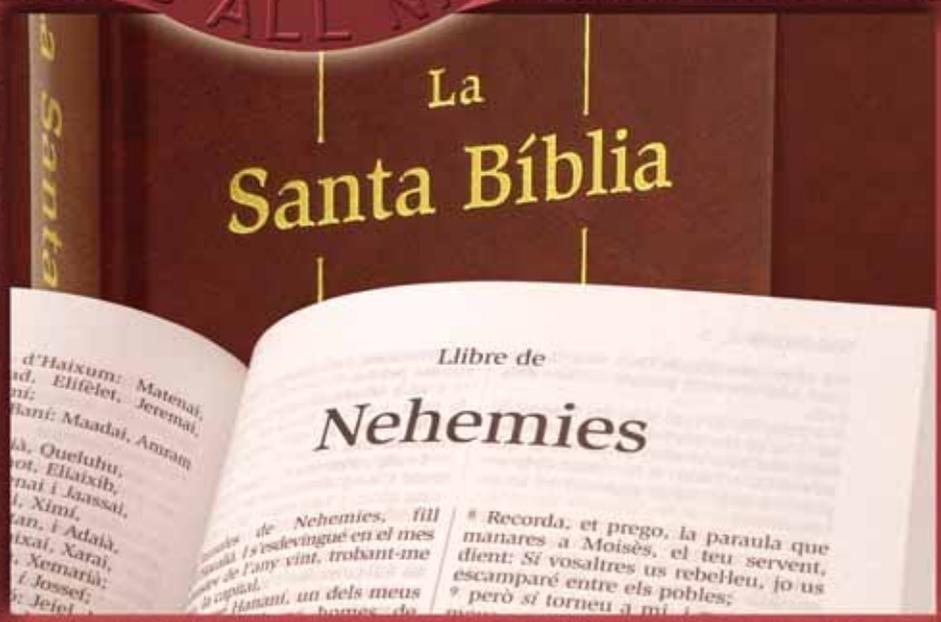




# Quarterly Record

## La Santa Bíblia



The Magazine of the Trinitarian Bible Society

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2010





# Trinitarian Bible Society

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

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A D V A N C E   N O T I C E



**Trinitarian Bible Society**

179<sup>th</sup>

# Annual General Meeting

will be held, God willing

commencing at

11.00 a.m.

on

**Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> September 2010**

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

The Rev. W. J. Malcolmson  
Minister of the Congregational Reformed Church, Belfast  
is expected to preach

All are welcome



# From the desk of the General Secretary

John Owen wrote,

The protestant religion may be considered either as it is religion in general,—that is, Christian religion; or as it is distinct from and opposite unto another pretended profession of the same religion, whereon it is called Protestant.

In the first sense of it, it derives its original from Christ and his apostles. What they taught to be believed, what they commanded to be observed in the worship of God,—all of it, and nothing but that,—is the protestant religion. Nothing else belongs unto it; in nothing else is it concerned. These, therefore, are the principles of the religion of Protestants, whereinto their faith and obedience are resolved.

1. What was revealed unto the church by the Lord Christ and his apostles is the whole of that religion which God will and doth accept.
2. So far as is needful unto the faith, obedience, and eternal salvation of the church, what they taught, revealed, and commanded is contained in the Scriptures of the New Testament, witnessed unto and confirmed by those of the Old.
3. All that is required of us that we may please God, be accepted with him, and come to the eternal enjoyment of him, is, that we truly believe what is so revealed and taught, yielding sincere obedience unto what is commanded in the Scriptures.

Upon these principles Protestants confidently propose their religion unto the trial of all mankind. If in any thing it be found to deviate from them,—if it exceeds, in any instance, what is so revealed, taught, and commanded,—if it be defective in the faith or practice of any thing that is so revealed or commanded,—they are ready to renounce it. Here they live and die; from this foundation they will not depart: *this is their religion*.<sup>1</sup>

Since its commencement in 1831, the Trinitarian Bible Society has been known as a ‘Protestant Society’, and all its members are asked to declare themselves to be ‘Protestants’ when they renew their membership each year. The Society’s subtitle states the purpose of the Society in uncompromising language: ‘For the circulation of Protestant or uncorrupted versions of the Word of God’. But what do we mean by the use of the word ‘Protestant’?

Every now and again, friends and supporters of the Society have asked what the framers of the Society’s Constitution meant when they used the word ‘Protestant’ in Law IV, and we know that certain good, prayerful supporters of the Society are hesitant to become members as they would prefer not to use the word ‘Protestant’. It is hoped that the following brief paragraphs on the use of this term will help clarify the matter.

Words can have definitions and meanings associated with them that can change over periods of time. Words may have one primary meaning in one country whilst having different meanings in another. Words that were previously used by our Godly forefathers in a distinctive and well understood Christian sense may come to have a very different meaning associated with them by the ungodly (especially in the media) who are not sympathetic to, or who are ignorant of, how these words had been originally used.

Therefore, words that were used by the Lord’s people in the United Kingdom in the first half of the 19th century to describe certain vital truths may have different connotations associated with them in different parts of the English-speaking world in the early 21st century. Not only has the English language itself become debased generally, but the spiritual discernment and judgment of the churches has been seriously eroded by the pervasive influence of worldliness and anti-Biblical thought. These factors make it necessary for the meaning of certain words, which have their provenance in a distinctive Christian and historical context, to be clarified that they may be clearly understood.

The word ‘Protestant’ is derived from the Latin word *protestari* (to raise an objection or to avow, witness or confess), and was first used in a religious sense on 19th April 1529 by pro-reform representatives at the second Diet of Speyer (Spies), who nobly stated, ‘We PROTEST by these presents before God, our only Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and Saviour, and who will one day be our judge, as well as before all men and all creatures, that we, for us and for our people, neither consent nor adhere in any manner whatsoever to the proposed decree, in anything that is contrary to God, to His Holy Word, to our right conscience, to the salvation of our souls, and to the last decree of Spies.’<sup>2</sup>

This is the name that is now so closely associated with the Reformers and their true followers who opposed the blasphemous doctrines and practices of Rome and separated from them. Although it is a word that has been frequently misused, misunderstood and misapplied, it nevertheless should be regarded as a very honourable word that has over the years come clearly to define and embrace not only those who literally came out of (or, should we say, were brought out of) the darkness of Romanism, but also all who have subsequently adhered to the tenets of true Biblical Christianity, whether or not they were as individuals or as bodies of Christians ever ensnared by the system that many of us would identify as the Antichrist.

The particular wording of the fourth Law of our Constitution, where we specify that Members of the Society must be Protestants, states:

The MEMBERS of this Society shall consist of PROTESTANTS, who acknowledge in writing to the Society's Head Office their belief in the GODHEAD OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST, THREE CO-EQUAL AND CO-ETERNAL PERSONS IN ONE LIVING AND TRUE GOD (as is more fully set forth in the Appendix to these laws); in the WHOLE BIBLE as the inspired and inerrant Word of God, the sole, supreme and infallible rule of faith and practice; and who unite to support the Society by contributing not less than FIVE POUNDS annually either directly to the Society's Head Office or through an Auxiliary or local representative. Members shall have the right of attending and voting at all General Meetings of the Society.

The particular wording we have on our Membership Form, in its summarising of the above, is:

I am/We are in full agreement with the Constitution of the Trinitarian Bible Society.

I am/We are Protestant.

I/We believe in the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, three co-equal and co-eternal Persons in one living and true God.

I/We acknowledge the whole Bible as the inspired and inerrant Word of God, the sole, supreme and infallible rule of faith and practice.

By the use of the word 'Protestant' it is clear that the Society's founders wished to ensure that those who were members of the Society, and all who

would be its Officers and serve on its governing bodies, would be true Bible-believing Christians. The term was used both to **exclude** those who were not truly Bible-believing Christians, and to **include** all who truly loved the Word of God and sought to be involved in its translation and distribution in a manner that accorded wholly with the divine principles revealed in it.

The years leading up to 1831 had been years of intense conflict. Many (but, sadly, not the majority) of the members of the British and Foreign Bible Society (now known in the United Kingdom as ‘Bible Society’, one of the founding members of the United Bible Societies), wanted to save the institution from the unscriptural policies that had been deceitfully introduced into its work, and which by that time were compromising the noble work of Scripture translation, publication and distribution, for which it had been started. Unitarians and members of the Roman Catholic hierarchy were now very closely associated with the BFBS and its work, which resulted (among other things) in there being Unitarians assisting in the conduct of the work, meetings being held without prayer so as not to offend the deniers of the divinity of Christ, and the inclusion of the Apocrypha in copies of the Bible being distributed in countries under the dominion and curse of the Papacy, with whom associates of the BFBS were fraternising.

It was, then, against this background that the Constitution of the Trinitarian Bible Society was framed by those who out of love to God and His Word had broken away from the BFBS when its governing body had refused all attempts made to amend its Constitution to ensure that the work was conducted on wholly Scriptural principles.

The Bible-believers, who at that time became the first members of the Society, were from a variety of denominational backgrounds. The majority of them were from the Church of England, but there were also a large number of Baptists, Independents, Presbyterians and representatives from a wide range of other denominations. One feature characterised them all—they were Bible-believing Christians from Bible-believing churches and assemblies, who were prepared to identify with those noble men who at considerable cost to their own reputations among men had no other option open to them than to make a clear and decisive stand for truth against error, which they did in withdrawing their allegiance from the BFBS and forming the Trinitarian Bible Society. These men and women—Anglicans, Baptists, Independents and others—were all ‘Protestants’, prepared to ‘protest’ firmly, and yet prayerfully, graciously and Scripturally, in the spirit of their Master, against the unbiblical evils of their day. By grace, they were ‘Protesting’ or, to use a Scriptural expression, they were ‘Contending’ for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

Of course, their ‘Contending’ or ‘Protesting’ was against Rome and the gross evils of that anti-scriptural system, and the word ‘Protestant’ clearly demarked them as not being Romanists. However, the true ‘Protest’ of sincere Bible-believing Protestants has never stopped at only protesting against the Papacy. Their ‘Protest’ was also against the Unitarianism of their day, and all the other heresies and unscriptural practices of their times. They were jealous for their God and His Word. Their ‘Protest’ would have been made in their own churches and assemblies against any unscriptural doctrine or innovation being surreptitiously introduced—however much they loved their body’s distinctive testimony and their fellow worshippers.

Their ‘Protest’ would have been first and foremost positive. It was, after all, **for** the Holy Scriptures and **for** the glory of its Divine Author—the God of Truth and Righteousness! Their ‘Protest’ would have been evident in their prayers, as they expressed their heart’s desires, ‘Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven’ (*Matthew 6.9,10*). Of course, there also would have been a negative element to their ‘Protest’. But, as with all true and sincere Bible-believers, the negative element of their ‘Protest’ would have started with themselves and the evil and wretched plague of wickedness they would have seen in their own hearts, causing them to cry out in ‘protest’ with the Apostle Paul, ‘O wretched man that I am!’ (*Romans 7.24*). With Martin Luther and all true Protestants, their Protestantism would have been very prayerful, very practical, very positive, very searching, very Biblically based, and—personally—very humbling.

It is in this context that the word ‘Protestant’ is used in the Society’s Constitution. It is in this same context that all true Bible-believing men and women of our day—from whatever background—can also closely identify with the Society in its work of faith and labour of love, seeking the glory of God in the circulating of Protestant or uncorrupted versions of the Word of God among all nations.

Your continued prayers for the Lord’s blessing to attend His Word are much appreciated!

### **Endnotes:**

1. John Owen, ‘A Brief and Impartial Account of the Nature of the Protestant Religion’: ‘The State and Fate of the Protestant Religion’ in *The Works of John Owen*, D.D., 16 vols., William Goold, ed. (Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T. Clark, 1862), 14.532.

2. J. H. Merle D’Aubigné, *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, 4 vols. (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1846), 4.60.

# A Priceless Promise

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

I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people,  
and they shall trust in the name of the LORD.

*Zephaniah 3.12*

All divine promises are valuable to God's people, but certain of these pledges have a special place in their hearts. Faith never becomes weary of pleading these heavenly mercies. Every one of these invaluable promises begins with a divine, 'I will'.

The first of these unique promises was given in the Garden of Eden. After the fall of our first parents, the word of infinite condescending mercy sounded forth, '...her seed...shall bruise thy head' (Genesis 3.15). By the mouth of Zechariah, the Lord gave the unsurpassed, 'and I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications' (Zechariah 12.10). In both the Old and the New Testaments we find the most precious of all covenant pledges: 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee' (e.g., Joshua 1.5, Isaiah 54.7-10, Hebrews 13.5). These divine 'I wills' speak of unfailing, sovereign grace.

In the sovereign 'I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people', the Lord promises to leave a remnant according to the grace of His election. As a fruit of His grace He will make this remnant to differ from the many who continue in their sinful pride and egotism. The people whom the Lord will leave and spare in the judgment, He will deliver, in grace, from their conceit and vanity; He will cause them to be 'afflicted and poor'. In the Scriptures, the word 'poor' frequently occurs with a spiritual connotation, designating and referring to God's people. At times, the word 'poor' in this regard stands by itself as in Isaiah 14.32, 'the poor of his people shall trust in it'.

At other times, this 'I will' is used with a synonym such as 'needy' or as in our text 'afflicted'. These synonyms—poor, needy and afflicted—signify humility before God and man, as well as a complete dependence on the grace of God.

To be afflicted and poor means to be bowed down on account of one's sin and sinfulness, to be oppressed with the feeling of utter inability to deliver oneself, and to be thirsting for deliverance by the compassionate grace of God alone. It is to be poor in spirit. It is thus the opposite of the spiritual pride which trusts in its own strength and boasts in its own righteousness.

These poor and needy, whom the Lord designs for His own glory, He enables to trust in His **name**. To trust in the name of the Lord can never be a reality without trusting in the Word of God in which this name is revealed. 'The name of the LORD *is* a strong tower' to which the needy flies for safety (Proverbs 18.10). By the phrase 'the name of the LORD' we must understand the perfections of His nature. 'They that know thy name' (that is, His perfections) 'will put their trust in thee' (Psalm 9.10). Trust is an activity of the soul, a resting on the Lord. Trust reposes all its hope on the Lord's unfailing love. How precious are the unsearchable mysteries of love and grace revealed in the name of the Lord!

When the poor and needy trust in the name of the Lord, they trust in His **mercy to forgive all their transgressions**. Their sins, red like crimson, are made white as snow by the power of the blood of Christ. No sense of guilt needs to keep the needy from the Throne of Grace. There are no limits to the tender mercies of the Lord. How comforting is this special grace of trusting in Christ's merits for pardon full and free. How sweet is **the name of Jesus!**

Moreover, when the poor and needy trust in the name of the Lord, they confide in the **Lord's providential care**, and exercise faith in His promise that 'all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose' (Romans 8.28). Often they cannot see how, but they may know by faith that 'God moves in a mysterious way/ His wonders to perform.'<sup>1</sup> They commit their ways to the Lord.

Furthermore, they trust in the Lord's **strength** to support and sustain them in all their weaknesses and frailties. They shelter in the strong tower of His name. Their enemies may be powerful; however, their Redeemer is omnipotent.

Finally, they humbly trust in the **unchanging grace** of the Lord. He assures them by promise and by oath, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee' (Hebrews 13.5). Their security rests on the unchanging love of God, whose compassions fail not, 'with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning' (James 1.17).

1. *Gadsby's Hymns* (London, England: C. J. Farncombe & Sons, 1919), no. 320.

T H E  
**SURE**  
WORD OF PROPHECY

The Rev. N. M. Ross

*The sermon preached at the 178th Annual General Meeting  
of the Trinitarian Bible Society (edited for publication)*

‘We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts’ (2 Peter 1.19)

**A**t the opening of this service we heard these words quoted from Psalm 138.2: ‘thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name’. It is a wonderful fact that in a certain sense the Word of God has **supremacy**—a fact that is calculated to be very encouraging and motivating to those whose work it is to spread abroad the Scriptures. The Lord Himself gave the Word, but He uses people to spread it abroad—‘great *was* the company of those that published *it*’, says Psalm 68.11.

In our text, 2 Peter 1.19, we have another motive and encouragement for carrying out this vitally important work of taking the Word of God to people throughout the world, that is, its **certainty**: it is the ‘**sure** word of prophecy’.

Therefore, by the Lord’s help, we shall now consider ‘**the sure word of prophecy**’. There are three things we shall look at. **First**, what this word of prophecy is, or its **nature** as the ‘more sure word of prophecy’; **second**, what it does, or its **effect** as ‘a light that shineth in a dark place’; and **third**, what we are to do with it, or the **duty** laid upon us by the words, ‘whereunto ye do well that ye take heed’.

## **The Word of Prophecy: its nature**

Strictly speaking, ‘the word of prophecy’ is simply Scripture foretelling future events, and the phrase, as used in this verse, refers especially to the foretelling of events connected with the coming of the Messiah. But we have more than just the prophecies of Scripture in the phrase ‘the word of prophecy’: it is descriptive, I believe, of the whole of Old Testament Scripture. Here we have an example of a part—the prophecy of Old Testament Scripture—being taken for the whole. Although the prophets predicted future events, especially the coming of the Messiah, they also proclaimed **all** the words given to them by God to proclaim. In other words, the prophets were the immediate human agents of God for communicating His mind and will to men.

Now, with regard to ourselves today, having both the Old and New Testaments, we may take ‘the word of prophecy’ to mean the whole Word of God. In Revelation 22.7 we are exhorted to keep ‘the sayings of the prophecy of this book’—not just the prophetic parts of The Revelation, nor even the book of The Revelation, but rather the whole of Scripture. The canon of Scripture was brought to a close when John wrote The Revelation, and towards the end we have the solemn warning that there is to be no adding to nor taking away from ‘the words of the prophecy of this book’ (22.18–19), that is, of Scripture. Just as the whole of Scripture is described as ‘the word of this salvation’ (Acts 13.26), ‘the word of life’ (Philippians 2.16), ‘the word of the truth of the gospel’ (Colossians 1.5), and ‘the word of righteousness’ (Hebrews 5.13), so it is described here, we understand, as ‘the word of prophecy’.

Another important aspect of the nature of the ‘word of prophecy’ is that it is ‘the word of Christ’ (Colossians 3.16), not only as it **comes** from Christ, but especially because it is **full** of Christ. It is Christ and Him crucified who is the substance of the Word; He is the very kernel of the truth. Christ instructs us to search the Scriptures for they testify of Himself (John 5.39). You will recall that when the two disciples were on their way to Emmaus, the Saviour Himself drew near to them, ‘and beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself’ (Luke 24.27). Yes, in **all** the Scriptures. What was it He set before them from **all** the Scriptures? Himself as the suffering Saviour. ‘Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?’ (Luke 24.26). How full of Christ is the ‘word of prophecy’.

Of course, the Scriptures are a revelation of the mind and will of God, but God reveals Himself also through the personal Word, Jesus Christ. Of Him we read, ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the

Word was God’ (John 1.1). It is through Christ especially that God reveals Himself—through Christ the personal Word presented in the written Word.

In a verse previous to our text, Peter says he made known ‘the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ’ (verse 16), but how did he make it known? He did not use cunningly devised fables but the ‘sure word’. And even although he testifies that he and James and John were eyewitnesses of the divine majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ on the holy mount, he goes on to state, ‘We have also a more sure word of prophecy’.

Now when the apostle was speaking of ‘the **power**...of our Lord Jesus Christ’, he was referring to His divine omnipotence. The apostle was making known that Christ, as the omnipotent One, had power to do what had to be done for the redemption of sinners; power to destroy the works of the devil, power to conquer death, and power to conquer him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and thus power to redeem His people. Christ still exercises His power for the salvation of sinners such as ourselves. He is ‘mighty to save’ (Isaiah 63.1); He ‘is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him’ (Hebrews 7.25).

This, then, is what Peter was making known: ‘the power...of our Lord Jesus Christ’—and making it known from the ‘sure word’. Yes, he testified to hearing the voice from heaven and to seeing the glory and majesty of the divine Redeemer in the holy mount, but this is what he is underlining: ‘We have also a more sure word of prophecy’.

The apostle was also making known the ‘**coming** of our Lord Jesus Christ’ (verse 16); that He came into this world to dwell among men. What a wonder: Emmanuel, God with us! The question of Solomon in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple was, ‘But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth?’ (2 Chronicles 6.18). Is it possible? Well, this was the great message of the prophets, that the Messiah would come into the world at the set time.

In the days of Moses, and before, there were those who looked forward to the coming of the Messiah. They thought of Him as ‘the coming One’. Then John the Baptist, through his disciples, asked the Saviour the question, ‘Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?’ (Matthew 11.3), asking, as it were, ‘Art thou the coming One?’ This is what Godly people in Old Testament times were much taken up with: the coming of the coming One. How much Godly Zacharias and Elisabeth, and Simeon and Anna in the Temple, were looking forward to His coming. Then suddenly the set time came. ‘When the fulness of the time was

come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law' (Galatians 4.4) to save His people from their sins by bearing their iniquities.

But when we think of the 'coming of our Lord Jesus Christ', are we not to think also that He shall yet come in the person of His Spirit, to pour out His Spirit upon all flesh (Joel 2.28; Acts 2.17)? That prophecy of Joel, of course, had a partial fulfilment on the day of Pentecost, but there shall be a further and greater and worldwide fulfilment of it. All nations shall come unto Him (Psalm 86.9), multitudes from all corners of the earth will flock unto Shiloh, and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be (Genesis 49.10). What an amazing prospect that is! The knowledge of His glory shall cover the whole earth 'as the waters cover the sea' (Habakkuk 2.14); when there shall be, as Jonathan Edwards calls it, 'The latter-day glory'.<sup>1</sup>

Then Christ shall come finally in person when He shall 'appear the second time without sin unto salvation' (Hebrews 9.28). On the great last day He shall come **without sin**, that is, not to bear the sins of His people, for that He has done already. Instead, He shall come **unto salvation**, that is, for the completing of their salvation, for the gathering of His saints together unto Him. How glorious shall be His coming! 'They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory' (Matthew 24.30). He Himself says, 'Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh' (Matthew 24.44).

We see also the nature of the 'word of prophecy' in the word 'sure'. It tells us that the Word of God is certain, true, altogether without error, absolutely infallible. It is settled in heaven for ever, as the Psalmist said:

'Thy word for ever is, O Lord,  
in heaven settled fast;  
Unto all generations  
thy faithfulness doth last' (Metrical Psalm 119.89).

And as the sure and settled Word, it will endure, as Metrical Psalm 33 puts it:

'O but the counsel of the Lord  
doth stand for ever sure;  
And of his heart the purposes  
from age to age endure' (verse 11).

What is the **reason** for the Word being sure? The answer is: its Divine origin. In the verses after our text, especially verse 21, we read, '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'. Here we have God as the original giver of the Word. 'The Lord gave the word' (Psalm 68.11), and each of the Persons of the Godhead was involved in giving the Word. The Word was given by God who cannot lie (Titus 1.2), by Christ who is the Amen and the faithful and true Witness (Revelation 3.14), by the Spirit who is the Spirit of truth (John 16.13). Therefore the Word cannot be other than sure. Those holy men of old were 'moved' or borne along by the Holy Ghost and thus the Word they spoke and wrote was God-breathed; they were used as penmen so that what they enscripturated is the very Word of God. 'All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God' (2 Timothy 3.16) and therefore is the 'sure word'.

When we think of that process of the Holy Spirit working in those holy men, we are confronted by what is deeply mysterious. Who can enter into what was happening in their souls when God the Holy Ghost carried them along, so that they were penmen in His hand? There was no submerging of their personalities, but what they wrote was precisely what God would have them to write.

The mysteriousness of that process is akin to the work of the Spirit of God in bringing sinners from death to life. The Saviour said to Nicodemus about the work of the Holy Spirit in the new birth that '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' (John 3.8). But the result of the Holy Spirit thus working secretly in the soul becomes evident. So also the mysterious work of the Spirit of God in those holy men of old as they were borne along is wonderfully evident in our having the Scriptures.

However, our text also says that the 'sure word' is '**more** sure', that is, it is more sure than a certain sure thing. It is more sure than the voice that Peter writes of in verse 18, 'this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount'. How profound were the words uttered by that voice: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him' (Matthew 17.5). Of course, those words they heard from heaven were sure; there is no question about that for they were words of God who cannot lie. Yet Scripture is 'a more sure word'.

In what sense is the written Word more sure than the voice from heaven? The voice from heaven was transient—it was heard and it was gone; but Scripture is a fixed and permanent Word. What a great privilege is ours in having this 'more sure word'! If it were only the voice from heaven we had, where would we be? We would be depending on fallible memories and word of mouth transmission

of the words of that voice. So it pleased God, as it says in the Westminster Confession of Faith, ‘for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church...to commit the same wholly unto writing’ (I.1). What an unspeakable mercy it is that God has given us His written Word! Of course, it is in the written Word that we have the record of the voice from heaven and of the glory of Christ being manifested on the Mount of Transfiguration.

A thought-provoking question was posed today in the Society’s Business Report on the work being done in Iran: ‘Can you imagine what it would be like if we had no Bible at all?’ How highly favoured we are in having this ‘more sure word’—and we must be praising the Most High for it. To others it was said, ‘To you is the word of this salvation sent’ (Acts 13.26), as if to say, ‘A great favour has been bestowed upon you’. How great indeed is our privilege! But what effect does the Word have upon us?

## **The Word of Prophecy: its effect**

Let us look, in the second place, at the **effect** of the ‘word of prophecy’. There is one effect indicated by our text: the effect of enlightening. The Word of God is compared to ‘a light that shineth in a dark place’. The dark place that we are to think of especially is this world itself, which has gross spiritual darkness covering it. However much light of knowledge there may be in various academic disciplines or particular professions, the world is enveloped in spiritual darkness. When man fell, his understanding was darkened; as Thomas Boston puts it, ‘the understanding, that as a lamp or candle shone brightly, is now enveloped with darkness’.<sup>2</sup> The soul of man came under the darkness of both ignorance and sin. We by nature are born in spiritual darkness, and if we are not enlightened by God in His mercy we will continue doing the works of darkness. The world, then, is covered by dreadful darkness, and something of the dreadfulness of that darkness is indicated by what it culminates in: ‘outer darkness’ and ‘the blackness of darkness’. What a mercy it is that we have the ‘sure word’ as ‘a light that shineth in a dark place’.

Another element in the darkness that covers the world is false religion: Roman Catholicism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and other religions of darkness. We heard today already about the spiritual darkness of false religion in our own nation. We also heard that in the prevailing darkness in Iran there are indications that some are looking for more than they can find in Islam. Only the Word of Christ and Christ in the Word will enlighten a poor sinner in his darkness.

But, of course, Satan, the prince of darkness, is constantly working to keep men in darkness. The world 'lieth in wickedness' (1 John 5.19), and the evil one is 'the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience' (Ephesians 2.2), 'the god of this world [who] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel' (2 Corinthians 4.4) shine into their hearts and they be converted. Multitudes upon multitudes in our own and other lands are travelling on in darkness to outer darkness. What hope is there for them?

What hope was there for you in the past, child of God? You who have the hope now that you are a child of light must acknowledge that you were brought to hope in God's Word, the light that shines in the dark place. Light comes into the soul when the Word is applied to it. When the gospel is preached in any place, a certain degree of light comes to that place; but never will there be light in the soul of any person until the Word is divinely applied to it. 'The entrance of thy words giveth light,' said the Psalmist (Psalm 119.130). There must be the entering of the Word into the soul if there is to be life and light in it.

That is what happened, for example, in Philippi (Acts 16.23ff). The jailer there was in the greatest darkness but the light of the truth entered his soul when it was presented to him by Paul and Silas, and so he became a child of light. What a remarkable and most profound change occurs when a sinner is translated, or carried across, from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Colossians 1.13). To the children of light it is said, 'ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord' (Ephesians 5.8)—not just brought into light, but made light itself, 'light in the Lord'.

There must, of course, be the accompanying of the Word by the Spirit of God if the darkness that is in the soul is to be dispelled. A great marvel it was when God, in His work of creation, 'commanded the light to shine out of darkness'. How much greater a marvel it is, believers must say, that 'God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ' (2 Corinthians 4.6), that is, in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

In thinking of the Word as a light we are to bear in mind that it is Christ in the Word who is especially the light. He declares, 'I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life' (John 8.12). He is the glorious Light of the world who is graciously calling to us in our darkness to come to Him (if we have not been yet enlightened), and also is calling His enlightened people to trust in Him in their times of darkness. We

are to be ever looking to Him, the Light of the world, as He is presented to us in the 'light that shineth in a dark place'.

It was an amazing effect that the Word had in Thessalonica also. The light of the gospel came in a general way to the people of Thessalonica, but the gospel came to some of them in a very special way—with spiritual light. 'Our gospel came not unto you in word only', wrote Paul, 'but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance' (1 Thessalonians 1.5). This assurance is not the assurance of faith, but the assurance that the word of the truth of the gospel is the 'sure word'. Those believers in Thessalonica came to understand that the Word of God was certain, right, inerrant and infallible, the Word that could indeed be the foundation of their salvation. Assurance of the veracity, inerrancy, and infallibility of the Word of God is what the believer has been brought to.

What a blessed people are they who have been made children of light! What is a characteristic of these blessed children? Do you think that they will go on in light constantly without having darkness? It is clear from the Word of God that this is not so. 'Who *is* among you that feareth the LORD...that walketh *in* darkness...?' (Isaiah 50.10). That is the experience of the believer from time to time. How should he react? 'Let him trust in the name of the LORD'. Let him turn to the 'sure word' of the Lord where he will find light. The Lord will cause light to arise to him in his darkness.

Here then is 'the light of the world': Jesus Christ Himself, but Jesus Christ as revealed in the Word. Therefore the Word itself is a light for this lost world, 'a light that shineth in a dark place'.

We heard today about the Iranian woman who received a copy of The Gospel According to John in her own language, Farsi, and how she was filled with grateful wonder that she should have been so favoured as to have part of the written Word of God in her hands. Greater was her wonder and gratitude when the Word was blessed to her to bring her to faith in Christ and to see Him as the light of the world.

There is no hope for a lost world if the Word be not spread abroad. This is the great need of the nations of the earth; and this is the pressing need of our own nation—that the Word again be proclaimed throughout its length and breadth, in our parishes, towns and cities. Sadly, there is a famine of the pure preaching of the Word in many corners of our land, and also a dreadful apathy on the part of so many with regard to this light that shines in dark places. What is our duty?

## The Word of Prophecy: our duty

Our duty is very clear: ‘whereunto’—that is, to the ‘sure word of prophecy’—‘ye do well that ye take heed’. These words, ‘that ye take heed’, were addressed by the apostle, in the first instance, to the Jewish Christians who were scattered abroad, but we today are also called to heed the ‘sure word’.

In what way are we to take heed to it? By conducting ourselves according to it. ‘This is the light that I must have for my feet; this is the lamp that I must have for my path’, says the believer. ‘It is my desire that I would indeed be, as the apostle John puts it, “walking in truth” (3 John 4). I must have my heart and life conformed to this light.’ The Christian is concerned to take heed by keeping ‘the sayings of the prophecy of this book’ (Revelation 22.7), to be ever diligent in going along the narrow way which it prescribes. He acknowledges that this is the good path, the old path, the narrow way that leads to life eternal; and that he must have God’s Word as his light if he is to progress in the way, endure to the end and arrive in heaven at last. So the ‘sure word’ must be thus heeded if he is to do what is required in verse 10, ‘Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure’.

There is another way in which we are to be heeding the Word: by doing our utmost to convey it to others. Peter’s concern was not only that these Jewish believers would be put in remembrance of the Word that had already been spoken to them (verses 12 and 13), but also that it would be proclaimed to others. How boldly he preached the Word to the multitude on the day of Pentecost. He set before them their sins, and also the crucified One who died and rose again for the remission of sins. The Word had an effect upon them. They anxiously enquired, ‘Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?’ (Acts 2.37). The Word was not only a light to show them their sins, but also a light to show thousands of them ‘the light of the world’, Jesus Christ, to the saving of their souls. This Word, in the hand of the Spirit of God, is the same effective Word today as it was then.

This is encouraging, is it not? When we are concerned about our duty to publish the Word of God among all nations, and when there is much work to be done in translating the Scriptures into the languages of the peoples of the world, what an encouragement it is that the Word is the same now as it was then, the same ‘sure word’, the same light that shines, the same powerful Word which is ‘the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek’ (Romans 1.16). Truly, it is a powerful Word.

This truth is also a motive to do what we can, while we can, so that others would have this precious, sure, enlightening Word in their own hands and hearts. This is the prayerful concern of ministers of the Gospel: that the Word will go forth powerfully to bring multitudes who are in darkness to know the blessed One who is the light of the world. And believers generally, when they consider the blessing they themselves received from the Word, under the work of the Spirit of God, desire that others, especially those near to them, would have the Word as the Word of their salvation. But again we say that there is no possibility of a turn of the tide of iniquity that is rising higher and higher nationally and internationally unless the Word be accompanied by the power of the Holy Ghost from heaven.

It is indeed an onerous responsibility that is laid upon the church of Christ, and upon those engaged on behalf of the church, in having to translate and publish faithful versions of the Word of God. The responsibility of transmitting the truth has been laid on the church in all generations. It was given to the church in Old Testament times, as we see in Metrical Psalm 78,

His testimony and his law  
in Isr'el he did place,  
And charg'd our fathers it to show  
to their succeeding race;  
That so the race which was to come  
might well them learn and know;  
And sons unborn, who should arise,  
might to their sons them show. (verses 5 and 6)

Today, there is a responsibility laid upon parents to instruct their children in the truth; upon the church to faithfully declare the Word; and upon those involved in the work of this Society to continue, by Divine grace, transmitting the truth by faithful translations of the Scriptures.

One last point needs to be emphasised: our heeding the Word is to **continue**, as our text says, 'until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts'. What day is this? We believe that is ultimately the great day when Christ will come to gather all His saints together to Himself. But each saint is first gathered in at the moment of death, when an entrance is given to him into the kingdom above—the kingdom that we read of in verse 11, 'the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ'.

To continue heeding the Word, never turning aside—this is what the child of God is striving to do. The believer is sure that he must not give up, turn aside, nor turn back, but go on in the way. He must run the race that is set before him,

having the Word as a light and Christ before his eyes (Hebrews 12.1–2). Then at last he will have the day star arise in his heart. The day star? Is this not Christ Himself? Yes; He is the bright and morning star that will be given to each believer who continues to the end. Christ says, ‘I will give him the morning star’ (Revelation 2.28), as if to say, ‘I, Myself, will be his portion eternally’. At the time of their departure believers shall go to ‘be with Christ; which is far better’ (Philippians 1.23). Then they shall have such a fulness of communion with Christ as they could not have in this world. This is what is in store for them.

‘I will give him the morning star’. To whom shall it be given? To those who ‘hold fast’, ‘to him that overcometh’, and, says Christ, ‘keepeth my works unto the end’—that is, the works required by Christ of everyone—doing His will and walking in His ways (Revelation 2.25,26). So the day star shall arise at last in the heart of each believer in his having the full enjoying of Christ for ever. The church in the Song of Solomon was earnestly desiring that day when she said, ‘Until the day break, and the shadows flee away’ (Song 2.17). Such is the language of believers in this world who long to have more of Christ and fuller communion with Him. Then, at last and for ever, they shall have that desired and fullest communion—and all this because of the ‘sure word of prophecy’ being blessed to them in time, bringing them to know Christ as ‘the light of the world’, ‘the bright and morning star’. I have a desire, said Paul, ‘to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better’ (Philippians 1.23). ‘For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain’ (v. 21). Why is it gain to die? The answer must be, ‘I shall be with Him; I shall have Him; I shall have communion with Him for ever and ever’.

Finally, who is **especially** set before us in the ‘sure word of prophecy’? Oh, it is indeed Christ. ‘I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified’, said Paul (1 Corinthians 2.2). This, then, is what we are never to lose sight of about the preaching of the Word: it is essentially preaching Christ. This is what people sitting in darkness need so much: the preaching of the Word, which is the preaching of Christ, so that they will behold Him with the eye of faith, have deliverance from the wrath which is to come and the hope of eternal life. And then, as verse 11 shows, an entrance shall be ministered unto them abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

May He bless His Word to us.

### Endnotes:

1. Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, Scotland: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1979), 2.287.
2. Thomas Boston, *The Works of Thomas Boston*, 12 vols., *Commentary on the Shorter Catechism*, (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada: Still Waters Revival Books, 1993), 1.184.

# THE CATALAN BIBLE

## *Scriptures for Catalunya* A letter from the translator

**‘O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.’ Psalm 107.1**

*August 2009*

The 5th of August 2009 was three months since we received the first copies of the complete Catalan Holy Scriptures, excellently printed by the TBS. We wrote a thanksgiving note the selfsame day, on Tuesday the 5th of May, expressing our gratitude to the Lord with Psalm 107, and our joy for this momentous event for us.

Now as a family we are greatly enjoying the systematic reading, in the morning and in the evening every day, of the Holy Scriptures in these volumes—until now we had been doing the readings using the PDF on the computer—following the ‘One Year Reading Scheme’ of the TBS diary. These readings are the basis of our family school-education system, which is quite at odds with—indeed contrary to—the corrupted and atheistic school system prevalent in the society that surrounds us. But in our ‘independent republic of plain Catalan Christians’ in Lleida, the Word of God is our Law and Statutes.

Thinking on the history of the TBS translation I remember that the first draft of verses was written as far back as 1977, when

I wrote on my student notebook a meditation on the words of Deuteronomy 29.29, ‘Les coses secretes *pertanyen* a Jahveh, el nostre Déu, però les revelades *són* per a nosaltres i per als nostres fills per sempre, a fi que complim totes les paraules d’aquesta llei’, in an interlinear format comparing the Catalan versions with other versions and trying to write and decipher the Hebrew original. I was then nineteen and now I am fifty years old. Then I was using what was available in Catalan, basically the Fundació Bíblica Catalana in one volume; the translation was quite accurate but some of the notes were misleading, from the Wellhausian school of ‘erudition’. I was helped a little later on by E. J. Young’s *Thy Word is Truth* published by the Banner of Truth.

We are now in the distribution process. In our area, in Lleida and the counties around, we are in a pioneering situation, and find that most of the people have no idea of the importance of the Holy Scriptures. I have tried to make a summary compilation in English of some notes that we have written down in our diary, in chronological order, so that you may uphold us in prayer in our endeavours to promote the faithful knowledge of the Holy Scriptures in the Catalan-speaking countries.

## *May 5, Tuesday*

Today, 5th of May 2009, at 13:55, while we were having lunch, we have received the long awaited parcel with the first five TBS Catalan Bibles for our family. These volumes are precious to us!

We have read Psalm 107 to express our gratitude to the Lord as the first family reading with our new Books.

As you have been supporting us with your prayers in this project, we send you this thanksgiving note the selfsame day, so that you may give thanks and rejoice with us.

The first days we tried to offer copies to relatives and acquaintances, some accepted it, but many others refused it. My father was very eager to go to the library of Benavent town hall, the village of my family, where they have a copy in their library. There are many people who have a copy and for whom we pray that they may have the blessing of Psalm 119 for themselves.

## *May 16, Saturday*

This was the first trip of distribution outside Lleida. I looked for the first town in alphabetical order in the nearby counties: it was Àger, in the county of La Noguera. My father had met a friend from Àger in a trip to Peníscola. We went to visit him, and he told us that he had recently purchased by mail a copy of the Bible of Montserrat for more than 80 euros; we gave him a copy of our Bible for himself, and a copy for the

school and the public library of the village which were closed just then, and had a profitable conversation about how to read the Scriptures.

Afterwards I went up and down the streets of Àger, knocking on doors: the Lord gave the opportunity of several conversations with some people. One was a teacher of physics and chemistry who said that she used to be very religious when a young person, but she was now sceptical about religious matters, and she was very surprised when I told her that I believed that the Lord Jesus is the Creator, and that I did not believe the theory of evolution: she said it was the first time she met a person like this. I persuaded her after some insistence to accept a copy of the New Testament. I also spoke to a man who was ninety-three years old who had been a judge in the district, and who very gladly accepted a copy of the New Testament. This day I distributed twenty-three copies of the New Testament and three copies of the Holy Bible.

## *May 27, Wednesday*

Went to the village of Almacelles. At 10.00 a.m. I visited the local primary school, called Antònia Simó-Arnó, and spoke to the secretary and to the librarian of the school. We had a conversation about what books the children read, and they accepted three copies of the New Testament for the school library. Then I went to the secondary schools, called Canigó, and spoke to the secretary who said that she already had a copy of the TBS New Testament that I had given

them in 1999; she said that the director and the librarian were not available, and I waited for a quarter of an hour for the head of the department of religion, but they could not talk with me at that time. Then I went to the public library and to the town hall department which is responsible for culture, which is in charge of the local public libraries, and they also took two copies for their libraries.

Then I went house to house, distributing leaflets and engaging in conversation with the people who were available, explaining as far as was an opportunity about the Holy Scriptures. I met with an old student, who I had in the my classroom some seventeen years ago, a nice fellow who invited me to come into the house and have a drink—which I politely declined—and he took two copies of the New Testament. I had some five good conversations with people at the doorsteps or on the street, but none was interested enough for a copy of the Bible. Some said that they already had one—the Catalan interconfessional paraphrase, or the Montserrat—others that they were not used to reading.

### *June 12, Friday*

I went to the Savings Bank, and I offered a copy of the new Catalan Bible to the people there. One of them paid for one copy and started to ask many questions, and I had to write down some of the information. In these places, as with the medical doctors, they usually tell you, 'I respect your opinions, but I am not interested.' So this one was an exception, and I was at the bank office for more than thirty-seven minutes

answering interesting questions and giving directions about how to read the Scriptures. The director accepted a copy as a deposit, and because of the questions that he has asked I advised him to read Romans; he said that he would ask advice from someone of his acquaintance, and compare with the version that he had at home.

### *June 13th, Saturday*

I started the battle by prayer at 5.00 in the morning, asking the Lord for a great supply of patience, grace and love for the day. We went to a town in the pre-Pyrenees called Oliana, and distributed four copies of the Catalan Bible. I would not do this for any other book in the world, but only for this one. I had the opportunity of some preaching to five people sitting at a table, who asked substantial questions afterwards. Our task here is ploughing and breaking ground, kindling the fire, and then awaiting the flame.

### *June 29th, Monday*

Went to the Lleida University Library, and after several questions about the books included on the translation and about the Council of Trento, the chief librarian accepted a copy as a deposit—which means that they will pass it to the Department of Humanities. In 1300 AD, when Lleida University was founded, it would have been the Department of Theology, but we are in a secularised system of studies in the 21st century. In September I hope to be able to see the TBS edition on the shelves.

## *June 30th, Tuesday*

In the morning went to the Institut Superior de Ciències religioses de Lleida, which is a vaticanish centre for post-graduate studies. The librarian told me that the course was over, and that I should come in September, and that he thought some of the students would be interested in having a copy of the TBS Catalan Bible. In 1999 two of the students of this institution had asked for copies of the New Testament.

## *July 2nd, Thursday*

At 10.00 in the morning I had an appointment with the director of the Institut d'Estudis Ilerdencs, and after one hour and a half of a substantial conversation about the translation, the history of the Scriptures in Catalan and Arnau de Vilanova, he said 'thank you for the lesson' and took a copy in deposit for the IEI library, which is just in front of the 'new' (18th century) vaticanish cathedral of Lleida. They have a better light in this historical library at the centre of Lleida.

## *July 15th, Wednesday*

In the evening I went to the Ateneu Popular de Ponent, which is an institution to promote the local history at a popular level, and the librarians took a copy of the Bible in deposit to show at the next meeting of the committee in September. I told them that if there are people interested in the serious reading or an introduction of the reading of the Scriptures or of any

book in particular, I would be available to go there some evenings.

## *July 17-27*

I visited several private schools, and they told me to better come back in September, when the librarians will be again active. In all these endeavours I had in mind the words of Ecclesiastes 11.1-6, sowing in hope... I feel a bit like Jeremiah buying his field in Anathoth when all was a devastation: it is a question of working through faith.

A note also related to the distribution of the TBS Catalan Scriptures, but not distributed directly by us: Last year I was asked to translate and prepare, as a voluntary work, the additional material in two formats for an organisation called The Gideons International. I was glad to hear that in June arrived in Barcelona almost 85,000 copies of the TBS Catalan New Testament in one of the Gideons' formats, which this organisation plan to distribute by themselves in places—hospitals, hotels—that we could not possibly reach with our artisan means of distribution. I have not yet seen these copies, and I hope that they will send at least one to me for my voluntary cooperation.

### *Some information on several projects*

In order to reinforce the distribution of the TBS Catalan edition of the Holy Scriptures and diffuse the knowledge of the sound Christian doctrines in Catalan, I am writing some leaflets and booklets on the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures as the only authority for the faith and the practice of the Christian,

which is so needful in a traditionally vaticanish influenced area. These subjects include the *theo-pnèustia* of the Scriptures; the unique authority and holiness of the Scriptures; the identity of the books ('canon'); the sufficiency, the transmission and the preservation of the Scriptures; the rules of hermeneutics to interpret rightly the Scriptures. I wrote a leaflet as an introduction to the reading of the Scriptures, intended for the people to whom we distribute and who have never seen a real Bible, called 'Entens el que estàs llegint? Guiatge per llegir les Santes Escriptures', which is based on Acts 8.30. Antoni—with whom we collaborate sometimes—said that he also would like to have copies of it for his distribution, so he did the design as a triptych for a homespun printing.

We plan the voice recording in a quality MP3 or other suitable format of some of the books of the Catalan Bible. I am now taking advice about the best way of doing this.

After prayer and receiving advice about the building of a mission station in a plot of land in Benavent, we think that it is best to leave this at a standstill. We think that building is too much of a headache in accordance to our circumstances, and it is best to employ our family resources in more useful things like the printing of Christian booklets and leaflets, distribution travel expenses, renting when necessary a suitable place for meetings in Lleida, etc.

Another good exercise that we try to encourage in the family is the reading of good Christian books in the original language and edition. I am reading Gausson's 'Theo-pnèustia: la plena

inspiració de les Santes Escriptures' in the original French 1840 Geneva edition; and we have read some pages of 'The Breastplate of Faith and Love' by John Preston in its 1634 English edition.

Now that we have in print the definitive wording of the Psalms in Catalan, we commit them into memory and sing them with several musical settings. If the music suits the words of the verse of the Psalm, I encourage my wife, Marina, to adapt it into musical notation. The last we have done are the four first verses of Psalm 90: 'Senyor, tu has estat el nostre refugi de generació en generació...'

I should clarify that all our ministry is in the Catalan language; it seems that it is only us who take it seriously into consideration for the Christian service, and although we, sadly, live under the yoke of the state of 'Spain'—more or less like Israel under Egypt—we continue to be just plain Catalans, and are most emphatically not 'Spaniards'—typically they enjoy bullfighting and flamenco dancing, and plain Catalans abhor these things. Our everyday language is Catalan and not Spanish. In our ministry we are devoted to promote the truth in Catalan for the Catalan countries. There are brothers and ministries in 'Spain' who work in Castilian Spanish, but we in the Catalan countries work in Catalan. Please have this in mind if you pray specifically for us and do not be confused by misleading typical tourists and commercial topics from the politicians in Madrid. Look for truth in everything, and make your investigation always from reliable sources.

*October 2009*

Lately I have been targeting the schools of the Baix Segre counties. The results until now have been mostly disappointing: it seems that the schools boards, the heads of the departments and the people in charge of the libraries are not interested in having a reliable copy of the Holy Scriptures with them. I am awaiting an answer from several places where I left a copy for inspection.

On Friday 23rd October I gave a copy of the New Testament, together with the guidance on 'How-to-read the Scripture' triptych and a 2010 calendar to the wife of the man who for twenty-three years was the President of the Generalitat de Catalunya. They seem to be readers of the Scriptures, but under the vaticanish influence of the Montserrat monks.

So the Lord is giving us opportunities to distribute His Word both to people

considered small as well as those considered more important among men.

As you may see, we have plenty to do, but the important thing is that we do it in the right way, because we love our Lord Jesus Christ, our Lord and Redeemer, and all His truth written in His Word.

In our Lord's service,

*Ramon i Marina  
Rocaspana*



*The Rocaspana family with their Bibles*

## THE TREASURY

We warmly thank the donors of the following anonymous gifts which have been received since the October *Quarterly Record* went to press. Coleford £25; Newtownards £500, £100; Edinburgh £150, £30, £20; Lairg £25; West Yorkshire £300; Wales £10; South West Wales £10; Cambridge £100; Glasgow £100, four of £50, £25; Bedford (direct into bank) £500; Oxford (direct into bank) £150; Bournemouth £500, £240; Lord's Work Trust £80, £50; Give As You Earn £100.27, £70.67, £45.47; Charities Aid Foundation two of £128.21; church donation three of £75; South West Charitable Giving £94.44, two of £54.44; direct into the bank £30, six of £25, two of £10, €350; TBS AGM £394.15, Trafalgar Square Witness £4.  
**Total £4,614.30 plus €350.**

# Membership Renewal

## Membership subscriptions for 2010 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. You will find enclosed herein\* the Membership Form for your convenience.

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. 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. 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.

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 2009 *Quarterly Record* to the great majority of our overseas supporters.

# The Word of God Among All Nations



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

## Europe

### From Armagh, N. Ireland:

A Report of the Tall Ships visit to Belfast, August 2009: Dear friends, could I thank you on behalf of the many seamen from Brazil, Portugal, Holland, France, and Uruguay, for all the TBS Calendars in Dutch, Portuguese, Spanish, and French. Also for the Portuguese Bibles and New

Testaments taken by seamen from Portugal and Brazil. A special word of thanks from the crew of the *Capitan Miranda* from Uruguay, for the many TBS Spanish New Testaments. Also, a woman in the port wanted many TBS tracts in English to take back to Fiji; and a man from Sofia, Bulgaria, took Romanian and Russian 2010 Calendars, and Russian ‘Church of the Living God’ for his work in Bulgaria. Many thanks for all this literature and for sending it over here in time.

**Portuguese Scriptures  
for the crew of a  
tall ship, Belfast**



 **From the headteacher of a school in Bedford, England:**

I am writing to thank you so much for the kind donation of Bibles for our Year 4 leavers. We have very much enjoyed the visits from Graham Chewter during this year (as in other years) and to receive the Bibles has proved to be a wonderful finale to our work in assemblies. Our children were absolutely delighted to receive them and are very proud now to have their own Bible. Once again, thank you for the generous gift.

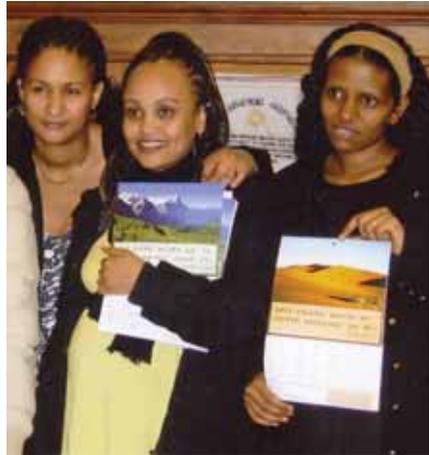
 **From a church in Scotland who distribute the Scriptures in Eastern Europe:**

We are very thankful to God for your perseverance in supporting our churches. The Hungarian and Romanian calendars and the Hungarian Bibles were again a blessed tool in our attempt to reach sinners for Christ. Many people who received calendars in the years before were already waiting for the new calendars. There were also many people who received calendars and Bibles for the first time. We know that although we received these calendars and Bibles free of charge, they cost a big amount of money. Keeping this in mind, we tried to distribute them responsibly to people who really wanted them. There were many of them! The elderly people appreciated very much the large print on the calendars. Many people told us that the Bible verses on their walls are encouraging them every day. Please pray that our Lord will bless the seed of the Word that we sowed

through these means, in order to bear fruit for the glory of God and for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose. You can read the following four quotations taken from thank-you letters of our co-workers and congregations from various places.

 **From Glasgow, Scotland:**

Thank you for the Amharic calendars. These calendars have been distributed to Ethiopians and Eritreans who live in Glasgow and Edinburgh.



**Amharic calendar distribution**

 **From Szekelyudvarhely, Romania:**

We received the Bibles and calendars with a great joy. We began to distribute the calendars immediately. It's indescribable the joy of the people who received the calendars. We were selling books at a Fair in December where we distributed the Bibles and the calendars freely. A young man from a 'good family' stopped by our

table. He saw the Bibles and immediately asked us how much it cost. I told him that it's free; then he shared with me how he came to the Fair. He told me that he began to think that maybe believers are those whose thinking is right, and he must start to read the Bible. He was thinking about where he can find a Bible, and then he came to the Fair without knowing that he would find Bibles there. He was very happy, and after that I told him how to begin to read the Bible and to study it. Bibles are very expensive. Believers are ready to pay even a great price for a Bible, but in our country sometimes the salary is enough for food only. Some students also came to our table. They wanted to buy Bibles for themselves, but their parents have not money for it. They were glad to receive free Bibles, and promised to study them.

 **From Budapest, Hungary:**

Budapest is a big city, and it is very much like Corinth was in the time of Paul. Most of the people are here for one of three reasons (work, study, entertainment). I mention this, because that is the reason people are not interested in Christianity, so it is God's miracle when we see people who receive Bibles and Christian calendars. This year I was much surprised. I put some advertisements in the local newspaper and we also put advertisements on the notice boards that are on the street in this district. Thirteen persons responded to these, and I know that this number is not big, but in Budapest it counts much. And also there were three persons who

received Bibles. The people were more interested in calendars than in the Bible. So, I was very glad for these persons, having also opportunity to talk with them.

 **From Beregszasz, Ukraine:**

We are very thankful to God that we were able to receive again calendars and Bibles. This year we received more copies than in the years before and because of this, we were able to give not only to acquaintances, but also to unknown people. Those that received calendars in the years before were already waiting for the new calendars. It was encouraging to see that in today's pagan world, there are situations when people rejoice in something that has to do with God's Word. We pray that God might use His Word to reach His elect! There was no one who refused the free calendar with Bible verses. After receiving calendars, three people started to attend our meetings regularly. The Bibles were also well received. During our family visitations we often met people who have no Bibles at all, and would be interested to read it. We are very glad in these situations that we can offer them God's Word free of charge. Many of the children who are attending our children's meetings come from non-Christian homes and in this way they have no Bibles. We are very glad that we can offer Bibles to them too. They are so proud of their Bibles! They always carry them when they are attending our meetings. We pray that God might use His Word in the lives of these children.

 **From Kpasnodar, Russia:**

Dear brothers and sisters, I went to the post office to collect some letters and I was told on arrival that there was a big parcel for me. The moment I saw it, I had no doubt where it came from. I picked it up with care, and put my hands around it and pressed it close to my heart. Then I thanked God for such a precious gift. Dear brothers and sisters, I go down on my knees to give God the honour and glory for all your labours and for your selfless efforts to send us the Word of God. We wish we could write to you more often, but we are so busy working in our gardens and growing vegetables to make ends meet. We are a small church of elderly Christians with a few young people. We do not have a church building, so we have our services in our homes. All of us who are so privileged to receive your Bibles express our deep gratitude for the precious Word of God. Please pray that the Lord will give us the fervour and the wisdom to deliver to many a heart the everlasting truth of the Gospel.

 **From Stockholm, Sweden:**

God bless you all for your unlimited effort in providing us the Word of God. These Amharic calendars will be of great help to us in reaching the unreached and strengthening those who receive the Lord Jesus as their personal Saviour. You will need to think of increasing the distribution next year as there are still those in need of it, and this will help us reach more people. We pray for you all.

 **From Lipasmata, near Athens, Greece:**

I greet you in the name of Jesus Christ. I serve the Lord Jesus in the sphere of Christian literature. I am in charge of the storeroom and the classification and distribution of God's Word in the little church of Lipasmata. In Greece, this country which was the cradle of civilisation, people in recent times do not read as much as they ought. By the grace of God, however, we continue to distribute Bibles and New Testaments, calendars, books and leaflets to Greeks and foreigners. This is a highly important and weighty task and one that requires much wisdom and prayer. From our little church in a suburb of Pireas, we send out Scriptures and other Christian literature to every corner of Greece! First of all we send to churches in all the cities of Greece, and from there seasoned Gospel workers distribute them amongst the Greek population. As you know, Greece has a flourishing tourist trade with visitors from various parts of the world. We seek to approach them also with the Word of God. There are also many foreign immigrants, such as Albanians, Romanians, Poles, Russians, Pakistanis, Africans, etc., who have settled in Greece. We evangelise them too, giving them portions of God's Word in their language. Christian workers from other churches also visit our church and are provided with Scriptures for distribution in the centre of Athens where there are many homeless people, drug addicts, prostitutes and drop outs who need spiritual and moral counselling and practical help. There is also an extensive ministry in prisons throughout Greece. Not only the inmates, but the staff

also receive the Word of God. Young people from all the Greek churches organise evangelistic campaigns in the summer—generally to the islands—during which a considerable amount of material is distributed, especially to young people. We thank God that His written Word has been preserved up to this present day. Surely this is one of God’s greatest miracles. We are instruments in His hands and we thank Him that He uses us for the salvation of precious souls from eternal death to the true life which is in Christ Jesus. We thank the Lord for you and for the Scriptures you have been sending to us for many years. May the Lord repay you abundantly to His glory and may He continue to bless our fellowship in His service. I have written you these few words to give you an idea of the work in Greece with the material which you give free of charge to people of many races. We love you, we esteem you, we pray for you and thank you for your labour of love.

 **Africa**

 **From Lusaka, Zambia:**

Greetings in the wonderful Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We received the Scriptures with gladness and we hope we shall continue receiving more in order to expand the kingdom of God.

 **From Kitwe, Zambia:**

Many people are still demanding Bibles. At least those given Bibles are able to read on their own and do some personal research in the Bible. The Word of God is



**The Scriptures for people in Zambia**

changing their lives. The work of God is moving forward. People have discovered the importance of reading the Word of God, which is a blessing. We are so grateful for your help and hope that this will not be the last time.

 **From the police service, Kamfinsa, Kitwe, Zambia:**

Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ. I am the chaplain here in Zambia at Kamfinsa, preaching the Word of God to police officers, families and prisoners. The office of the chaplaincy in the police was opened a few years ago and it has a lot of challenges. This year the school will be training about five hundred new police officers. The desire and vision of the chaplaincy is to build up God-fearing officers who can serve the nation with integrity. Looking at this vision I write to your ministry for assistance so that you can help us with Bibles. The chaplaincy would be happy for you to come and visit us. I also want to bring to your attention that we also have Kamfinsa Prison with

about two thousand five hundred prisoners. Any assistance from you shall be highly appreciated.

 **From Abuja, Nigeria:**

I distributed the Bibles to the people who were in need of them. Others I distributed at the International School. The students were very thankful, and they accepted those Bibles with overwhelmed joy and appreciation. I need more Bibles. Send as many as you can, one thousand and above, even the big print Bibles for the mature men and women.

 **From Accra, Ghana:**

Since the early 1980s many Bibles from the Trinitarian Bible Society have been distributed by our missionaries in the northern part of Ghana and the neighbouring countries. More than 50,000 Golden Thoughts Calendars, tracts and New Testaments have also been distributed freely to young people, and hundreds of them are now actively involved in their local churches reaching out to others. Reaching African youth with the Scriptures is especially important, as more than half the country's population is under seventeen. The need for Bibles in every home is more urgent. We seek to place Bibles in every village and home which have been devastated by the tribal wars and violence and bring comfort that comes only from the Word of God.

 **From Kampala, Uganda:**

Greetings in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. The purpose of this letter is to

express our appreciation to you for your support towards the Lira Town Mission. Your support in the form of Bibles and other Christian literature was very useful especially in the 16 secondary schools and the main town prison. We ask for your continued prayer for the new converts to grow in the Lord, and that the church leaders in Lira will take up unwaveringly the task of follow-up and discipleship. In addition we would like to continue working together in this task of spreading the gospel especially in schools, prisons and other English-speaking communities.

 **From Douala, Cameroon:**

We received the French 'Confidence' booklets and 'The Light of the World', along with the tracts and bookmarks. Here in the photograph we distribute to our church. Many thanks.



**'Confidence' in Cameroon**

 **From Kampala, Uganda:**

Praise the good Lord. I have been using these tracts for more than ten years, and I

do not know what I would have done without them. These tracts help me share the Gospel in many places because they act as a point of contact before I speak to the people. I take them wherever I go, and give them to the patients when I visit the doctor! Sometimes when I have more, I even give to those who give to others. I always meet with people who ask me whether I have some tracts. I also meet with people who got saved and confess Christ through this ministry. The New Testaments and Bibles I give to the new converts who do not have Bibles. Once again I thank God so much for you and your ministry.

 **From Kampala, Uganda:**

Our special thanks to Trinitarian Bible Society who have supplied us with 1164kgs of assorted Christian materials as follows: 10 Comfort Text Bibles; 4 New Brevier reference Bibles; 2,000 Royal Ruby Text Bibles; 400 New Testaments and Psalms; 200 emerald green Classic Bibles; 100 Pocket Reference Bibles; 35 Railway Posters; 15,000 English GTC; 23 large posters. We want to thank God

**Preparing Bibles for distribution in Uganda**



who enables you to send such huge amounts of literature. May our Lord reward you for the great work involved, in printing and the enormous amount of money including packing and freighting it to us here in Uganda.

 **From Addis Ababa, Ethiopia:**



**Amharic calendars distributed in Ethiopia**

Greetings to you in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Firstly, thank you for these Scriptures—1,000 copies of the Amharic Words of Life Calendars. They have been distributed personally around the church, and all the people who received them have been blessed. May God bless you.

 **Asia**

 **From Kandukur, India:**

Greetings in the precious Name of Jesus. Thanking you for the parcels of Bibles

which reached us. I and my team members are thanking you from the bottom of our hearts. We will use and distribute these Bibles for the extension of His kingdom. We are also in need of Telugu Holy Bibles.

 **From Kerala, India:**

Greetings in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. How we thank God for each one of you who have stood with us over the years. As we look back, we see that until today God has helped us establish many fellowship groups, Bible study groups, and outreach work in many unreached areas, even in the face of severe persecution. All of these things have been possible because each one of you prayed for us and gave the Word of God for our outreach ministry. As we look forward to what God will do, we thank God for the Trinitarian Bible Society. We request you to continue to pray and support us with Bibles, booklets and tracts, so that we can all rejoice in the Day of Christ that we did not run or labour in vain.

 **From Hyderabad, India:**

Dear most respected Saints at the Trinitarian Bible Society. We have this rare privilege of greeting you in the most loving Name Jesus, from this land of India. I am most thankful to you for sending to me, for my free distribution ministry, the English Holy Bibles and Golden Thoughts Calendars. The Lord is leading me to distribute these precious spiritual food items to the needy here. One lady who comes from a very poor family has come

to our home several times and requested the Telugu and English Bibles, which I gave her as requested. She is working as a street sweeper. After sweeping the streets she comes to our home for the Bibles which she gives to children and friends.

 **From Chennai, India:**

Greetings in the precious Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We received the boxes of Bibles with many thanks. We distribute the Bibles in India with prayer and commitment. This photograph is of a college teacher loading a box of Bibles onto his motorcycle to take it to the Bible College for distribution.

**Precious cargo in India**



 **From Manipur, India:**

Warm greetings to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. North-east India is the place where many Christians are settled. I was able to visit a church in a village called Zimthiang. It is always my desire to

instruct Christians to the truth, especially about the church in the mind of God. Your Bibles are a great help to encourage the young to read and study their Bibles like Bereans. Zimthiang village has around sixty households with a population of nearly a thousand; most of them are farmers, a few work in the government. After selecting out the real poor villagers, I distributed 40 Bibles and 40 New Testaments to the Sunday School children. I hope it will bring some fruit. I still have a few more Bibles in hand, which I will use for the correspondents. I shall appreciate you continuing to supply the same as and when the Lord permits. I assure you I will distribute them sincerely and honestly.

## North America

 **From Pittsburgh, PA, USA, with a ministry to Zimbabwe:**

Thank you very much for the parcel of Golden Thoughts Calendars for 2010. With the continuing difficulties in Zimbabwe word has been received of the unavailability of Bibles there for some time. So to those who received these calendars, these were as 'Daily Golden Thoughts and Messages from the Lord' for them. How good of the Lord to 'satisfy their souls in drought' (Is. 58.11) with their real hunger for God's Word there.

Just as 'manna' was provided by God for His people in the wilderness, so the Lord is using these verses as daily spiritual manna for many there in Zimbabwe. My dear husband (now with the Lord) and I had the joy of working among the people in Zimbabwe for many years and they are still very dear to my heart. It is a joy to encourage them in the Lord by sending them these calendars each year.

## Central America & the West Indies

 **From Castries, St. Lucia:**

The demand for the Scripture Calendars increases every year. People are requesting additional copies to give to their friends and families. These calendars have found their way into government offices as well as private enterprises. We get reports from those who receive them indicating that they cannot begin their day without reading the verse for the day, and some have admitted that it literally forces them to read the Bible more often. The general consensus is that the calendars are of immense help spiritually to those who take time out to follow up on the chapter from which the verse for the day is taken. Our prayer is that God will continue to use this ministry to bring many to a saving knowledge of His grace.

*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.*



# 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

**English Charity Number:** 233082

**Scottish Charity Number:** SC038379

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

### Auditors:

**Jacob Cavenagh & Skeet**  
5 Robin Hood Lane,  
Sutton,  
Surrey,  
SM1 2SW

### Solicitors:

**Bates, Wells & Braithwaite**  
2-6 Cannon Street,  
London,  
EC4M 6YA

### Bankers:

**Arbuthnot Latham & Co. Ltd.**  
Arbuthnot House,  
20 Ropemaker Street,  
London, EC2Y 9AR

**Sterling Account No.:** 71529601 **Sort Code:** 30-13-93

**Swift ID Code:** ARBUGB2L

**Euro Account No.:** 31529601

**IBAN Euro Account No.:** GB19 ARBU 3003 0831 5296 01

## International Branches

### Australian Branch

**President:** Mr. M. F. Stuart  
**National Secretary:** Mr. G. Kidd  
**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.:** (11) 2693-5663 **Fax:** (11) 2695-3635  
**e-mail:** sbtb@biblias.com.br

### Canadian Branch

**General Secretary:** Mr. A. Stoutjesdyk, B.Ed., M.Ed.  
**Office Manager:** Mr. J. van Huigenbos  
**Trinitarian Bible Society (Canada)**  
9128 Young Road,  
Chilliwack, B.C., V2P 4R4, Canada  
**Tel.:** (604) 793-2232 **Fax:** (604) 793-2262  
**e-mail:** stoutjesdyk-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  
**e-mail:** NZ@TBS-sales.org

### U.S.A. Branch

**General Secretary:** Mr. W. Greendyk, B.A.  
**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.

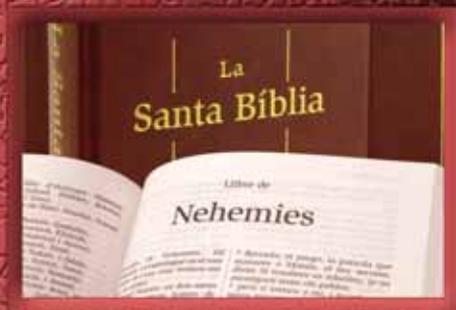
To uphold the doctrines of reformed Christianity, bearing witness to the equal and eternal deity of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, One God in three Persons.

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*

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## **The New TBS Catalan Bible**



**Trinitarian Bible Society**

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

*e-mail: [TBS@trinitarianbiblesociety.org](mailto:TBS@trinitarianbiblesociety.org)  
[www.trinitarianbiblesociety.org](http://www.trinitarianbiblesociety.org)*