Muslim. God used John 14.6 to change his mother: 'Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me'. God used this particular verse of Scripture to transform the life of this woman. As she read this verse, the Holy Spirit made her to understand that there is no other way one can go to the Father except through Jesus Christ, and following this conviction the woman gave her life to Jesus Christ and totally surrendered to the Lord. Thanks for making the Scriptures available for the less privileged ones, and may God reward you richly for this great work.

 **From Jos, Nigeria:**

Thank you so much [for the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures]. All my translators and students to whom I've already given copies are delighted, and have said that I should please pass on their thanks and appreciation. I've not seen them so happy in months!

 **From Daloa, Ivory Coast:**

I would like to ask you to consider my request for literature, even if the literature is in English. With the war that our country is experiencing, we have people from the United Nations in our midst, and we preach the Gospel to them every day. In our Assembly, we have two men from UN. This is why I also need English Bibles. Thank you for your understanding.

Latin America

From San Juan, Argentina:

I am writing to request some Golden Thoughts calendars, even if this be only two or three copies. I will distribute them to my family. The last calendar we had was for 2004, and we haven't been able to obtain any more for subsequent years. We would be so grateful for this favour as the calendars are of much blessing.

North America

From a prisoner in South Jesup, Georgia, USA:

I am currently on my seventeenth year in prison here in America; it is not easy doing day after day, year after year, locked away from the outside, but God is good and has protected me and provided for me all these years. I happened to be blessed and obtain a calendar for 2006. I still have it hung on my notice board in my cell, and reading the verses and looking at the beautiful pictures on it was such a joy throughout all of last year. I thought I would write to you and request if you could please mail me a calendar for 2007, to inspire me and keep my spirit up. May God bless all of you abundantly for all of your good works.

From Pittsboro, NC, USA:

Once again thank you very much for these Golden Thoughts Calendars for 2007. Many of these I mail to suffering ones in Zimbabwe where my dear husband, who is now with the Lord, and I

had the joy of serving the Lord for over fifty years. With all the extreme hardships and difficulties they are going through in that country, their increased hunger for His Word has made these Golden Thoughts from the Lord a real blessing and encouragement to them. Their expressed gratitude for these calendars warms one's heart. Thank you for touching many lives through these Golden Thoughts Calendars and may the Lord continue to bless you in this fruitful ministry for Him.

An e-mail from the USA:

Thank you so much for the Spanish language calendars that the TBS so graciously sent. As you know from the national news, there is a tremendous influx of Hispanics into the United States, especially from Mexico. Since many of them brought very few possessions, and most of them didn't even have a Bible to bring with them, and the attitude of many Americans is not very gracious toward them, I have been giving your calendars to them as I meet them (all over the place—roadside construction sites, landscaping jobs, in malls, supermarkets, Spanish-oriented restaurants) as a friendly opening gesture. As you might expect, reactions are wonderful and I am sure the Lord is blessing His Word daily with salvation and changed lives and families!

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



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The aims of the Society

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

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

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

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

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

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



Siverek, Turkish Highlands

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

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