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Sabbath School Learning Prize Fund

‘...FROM A CHILD THOU HAST KNOWN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES...’

2 Timothy 3.15

The Trinitarian Bible Society seeks to encourage and enable children in the study of God’s Word by means of the Sabbath School Learning Prize Fund. This Fund was commenced a number of years ago to encourage English-speaking children and young people to memorise the Holy Scriptures from the Authorised Version of the Bible. Under the scheme, we provide a list of verses to be memorised by children in two age groups: those ten years of age and under and those aged eleven to fifteen. To the younger children who memorise their verses, we present suitably inscribed gilt-edged, bonded leather text Bibles. For the older children, gilt-edged bonded leather reference Bibles are awarded. Those who have memorised the first set of verses may receive the reference Bible upon completing the work for the higher age group.

The Society would encourage all parents, office-bearers and other supporters of the Society who seek the spiritual well-being of the young, whether or not the children under their charge attend a Sabbath school, to request further details of the Sabbath School Learning Prize Fund from Anne Newman (a.newman@tbsbibles.org) at our London headquarters, or from any of the Society’s Branches (contact details on the inside back cover of this Quarterly Record).
God willing, we will be continuing to mark the four hundredth anniversary of the Authorised Version with a series of meetings and lectures in the UK on various aspects of this excellent version’s supremacy. The latest information on these meetings follows. Please note that meeting arrangements may be subject to change. We will post changes and updates on our website, and would recommend that you contact the Society’s head office to confirm details of time and location closer to the date.

The following meetings will be held, God willing:

**Saturday 8th October**
**At 3.00 p.m.**
Exeter Independent Evangelical Church,
meeting at Trefoil Lodge, Buddle Lane,
Exeter EX4 1JP

The Authorised Version:
Not Archaic, but an Accurate and Timeless Translation

*Speaker: The Rev. John P. Thackway*
(Member of the Society’s General Committee)

**Saturday 22nd October**
**At 3.00 p.m.**
Emmanuel College, Cambridge CB2 3AP

The Authorised Version:
The Noblest Monument of English Prose and Christian Devotion

*Speaker: Pastor Michael Harley*
(Member of the Society’s General Committee)

**Saturday 12th November**
**At 3.00 p.m.**
Walsham-Le-Willows Evangelical Congregational Church, Suffolk IP31 3AZ

The Authorised Version:
A Critical Assessment of Three Modern Versions

*Speaker: Mr. Roland Burrows*
(Member of the Society’s General Committee)

**Saturday 10th December**
**At 3.00 p.m.**
Hebron Hall, Dinas Powys,
Vale of Glamorgan CF64 4YB

The Authorised Version:
A New Hearing For the Authorised Version

*Speaker: The Rev. Neil Pfeiffer*
he Authorised (King James) Bible anniversary year is almost at an end, and by the time this edition of the Quarterly Record is received, most of the Society’s members should have received a copy of the Society’s much appreciated publication, *The Authorised Version: A Wonderful and Unfinished History* by Peter Hallihan. (If anyone has not received their copy, would they please contact their local Society office.) This attractively produced, well illustrated paperback of nearly eighty pages, has been the Society’s main literary contribution to the 400th anniversary of the Authorised Version, and has been well received and widely distributed. The Society is indebted to Mr. Hallihan for this eminently readable and fascinating study.

This ‘Desk’ is largely being given over to provide details of two other contributions to the 400th anniversary of the original publication of the Authorised (King James) Bible in 1611.

The first is a series of three booklets for children and young people (also available on a CD together with Mr. Hallihan’s *The Authorised Version: A Wonderful and Unfinished History*) which have been compiled by Adrian Stoutjesdyk, the General Secretary of the Society’s Branch in Canada. Mr. Stoutjesdyk has used his considerable experience and talent as an educator to prepare material for use by pupils in schools and by homeschoolers (chiefly in North America), which it is thought would also be of considerable value and interest to all parents, Sabbath school teachers and others who have access to children and young people. The three 11- and 12-page large-size booklets cover, in words and pictures, the great goodness of the Lord in providing the English-speaking peoples with the Word of God in their own language.

The second is a well produced and informative book entitled *The Jewel in the King’s Crown*, by Dr. David Allen, one of the Society’s Deputation Speakers in the United Kingdom. Dr. Allen brings his keen interest and considerable knowledge of the events that surrounded and led up to the publication of the Authorised Version of the Bible to the reader in a most compelling and readable manner. The book contains excellent illustrations and valuable appendices.

**Our Bible’s History Learning Package Outline by Adrian Stoutjesdyk**

In his *Note to Teachers and Parents* which accompanies the three booklets, Mr. Stoutjesdyk states,

> This year, English-speaking Christians commemorate the 400th anniversary of the King
James Version of the Bible. The Lord has given us a trustworthy translation of His infallible Word. Our goal is to point students to the manifestations of His hand in guiding the development of this translation.

Until the present day, the Lord continues to use this Version to call and save souls, nurture congregations, and direct families. We hope these learning activities will not only familiarize our students with the fascinating history of our Bible but encourage them to study the Word. We hope the Lord will bless the study of His Word to their eternal well-being.

Because the narrative format remains a powerful learning tool, we decided to use the story-format to involve them in a study of the captivating history of the Authorized Version. Colouring pages will appeal to younger students while the short learning assignments will help the older ones consolidate their learning.

Copies of these resources may be downloaded from the Society’s website or obtained from the Society’s premises.

**The Jewel in the King’s Crown by Dr. David Allen**

Possibly no better recommendation of this book can be given than to draw attention to the wording of the dust jacket and the preface, which follow:

> It has often been said—by Winston Churchill and T.S. Eliot among others—that the King James Bible is the greatest work in the English language; and it is true. The King James Bible appeared at the same time as Shakespeare’s plays. The providence of God found a moment when the English language was young, yet vigorously mature, sprightly yet stately, earthy yet sublime.

This book takes us back to another world as it traces the development of the English Bible, and then sets the translation of the Authorised Version within the socio-political maelstrom of Elizabethan and Jacobean England. We are introduced to the translators: Puritans such as John Reynolds and Lawrence Chadderton; Miles Smith, who wrote the now seldom-printed Preface to the Reader and was a final editor; godly Lancelot Andrewes, then Dean of Westminster; and many other deans and scholars of the classical languages.

Dr. Allen’s book will delight any reader and will draw out fresh appreciation of the King James Bible as a religious and literary masterpiece, and an enduring landmark at the climax of the English Reformation. The reader will understand more fully why the King James Bible is still treasured throughout the English-speaking world and beyond.

**Preface**

The Authorised Version of the Holy Bible, also known as the King James Bible, has been described as the ‘noblest monument of English prose’. Some would contend that it is the finest literary achievement in the English language, a religious and literary classic. Some men praise it for its pure English and forceful style, others for its beauty and majesty, and still others for its masterful translation. It is all of that and much more. But even more important, we must see the Authorised Version as the Bible
that God has providentially given to His English-speaking Church. It is the Word of God, that is, a faithful translation of the inspired originals. ...the very meanest translation of the Bible in English, set forth by men of our profession...is the Word of God. As the King’s Speech which he uttered in Parliament, being translated into French, Dutch, Italian, and Latin, is still the King’s Speech.¹

Following the defeat of the French at the Battle of Agincourt in the fifteenth century, English began to emerge as the national language. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, however, continued to use Latin as the language of academia. Erasmus lectured at both universities in his favourite Latin tongue. The Church, for her part, had moved away from Latin to the vernacular by the mid sixteenth century, and with that move there arose the need for an English Bible.

Luther’s translation of the German Bible in the 1520s inadvertently sowed the seeds for an accurate and reliable English Bible in the hearts of the English Reformers. The King James Bible was the polished jewel which emerged from the chrysalis of the sixteenth century English translations. It gave to the English people a national Bible. Linguistically, it consolidated English at the forefront of living European languages. Without question, the printing of the King James Bible in 1611 marked an epoch-breaking [sic] landmark in the history of the English language. It shaped the English language for three hundred and fifty years. The Authorised Version formed the basis for Milton’s Paradise Lost, Bunyan’s Pilgrim’s Progress, and Handel’s glorious Messiah. This Bible expanded the horizons of our culture, and without its incalculable influence the English-speaking world would have been irredeemably impoverished.

This Bible united monarch and subjects, church and laity, and was the cornerstone of every aspect of English culture. The translators created a scriptural rhetoric that was as plain and dignified as Tyndale’s and as rich and resonant as any book in the English language. There is a rich linguistic musicality to the whole, which was lacking in previous translations. The text was to be read in churches, and therefore was first tested on the ears of the translators. The result is a ‘feeling for syllable and rhythm’, invigorating every word and fixing itself upon the memory.

Contrary to modern opinion, it was not written in Jacobean English, and certainly not Shakespearian English. It was written in a form of English that no one had ever spoken. In some respects, its language was archaic even in 1611. It was English shaped by the Hebrew and Greek originals that they were translating. It was a translation in what can only be called ‘Biblical English’. The translators were constrained by the form of the original. No straining here for the language of

¹ A 1533 edition of Luther’s Bible
the ploughboy, or the mythical ‘man in the street’! They constructed a form of English which was determined by the Hebrew and Greek originals, but that would nevertheless be understood by the ploughboy. Neither Tyndale before them, nor the King James translators, translated into the language of the ploughboy.

The English language has passed through many and great changes, and had at last reached the very height of its purity and strength. The Authorised Version has ever since been the grand English classic. It is the noblest monument of the power of English speech. It is the pattern and standard of excellence. It is the most full and refreshing of all the ‘wells of English undefiled’. It has given a fixed character to our language.

H. L. Mencken wrote:

It is the most beautiful of all the translations of the Bible; indeed, it is probably the most beautiful piece of writing in all the literature of the world... Many learned but misguided men have sought to produce translations that should be mathematically accurate, and in the plain speech of everyday. But the Authorised Version has never yielded to any of them, for it is palpably and overwhelmingly better than they are... Its English is extraordinarily simple, pure, eloquent, and lovely. It is a mine of lordly and incomparable poetry, at once the most stirring and the most touching ever heard of.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, missionary work carried the influence of the King James Bible to Africa and Australasia, so that wherever Christianity was established it was nourished and nurtured by this incomparable translation. This Bible became the guiding text of Puritan America, and by the end of the seventeenth century it had become treasured by Americans as much as by the British as one of their national texts.

The great Jacobean Bible is still greatly cherished, long after versions which were intended to supplant it have perished. The King James Bible is still far from being a spent force, whether in private or in public. Why is this?

What is unique about the King James Bible? These are questions that we will address in the pages which follow, but consider the words of Psalm 8:3–5 as they appear in the Authorised Version:

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained;
What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?
For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

In this exquisite passage there is an absolute simplicity of vocabulary, but it is matched by a majestic and stately rhythm. The language is both majestic and sublime, and yet, at the same time it is so ordinary, so down to earth. There is here, an irreproachable authority mingled with a rich musicality in every word. The King
James translators throughout their epic work use phrases that are richer, deeper, more vigorous, and capable of enshrining complex thought, than anything produced in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

The churches and biblical scholarship have, by and large, abandoned the frame of mind which created this translation... The belief in the historical and authentic truth of the scriptures, particularly the Gospels, has been largely abandoned, even by the religious... It is impossible now to experience in an English church the enveloping amalgam of tradition, intelligence, beauty, clarity of purpose, intensity of conviction and plangent*, heart-gripping godliness which is the experience of page after page of the King James Bible. Nothing in our culture can match its breadth, depth and universality... Unlike the churches themselves, the words of this Bible remain alive, a way of speaking, and a form of the language which is still a vehicle of meaning in circumstances when little else can be.\(^3\)

Well does the Translators’ Preface speak of God’s sacred Word as ‘that inestimable treasure which excelleth all the riches of the earth’.

It at once formed and fixed our language. It continues to bring home the knowledge of God’s revealed truth to countless thousands...[more] minds than ever received it through the original tongues.

The average reader of the King James Bible may enjoy the delightful assurance, that, if he study it in faith and prayer, and give himself up to its teachings, he shall not be confounded nor misled as to any matter essential to his salvation and his spiritual good. This majestic translation will safely guide him into all things needful for faith and practice, as would the original Scriptures, if he could read them, or if they could speak to him as they spoke to the Hebrew in Jerusalem, or to the Greek in Corinth.

The English reader enjoys, by the good providence of God, a translation so exact, so plain, and trustworthy, that he may follow it with implicit confidence as ‘a light to his feet and a lamp to his path’.

As we approach the four hundredth anniversary of its publication, we shall seek to trace the complex history of its publication, whilst looking at some of the personalities involved, and make some digressions into the socio-political climate of the late Tudor and early Jacobean period...

Endnotes:
1. Preface to the Authorised Version.

*Resounding loudly, esp. with a plaintive sound, as a bell.


We are indebted to Mr. Stoutjesdyk and Dr. Allen for their efforts in seeking to make the history of the Authorised Version more widely known, and look to the Lord to bless their endeavours.
Tom Massey

The Society is saddened to announce the death of Mr Tom Massey, our caretaker for some forty-five years, who died in March following a short illness. He was three months short of his ninety-seventh birthday.

Tom served as a tank driver in the Army during World War II, and following other employment came to the Society in the 1960s. He and his wife lost both of their young children to illness. After his wife’s death, Tom often went to place flowers on her grave as well as theirs. However, such was Tom’s friendly personality that he had many who considered him family, in particular the children of former staff member Jean Pontin who were like grandchildren to him.

Tom faithfully continued his work over many years; as age increased and with it normal age-related frailness, his tasks became more sedentary but he was daily at his desk in the Packing Department. Staff remember fondly his daily announcement of morning refreshments, ‘Tea is now ready, thank you,’ often punctuated with words or phrases from various languages such as Arabic, picked up primarily during his years of service to his country in foreign lands.

Tom’s smiling face is greatly missed at Tyndale House.

Also missed is Leslie Wood, who served as handyman for several years, although our loss is North Wales’s gain: Leslie has retired to a Welsh farm. We wish Leslie God’s blessing upon his retirement and look forward to seeing him during his visits back south.
A Wondrous Thanksgiving

But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed.

Salvation is of the LORD

Jonah 2.9

by the

Rev. G. Hamstra

a Vice-President of the Society

The busy summer days are passed. The harvest is almost completed. The cooler autumn days of the Thanksgiving Season have arrived. The memories of past favours, the blessings of the present, and the anticipation of future mercies may produce fervent desires to praise and thank the Lord for His marvellous provisions.

Thanksgiving is a humble and wholehearted response to God for what He has done for us. It is good to give thanks; it is pleasant to praise the name of the Lord (Psalm 92.1). By faith we consider the numerous tokens of His bountiful goodness and reflect on our own unworthiness of the least of these mercies. By faith, we cannot do otherwise but honour God for the wonders of His love and care.

Thanksgiving is a spontaneous fruit of divine grace and should never be wanting in the life of a child of God. Yet many neglect to give thanks unto the Lord. The unbeliever does not know the joy and peace of wholehearted thanksgiving. Even a child of God may be far from Him and fail to give glory to the Lord.

Was this not the case with Jonah? This prophet certainly was ungrateful when he opposed the direct command of God. The Lord ordered Jonah to prophesy against Nineveh, but he refused to do so. He fled; instead of going east, he went west and intended to go as far west as he could. Jonah travelled to Joppa, found a ship bound for Tarshish, paid his fare and went aboard. This disgraceful disobedience was contrary to the spirit of thanksgiving.

Nevertheless, the Lord corrected His wayward servant by sending a great storm. His mighty winds blew into the Mediterranean Sea, raised the waves to unusual heights, and tossed the ship to and fro. The intensity of the storm alarmed even the sailors. The seamen endeavoured to save the ship and prayed to their gods to keep them alive. Their efforts, however, were futile.

Then the captain remembered the one who had spoken about his flight from the presence of the Lord. Where was he? The captain, finding Jonah sound asleep, awoke him and asked him to pray. The sailors were convinced that the storm was of supernatural origin. Someone had offended his god. Who was the culprit? The casting of lots decided the question: Jonah proved to be the guilty person.
The mariners appealed to Jonah to confess his crime. They enquired regarding his country, occupation and people. Jonah made a forthright confession and told them that he was a Hebrew. He acknowledged that he feared the Lord, the only living God, the Creator of heaven, earth and sea. He confessed his sin and his flight from God’s presence. In response to this confession, the horrified mariners cried out, ‘Why hast thou done this?’ (1.10).

In the meantime, the storm continued its frightening rage. What must be done to pacify the Lord? God’s repenting prophet knew. He deserved to die for his transgression. The wrath of God, manifested in the storm, could only be appeased by casting the guilty prophet overboard. Jonah’s proposal was, ‘Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea’ (1.12).

Presently, the prophetic promise followed: ‘so shall the sea be calm unto you’. God’s erring child knew this to be the will of God and was submissive. Trusting afresh, the prophet no longer fled from the presence of the Lord!

The sailors marvelled at the proposal, but had no intention of carrying it out. They made another attempt to break through the waves and wind to reach the safety of the shore. But the Lord opposed their attempt to save Jonah’s life. These Gentiles pleaded with the Lord, hoping to avoid the death of the prophet. Most impressive were their supplications. Finally, they rested in the sovereign will of the Lord and hurled Jonah into the stormy sea. When the Lord’s command was obeyed, the sea ceased from its raging.

How wondrous are the ways of God! The Lord had prepared a great fish. At His will the fish swallowed the prophet. Jonah was kept alive and conscious. After three days and three nights, the Lord released the penitent prophet. God spoke and the fish vomited Jonah out onto dry land on the shore.

Jonah provided a vivid description of his dramatic experience. In the belly of the fish he was exercised in the ways of God. In his deep affliction the prophet cried unto the Lord, and the Lord heard and answered the supplications of His servant. God’s erring child was reconciled. While still in eminent danger and sore distress, Jonah’s faith grew to such heights that he could express thanksgiving to the Lord even for future mercies (2.9). No longer fleeing from the Lord but in God’s gracious presence, Jonah knew himself to be safe in the arms of everlasting love.

Jonah would be tested further as we read later in the book. But for now he walked by faith and not by sight. Those who walk by faith may not only sing the song of thanksgiving in the day of prosperity, but also in the night of adversity. For salvation is of the LORD (2.9); He never forsakes the works of His own hands (Psalm 138.7–8)!

Endnotes:
1. The USA and Canada each have an official day set aside annually in which—at least in past times—the people consider the goodness of God and express thanksgiving for His provision of ‘daily bread’. 
Much of this report is derived from a meeting held at the Society’s Headquarters on 17th January 2011, when Mr Ivan Pambakian and Dr Michael Harrison visited us to speak on the work of Armenian Ministries, an organisation whose task is to provide spiritual and material help to people in Armenia. Their association with the Society is in respect to the Armenian Scriptures; Ivan’s wife, Mrs Sona Pambakian, is the principle reviser of the Armenian Scriptures published by the Society. The talk given by Ivan, then Director of Armenian Ministries, focussed chiefly on the history of these Scriptures, the need for a new version and the impact the Society’s Armenian New Testament has had in the country since its first publication in 2005. (The New Testament and Psalms was subsequently published in 2008.) Dr Harrison’s talk focussed on the present status of the project, and we are pleased in this article to be able to update our supporters, particularly those in Canada who are so generously helping to fund the project. Very sadly for all concerned, just a few weeks later, on 5th February 2011, Ivan went to be with the Lord. Concerning this sudden loss Michael wrote to me at the time, ‘Ivan died literally while on God’s service—he had just finished talking to a group of people about the Lord’s work in Armenia. He was struck by a massive heart attack on Saturday evening and died a few hours later.’
The Society is thankful that Michael has been able to take on the role of Director of Armenian Ministries and also grateful for the way in which Sona has been upheld to continue the work of checking and finalising the text of the Armenian Bible, which is currently being typeset in Armenia.

**A brief history of the Armenian Scriptures**

Although not directly connected to this heading, Mr Pambakian began his talk by recounting the fascinating possibility that during the time of our Lord’s earthly ministry the King of Armenia was interested in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is said that as well as sending emissaries to report on His teaching, he may also have offered asylum to our Lord. It is also believed, though not certain, that the Apostles Thomas and Bartholomew evangelised the country of Armenia in the 1st century AD. Although there is some doubt on the foregoing points, a better-attested historical event is the declaration of Armenia as a Christian state in AD 301—the first in the world to take such a step.¹

Concerning the Scriptures, the Bible was first translated into the classical Armenian language, known as Grabar, in the period AD 396–430 by Mesrop Mashtots, who invented the Armenian alphabet in order to produce this translation. Gradually, this form of Armenian became confined to the church and ordinary people were no longer able to read it. What further reduced the accessibility of these Scriptures to the general public was that copies were handwritten, and by the 17th century these copies had become very scarce. Today, this old version of the Scriptures can only be read by experts in classical Armenian.

Eventually, in the 18th century, people began to write in Western Armenian—the dialect used in the area of Armenia that was under Turkish rule (geographically in the eastern part of the modern state of Turkey). Building on this development, in the 19th century the British and Foreign Bible Society translated the Bible into Western Armenian.² Today, this form of Armenian is only used by the Armenian Diaspora, many who are descendants of those who fled the genocide committed by the Turks in 1915,³ and even among them its use is dying out as they learn the language of their various host countries. This Western Armenian Bible was (and still is) difficult for people in the country of Armenia (who speak Eastern Armenian) to understand, but it is nevertheless the most accessible, complete copy of the Scriptures which they have at the present time.

In 1831, a German missionary translated parts of the New Testament into Eastern Armenian. It was then revised and the Old Testament was added in 1883. However, it is of limited use due to developments in the language—it does not match the spoken language in current use, as the literary language has developed beyond the language of 1883.⁴ Nevertheless it is the only complete Bible the Eastern Armenian-speaking peoples currently have in their own dialect, except for one that
the Georgian church commissioned soon after Armenia gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. This modern translation has not been accepted by Christians because it does not read like Scripture and its renderings exhibit a lack of spiritual discernment: hardly surprising when one considers it was a translation undertaken by secular ‘Soviet’ scholars using manuscripts translated from the Septuagint!

In 1998 the Trinitarian Bible Society, being aware of the lack of readily accessible Armenian Scriptures, commissioned Ivan and Sona to revise the ancient Armenian Bible, bringing it into standard Eastern Armenian. In 1999 the Gospel according to John was published, followed by the New Testament in 2005, and the New Testament and Psalms three years later. We trust that the present lack of an adequate Armenian Bible will be alleviated shortly, as the Society’s revision of the entire Bible in Eastern Armenian is due to be published next year, if the Lord will.

The need for this Bible

As can be seen from the brief historical survey of the Scriptures in Armenian, for many years the people living in the country of Armenia and those in other countries whose primary language is Armenian have been without a Bible that they can readily understand. Such a situation does have a practical effect on the health of the church.

In the immediate post-Soviet era, many people were curious about religion, and a religious revival took place in which many people professed to be converted; but—as Ivan informed us—something was slightly wrong with that revival. For one thing it was semi-political: in the Soviet era Christians were repressed, and many old Bibles and much Christian literature were destroyed. Furthermore, the revival did not last long and there was no permanent impact on the culture of the country. Apart from the political situation producing some false fruit, the other main reason the revival was not sustained, according to Ivan, is that there was not a Bible that people could readily understand. There was only the Western Armenian Bible, which was very hard for them to decipher. In addition, there were very few trained evangelists and teachers, and thus a deficient leadership and ministry in the churches. Many professing believers lacked good teaching and as a result were weak in the faith. In view of this, it is our prayerful desire that, as the Society and Armenian Ministries cooperate in placing Eastern Armenian Scriptures in the hands of those who are desperately hungry for God’s Word, the Lord would use these Scriptures for His own glory and to strengthen the church in Armenia.

The impact of the Society’s Armenian New Testament

It should be noted at this stage that there is extreme poverty in Armenia, as illustrated in one or two of the photos that accompany this article. There is a significant lack of food and fuel in this landlocked country, and it is amidst such impoverished circumstances that Armenian Ministries carry out their work of distributing the Scriptures and material...
Ivan shared with us a number of heart-warming accounts of how the Society’s New Testament has been blessed to precious souls; he knew of a number who have been brought to spiritual life through reading its precious message of salvation by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, for which we give thanks to the Lord. One particularly striking account concerned a lady who took much pains trying to access God’s Word using the Western Armenian Bible; eventually she managed to master the Gospels, but it was a struggle to read in this unfamiliar dialect. Then someone gave her a TBS New Testament. She sat down and read it in one sitting over a period of twenty-four hours! It turned her life upside down—through reading the whole New Testament she was brought to realise that God saves by grace, and she was born again. This lady now goes into remote villages, in the depths of the Armenian mountains, as a colporteur distributing the book that changed her life, with the desire that others might have their spiritual eyes opened as they read God’s Word.

A second remarkable incident occurred when the director of the Ministries’ Armenian facility entered a shop one day to make a purchase and had difficulty in raising a response. Eventually someone emerged from the back to explain that a group of ten were engaged in reading a single copy of the TBS Armenian New Testament in the back of the shop. On hearing this, the director provided ten copies for the group, who then asked for someone to expound the Scriptures to them. Regrettably no-one was available at the time due to other commitments. ‘Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest’ (Matthew 9.38).

One important avenue in which Armenian Ministries have been able to spread the Good News is by holding summer camps for children and young people on a special campsite in the countryside, where the children are fed and often provided with new shoes and clothes and taught the Word of God. Five hundred New Testaments have been given out to participating children, and it is prayerfully hoped that these will have an influence for good on the lives of these young people and their families.

The present status
Revision of the Old Testament was completed in 2010 and, God willing, work on typesetting it will have commenced by the time this Quarterly Record has been issued. A time lag has arisen because it took some time to find a qualified typesetter who could put the text in a proper format appropriate for a Bible. This typesetter was first given the corrected
New Testament and Psalms as a priority, so that these can be published at the turn of this year. Publication of the entire Bible is then expected to follow in 2012, if the Lord will.

**Conclusion**

It is a sad irony that whilst the Armenian people are Christian in name, very many do not know the Saviour. Nevertheless, the distribution of the Society’s New Testament over the past six years is dispelling some of the ignorance concerning the Word of God, and it is our prayerful desire that the impending publication of the entire Bible will be used of the Lord to bring light into the darkness.

There are 3.5 million people in Armenia and almost universal literacy. It is a nation where people love to read. There is therefore a very large demand for Scriptures, and the need takes care of the supply. It is the privilege of the Society and Armenian Ministries to be instruments of the Lord in meeting some of that demand. Please partner with us in your prayers for this work. Pray that the remaining typesetting and proofreading work would proceed smoothly to a conclusion. Please petition the Throne of Grace that the Bibles, once printed, may gain a wide distribution within the Republic of Armenia and elsewhere, and be instrumental in strengthening the church, remembering that ‘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).

**Endnotes**

1. For more information, see our article on Armenia in *Quarterly Record* no. 555, April to June 2001.

2. The New Testament was translated into Western Armenian in 1825. The Bible, translated by Armenians under the auspices of Elias Riggs, was published in 1853, and has been the standard Western Armenian Bible for many years.

3. The 1915 genocide has never been admitted by Turkey. However, it is thought that about one million Armenians died, and thousands fled to other countries, initially to the Middle East and then onward to the USA and other countries.

4. Making it even more inaccessible than the Western Armenian Bible of 1853!

5. Readers interested in finding out more about the work of Armenian Ministries can contact them at Cyprus Lodge, Branches Lane, Holbeach, Lincolnshire, PE12 8PD, United Kingdom or via their website www.armenianministries.org.uk. It should be noted that the Society does not necessarily endorse all of the activities of this or other organisations.
It has been very instructive to study the occasions when the couplet that forms the name of this short section of the *Quarterly Record* is mentioned in Scripture, together with other places where money is mentioned. We are told, for example, that ‘the love of money is the root of all evil’ (1 Timothy 6.10). Some, such as Achan (Joshua 7) and Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5), in pursuing this love and failing to bring the money into the ‘treasury of the LORD’ as commanded (Joshua 6.19, 24) or to the apostles as promised (Acts 5.2), brought about their own destruction. Yet it has pleased God that this same resource is instrumental and necessary in the work of translating, printing and distributing His own written Word.

In this light, we are grieved when we are occasionally told that the business and spiritual matters of the Society should be kept separate: this cannot be right. Indeed, we find it written: ‘these words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple’ (John 8.20), and we find the Creator of the ends of the earth miraculously providing so that the tribute money could be paid for Peter and himself (Matthew 17.24–27). All the business meetings of the Society are opened and closed with prayer and we have had many encouraging answers, even over the past year. In carrying on the business affairs of the Society, we recognise that we are utterly dependant on the guidance of the Holy Spirit to aid our decisions and enable us to use the skills that we have been given and employ them in this work.

We commented on the financial results for 2010 in QR596, and by the time you read this they will have been reported in the Annual Report 2010 and at the Society’s Annual General Meeting on 24th September 2011, if the Lord will. We are now far enough into 2011 to make some useful observations on the UK financial situation, which we are thankful to say is stable, and we hope to be able to deliver on or very close to the 2011 budget, subject to receipt of a couple of large legacies that are currently in legal process. Please bear up in prayer the General Committee and Senior Management as we seek to manage the Society’s finances in these challenging times and particularly as we work to achieve a balanced budget for 2012.

Many people leave money or property as a legacy. As part of his legacy for the work of God, King David left Solomon not only the pattern of the temple and all its accompanying buildings and vessels, but also a treasury full of gold, silver, timber and precious stones to produce them (1 Chronicles 28.11ff). When the Lord’s people commit to leave their inheritance to be used in His name, it is ‘an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God’ (Philippians 4.18). We are deeply grateful to all who remember the
Society in their will, as this is a significant source of income to the Society, averaging around £460,000 per annum over the last ten years. Equally, we are deeply conscious each time we receive a legacy that we have one less prayerful supporter.

In connection with legacies, the UK government has helpfully announced in the 2011 budget that it intends to introduce a lower rate of inheritance tax in instances in which people leave a charitable legacy of 10% or more of their estate when they die (after deducting inheritance tax reliefs and exemptions). The change is expected to apply for deaths on or after 6 April 2012.

It is a matter of great thankfulness that subscriptions, general donations and collections are all up by more than 30% at the end of July 2011 compared with the same point in 2010. We are particularly grateful to our generous supporters in Canada, who have provided significant amounts of funding in recent months for specific projects such as the Farsi Bible, the French revision work, the Spanish Gospel according to John, Scripture grants to Africa and the former USSR, among others. Whilst it is perhaps naturally easier to notice and be thankful for the large donations that are given to the Society, neither do we forget ‘a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites’, of whom Christ said she ‘hath cast in more than they all’ (Luke 21.2–3). We are very conscious that much of the giving to the Society is truly sacrificial, particularly at this time of widespread economic hardship.

We remain deeply thankful to all our members, supporters and friends for their partnership with us in this work, practically, financially and in prayer. We gratefully acknowledge receipt of anonymous gifts totalling £10,544.73 for the period April to June 2011 (Matthew 6.4).

### TBS Telephone Numbers

Recently we found it necessary to replace our old, worn telephones with a new phone system. This change has produced several benefits, including providing departments and staff members with direct dial numbers. Therefore, along with calling through our normal number (020) 8543-7857, you may dial direct to the following. Please preface the numbers below with 020 in the UK, and with international dialling codes and 44-20 from outside the UK.

#### Departments:
- Editorial 8417-8874
- Facilities 8417-8879
- Finance and Supporters 8417-8854
- Operations 8417-8857
- Resources 8417-8854
- Sales and Grants 8417-8860/8862/8863
- Warehouse 8417-8868/8869

#### Staff Members:
- Debra Anderson 8417-8874
- David Broome 8417-8851
- Andrew Clarke 8417-8858
- Ian Docksey 8417-8879
- John Edwards 8417-8877
- James Galbraith 8417-8860
- Gary Hayes 8417-8869
- Philip Hopkins 8417-8873
- Peter Hughes 8417-8861
- David Larlham 8417-8857/8864
- Louise Lynch 8417-8863
- Anne Newman 8417-8862
- Michael Wade 8417-8853
- Mark Wilson 8417-8854
Introduction

As many of our readers will be aware, the peoples of the United Kingdom and British Commonwealth look forward in the providence of God to celebrating the sixtieth anniversary next year of H. M. Queen Elizabeth II’s reign. If, in the will of God, she reaches this landmark, she will be only the second British monarch to do so.¹ In the secular world, preparations are already far advanced to mark in a variety of ways the Diamond Jubilee of her ascension to the throne. Among these, an additional UK national holiday has been set for 5 June, 2012, when there will, no doubt, be a stunning display of the pageantry and history associated with the British Royal family.

It is a matter of regret that the role of Scripture during the Queen’s Coronation in 1953 will be largely forgotten in the official events organised to mark her Diamond Jubilee. However, bearing in mind that the Bible was called at the Queen’s Coronation ‘the most valuable possession this world affords’, the Society plans to mark this significant anniversary by seeking to capitalise upon the need for the Word of God, especially amongst the young.

In the English-speaking world, the 400th anniversary of the original publication of the Authorised (King James) Version has helped put the Bible, particularly the AV, back into the public consciousness. In the UK, positive coverage, by both the religious and secular presses, has resulted in a noticeable openness and willingness from some schools to accept offers of the Scriptures for their pupils. This greater openness has provided fertile ground to help make the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee in 2012 an unprecedented opportunity for the further distribution of the Scriptures in general, and the AV in particular.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the Jubilee, as a British and Commonwealth celebration and not simply a religious or Christian event, may provide a significant window of
opportunity for churches to ‘break the ice’ and establish a relationship with schools and other groups that may otherwise be disinterested or even hostile to the Bible. The Jubilee event also overcomes the possible objection that schools cannot provide Bibles to the children without also offering the writings of other faiths, because no other faiths (or writings) were involved with the Queen’s Coronation. In addition, the Bible (at least the New Testament) was seen as an appropriate and profitable gift for schoolchildren in 1953 and was consequently produced and distributed by some local authorities in the UK to commemorate the Queen’s coronation—a precedent which we hope will open doors for Scripture distribution in 2012.

Recognising all these factors, the Society is keen to support churches and Christian groups in the work of distributing the Scriptures more widely during the coming year. Our desire is to encourage and assist churches and other Christian organisations to contact schools, residential care homes, army barracks, prisons and other institutions in their neighbourhoods, and to enable them to offer free copies of a Jubilee edition of the Authorised (King James) Version of the Scriptures. It is planned, if the Lord will, that these distinctive editions will be supplied by the Society at an economic price to facilitate their widespread distribution to many who would not otherwise receive or accept a copy of the Word of God.

Details for this project are in the process of being finalised during the month of August, but we can already advise that, God willing, there will be an inexpensive hardback Jubilee edition in the very popular Royal Ruby setting, along with a more expensive leather-bound Pitt Minion edition. Both Bibles are due to be published early in 2012 and more details will be given in the January-March 2012 Quarterly Record.

It is encouraging to report that interest has already been shown in this initiative and a number of churches have contacted the Society to seek advice and support as to how they can use the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee to distribute the Scriptures in their locality. We pray that the Lord may bless this venture and the preparations now in hand to produce these special editions. May He also hear the prayers of His people for the Queen and all those in authority over us.

Endnote

1. Queen Victoria being the first, 20 June 1837–22 January 1901: 63 years, seven months and three days (216 days). ‘If Elizabeth II is still on the throne on 10 September 2015…she will then, metaphorically speaking, be crowned as the longest-serving sovereign in the 1,000 year history of the British monarchy’ (‘Queen Elizabeth II marks another milestone’, BBC News UK, 12 May 2011 [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-13363504]).
and the DAN BIBLE

by C. P. Hallihan

Introduction

Among the Mandé peoples in Liberia, the Dan (Gio) have had some Scripture portions in their own language since the 1940s and a New Testament since 1981. This New Testament, published by the TBS as the ‘Gio New Testament’ for a number of years, was the work of the missionaries and translators Tom and June Jackson, American husband and English wife, residents in Liberia for many years until they were murdered on the mission field in March 1990. At the time of their deaths, the Jacksons were in discussion with TBS as to linguistic and textual revisions of their New Testament. Subsequently, a translation team from the Liberia Inland Mission (DALITA: Dan Literacy and Translation Association) has been working with TBS towards this revision.

Part of the need expressed by the Liberian team is that we should use their preferred designation of the people as Dan, no longer as Gio: thus, the Dan (Gio) project. Work in this project is moving on with the revised text currently being checked by the Society, so a ‘Country Article’ seemed a good step to take.

Geographical Placement

Africa’s oldest independent republic, declared so in 1847, Liberia is on the west coast of Africa. Its adjacent neighbours are Sierra Leone to the west (along the Mano and Morro Rivers), Guinea to the north and Côte d’Ivoire on the east (along the Cavalla River). The Atlantic Ocean is to the south and mangrove...
swamps line Liberia’s coast. Among the fauna living in this geographically diverse country are chimpanzees, pygmy hippos and crocodiles, and the rather unusual zebra antelope. According to the census of 2008, the population is 3,476,608 people; nearly two-thirds live in rural areas, in an overall area of 111,369 km² (43,000 sq.mi.). In terms of latitude it lies about 6° north of the Equator, the same as central Colombia, Venezuela, the Maldives and the south coast of Sri Lanka. Liberia is in the central part of what was known as the Pepper Coast: the melegueta pepper, a rare spice in high demand throughout Europe also known as the grain of paradise, grew there, hence an alternative name, the Grain Coast.¹

The Mandé are a large ethnic group (twenty-seven million plus) in West Africa, speaking various Mandé languages. Since the 13th century, most profess to follow Islam, ranging from orthodox Sunni Islam to a simple ‘cultural’ Islam, whilst maintaining aspects of traditional religions. These Mandé peoples had spread from Central Sahara, and had been founders of the great Ghana and Mali Empires. They were among the first to produce stone settlement civilisations in Africa.² ‘Desertification’, the steady encroachment of the Sahara, had affected these lands in part from 2000 BC, but between 200 BC and AD 100 the desert expanded significantly, and the population

Mandé people and the Dan

This second map dates from 1736, one hundred years before Liberia, as such, existed. It is a better indication of the area of the Mandé Dan peoples, though the modern map on page 21 does more plainly show the northern highlands, especially the Nimba Range where the Jacksons lived, laboured and were killed.
headed south and west toward the Atlantic coast.

Mandé languages then spread throughout the region, and Mandé groups are found along the Atlantic coast of West Africa. Using modern country names, north to south, they are in Mauritania, Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria; paralleling these inland are Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad and Niger. European colonisation greatly affected Mandé life. Constant wars seriously depleted their numbers and led to increased reliance on Atlantic trade. Artificial colonial boundaries followed, dividing the Mandé population without regard to their language and culture.

Amongst the Mandé, the Dan people had eventually settled chiefly in the northern, more mountainous regions, of what we know as Liberia and the Côte d’Ivoire. Traditionally a warlike people in long-standing conflict with other African tribes, there have been frequent outbreaks of war with indigenous populations along the coast. Amongst their most famous fighters was a man named Gio (‘hurt’ or ‘stab’), and so the people whom he led came to be called ‘the Gio’. The Gio themselves were always aware of being the Dan, with a very strong sense of having originated in Israel before being in Guinea and Mali. As the histories began to move from oral tradition to written records, Gio was the prevailing title, but the secretary of the translation team in Liberia tells us that ‘…as our history approaches revitalization, there was constant appeal from the Gio prominent citizens that the name Gio was a name of an individual, not the tribe, and that it must be given its original name “Dan”’. As a result, any time the name of the tribe is written in this article, it will be in both ways as Dan/Gio, because most of our histories and writings have carried Gio and many people have known the tribe as Gio.

In terms of modern history the Dan/Gio, as Mandé, are traditionally Muslim, usually observing ritual washing and daily prayers, but very few wear Arab dress, or women the veil. Mandé social relationships enduring amongst the Dan/Gio are the sanankuya, and their highly secret yet pervasively influential orders, Poro for men and Sande or Bundu for women. Involvement is begun with initiation rites at puberty, but continues throughout life as a powerful and fearful direction of tribe, clan or village matters, at every level. For instance, if the poro chief, masked as he would be to represent a spirit or devil, places a taboo on a man’s crop or on his sweetheart, that man would not dare to proceed with either a harvest or engagement: a problem for everyone, even the national government. The Dan masks, collected and displayed as art in the West, are in fact part of the cult equipment of these societies, used to maintain both
secretory and fear. You will understand the opposition to the Gospel of Christ that such societies present.

**Liberia: a snapshot**

In 1822 groups of freed American slaves were landed in the region to initiate a colony. This had been agreed with the indigenous peoples by the American Colonialization Society. Based on ‘liberation’, the country was to be Liberia. In 1847 Liberia declared itself an independent republic, and Joseph Jenkins Roberts, a settler from Virginia, was the first president (1848–1856).

The 1920s saw heavy investment by the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company of the United States. When rubber prices fell in the 1960s and ‘70s, the economy inevitably suffered, but rubber is still the main cash crop. Staple food is rice, and most food is imported. Iron ore is Liberia’s principal export, along with diamonds and gold. Timber, too, is a significant export, but most industries principally serve the national and local market. The road network is largely unpaved and railways are mainly used for ore transportation. Monrovia (named after American President James Monroe) is the capital city and principal port, with two major airports nearby.

Descendants of the American freed slaves became a minority of the population, although they held political power until 1980 when President William Tolbert (1913–1980) was shot during a coup led by Master Sergeant Samuel Kanyon Doe (1951–1990). Doe’s vision was to share power more equally between ‘Americo-Liberians’ and native Africans, but Doe himself was killed in 1990 in the beginning of a fierce war. Civil wars plagued Liberia throughout the 1990s, producing an estimated 750,000 refugees fleeing to neighbouring countries, dangerously destabilising the whole region. This devastated the economy yet again, and with so many of the business people fleeing, economic rebuilding still looks a bleak prospect.

Malaria, leprosy, tuberculosis and sleeping sickness are endemic. Education is free and compulsory from the ages of six to sixteen and there are several institutions of higher education; nevertheless, literacy levels are low. Although there are three large language groups—Mandé, Kwa and West Atlantic—English is the official language.
To add to their difficulties Liberia is suffering from the effects of a dramatic series of floods this century. A map of the southern Atlantic Ocean will show that the narrowest part is between Brazil’s eastern bulge at Recife, and the West African Coast at Liberia. In Atlantic Ocean terms this is a ‘choke point’. The summer months of recent years have seen wave after wave of storms gnawing away the Liberian coast, tumbling hundreds of houses into the sea. Liberia’s government has warned that unless the international community helps, coastal towns will have to watch helplessly as streets are inundated and people forced to move inland; the country will be compelled to alter its very shape in order to accommodate the sea’s changing patterns.

**Liberia: Mission**

It is impossible to speak of the Gospel in Liberia without mention of Lott Carey (sometimes Cary). He was born into slavery near Richmond, Virginia, USA, in 1780, and turned to Christ in 1807, becoming a member of the racially mixed First Baptist Church of Richmond. A diligent worker, he was able to purchase freedom for himself and his family by 1813; he became active in preaching, and helped form the Richmond African Missionary Society.

It is worth recalling that this was the growing time of Protestant mission work: Lott Carey was

- twenty years younger than William Carey, India
- one year older than Henry Martin, Persia
- two years older than Robert Morrison, China
- eight years older than Adoniram Judson, Burma.

Serving Christ’s Gospel beyond America was where his heart belonged, and it seems almost inevitable that in 1821 he and a small group, already constituted together as a church for the purpose, sailed for Liberia. Although this was in connection with the American Colonization Society, Carey’s passion was to preach Christ—the first US Baptist missionary to Africa. ‘I am an African,’ he had said in a parting sermon in Richmond, ‘and…I feel bound to labour for my suffering race’; he thus fulfilled his grandmother’s dream that he would return to Africa, taking Christ to her own people.

On their arrival they soon constructed a building for the Providence Baptist Church. Lott Carey was killed in a gunpowder explosion in 1828, but his witness and commitment is a continuing and significant part of Liberian and West African Christianity. There are schools and missionary training colleges in Liberia and in USA, proud to bear his name.

There was something of a revival under the ministry of his successor at Providence, but church work was directed towards the settlers, and not much attention was paid to evangelising the indigenous peoples. Many of the thousands of colonists arriving in Liberia over the next decades were already affiliated with denominations and continued
or began their own denominational churches in the new settlement. The first Methodist missionary came in 1833; the Basel Evangelical Society briefly sent missionaries (1828–1832); Presbyterian and Congregationalist workers arrived in 1833, the African Episcopal Church in 1835, the (American) Episcopal Church in 1836, and Lutherans began a work in 1860. There were fields ripe to harvest waiting ready in the older parts of the land, but the reaping did not come until the later part of the 1800s. Fresh waves of African Americans arriving after the American Civil War and the ensuing emancipation of slaves seemed to generate a vision for the indigenous people. Two black American denominations, African Methodist Episcopal Church (1873) and AME Zion Church (1876), sent missionaries. Pentecostal missionaries came in 1908 and worked extensively among the Grebo peoples of the interior, developing three Bible schools to train indigenous pastors. The Baptist Mid-Missions commenced their work in 1931, and WEC International (formerly Worldwide Evangelisation for Christ) in 1938 (founding the Liberia Inland Mission church). In 1954 the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) founded ELWA (Eternal Love Winning Africa), the first mission radio station in Africa. Before being twice destroyed in the recent civil wars, it broadcast in forty-four languages to all of Africa and the Middle East.\footnote{15}

The Bible Work

Now we return to Thomas Jackson—not the American Civil War figure, but one equally heroic on a different battlefield. He and his first wife, Billie, were missionaries in Liberia, and Tom’s name first appears in connection with Bible translation with the production of Ruth, Job, Daniel and Jonah, a forty-four-page translation in the Gio/Dan language published by WEC in 1959. These labours can then be followed through chapters of Exodus to Deuteronomy (135 pages, 1960) and Genesis (130 pages, 1962). Soon afterward, work began on the New Testament.

Around this time Mrs Jackson became ill, and there was a return to North Carolina for treatment and recovery. Tom Jackson took a lively part in the ministry at a church, Lillington, North Carolina, leaving a savour that lingered long after his return to Liberia, directing others to Christ and to the mission field. His wife Billie did not recover, but died while in the USA.

Tom subsequently married an English woman, June Hobley, and it is this Mr. and Mrs. Jackson who became involved with the TBS and the Dan/Gio New Testament. An announcement in Quarterly Record no. 474 (January to March 1981, p. 3) reads, ‘After many years of devoted labour on the translation of the New Testament into the language of the Gio tribe in Liberia in West Africa, Mr. and Mrs. T. Jackson of Baptist Mid Missions recently completed this stage of the work.’ The item concluded with these words, ‘The Gio New Testaments are eagerly awaited by our fellow labourers in West Africa, and it will be the prayer of many that there will be spiritual fruit where the seed is sown.’

There is every reason to believe that such prayers were heard and continue to be answered. Setting, printing, binding and distribution of the Gio New Testament occupied another seven years. You may want to ask, ‘Why so long?’ Think of the distances
involved—Liberia, London, North Carolina—and the complete absence of digital technology for transmission of documents needing proofing, revising and correcting, and all this in a language and script wholly new. The ninety-six carton consignment of Gio New Testaments was despatched from TBS in London in May 1981, arriving complete (not always the case!) the same month in Monrovia. There were reports of the first packet ‘melting away like snow in June’.

Tom and June Jackson resumed their labours among the Dan/Gio tribe, and also set themselves to the task of translating the whole Old Testament in the language. This was not to be. Associated Press published this bulletin on 29 March 1990: ‘U.S. Missionary and His Wife Are Reported Slain in Liberia. Villagers today found the bodies of a missionary couple slain in Liberia’s eastern Nimba County, where Government troops battling rebels have killed hundreds of civilians, diplomats said. The bodies of the Rev. Tom Jackson, an American, and his British wife, June, were found in the village where they lived at Bahn, the diplomats said… The slain couple belonged to the United States-based United Liberian Inland Church and had lived in Liberia for 40 years.’

This was a great loss to all concerned, family, mission, home churches, friends, and TBS. Alongside the work on the Old Testament, which Tom Jackson and his team had begun translating, TBS and the Mission had been re-assessing the New Testament. It was harmoniously, graciously acknowledged that the Testament had strayed from the textual foundation of the Received Text, not wilfully, but noticeably. Regarding the Gio/Dan New Testament Tom Jackson had said in a letter to TBS dated 26 January 1990, received 14 February, just six weeks before the killing: ‘[The New Testament] is overdue for revision. My own knowledge of the language has expanded considerably’; and of the workers he reports, ‘Give them their due, they were scholars and applied themselves wholly to research and study of various texts, but they just didn’t have a wide knowledge of Gio.’ There was a resolve to ‘fix’ a couple of serious points in the text, and go ahead with a much needed reprint, and the last letter that TBS received from the Jacksons was to thank the Society for the reprint. The New Testaments were despatched to Liberia; letters from others came afterwards, asking for any remaining copies to be sent out. In an example of the Widow’s Mite, in the 1990s, with many Liberians living in exile in Côte d’Ivoire, the mission with which the Jacksons had worked sent not one, but two cheques, comprising nearly US$2,000 donated by Liberian refugees for the printing and distribution of the Gio New Testament. The letter accompanying the second cheque noted:

The situation in Liberia seems to be improving… We still have some of the Gio New Testaments with us in Côte d’Ivoire and are waiting for peace to come before we transport everything into Liberia. For the past seven years we have stationed ourselves in Côte d’Ivoire near the border to Liberia so that we can help our Christians from inside. We were able to run some short term Bible study classes for our church leaders and it proved to be beneficial to the church. We are hoping to continue our ministry in Côte d’Ivoire until the situation in Liberia is safe for us to enter.
Following the deaths of the Jacksons, supporters were asked to pray that the Lord would raise up new translators to carry on their work, and we are now pleased to include a photograph of the present team (DALITA) in Liberia working on the Dan Bible in connection with Liberia Inland Mission and TBS. Work thus far has focused on the New Testament. Earlier this year, the present team finished a draft of the revised New Testament after a number of years’ labour.

Their work over the past twelve months has been helped considerably by the provision of a laptop computer, but internet communications are somewhat unreliable (by Western standards), which has meant that the exchange of files between Liberia and TBS in London has been anything but smooth. Nevertheless, the draft revision is in the process of being assessed by the Society’s editorial department for its faithfulness to the Received Text. It is anticipated that this particular phase of the work will continue for some months, with the aim of correcting any errors identified and improving as necessary the faithfulness of the Dan text to the underlying Greek.

The Translation Association in Liberia

The Dan Literacy and Translation Association (DALITA) was founded in 1997 by the Rev. David K. Dunah, the former National Assistant Secretary General of the United Inland Church (1980–2002), who started Bible translation work with Tom and Billie Jackson in 1958 at the Bahn Inland Mission, Nimba County, Liberia. After the fierce civil war in Liberia that took the lives of the Jacksons had subsided, Mr. Dunah felt an urgent need to continue their work, and that continues to this day.

The focus of DALITA is spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ through literacy programmes and Bible translation. DALITA is actively engaged in conducting literacy classes aimed at teaching Liberian people how to read and write the Dan/Gio language. Toward this end, many teaching aids have been produced by the organisation, including primers, graded readers and calendars. Bible translation has been mainly centred on Gospels, tracts and the ongoing work on the Dan/Gio New Testament. Although the Society has been able to provide some help in the way of computers, funding for the group is mainly from contributions from Christians in Liberia; even though the money is insufficient to produce materials as DALITA would want, they continue thankful to God for His grace that has kept this group of volunteers
focussed on the task before them.

Conclusion

‘Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.’ (Psalm 40.5)

Isn’t this glimpse of just one of our God’s great works a magnificent testimony? The Bible in English brought about the agitation in Britain and America that led to a wholesale, if slow, change of attitudes to slavery. Liberia and Sierra Leone were brought into being as countries where freed slaves could take up ‘home’ life. They brought the Bible, in African hands, to hitherto unreached African peoples. Christianity was now also ‘free’ in West Africa, and remains a powerful force there. The next need? The Bible again, in new languages; and it should not surprise nor dismay anyone familiar with the history of the Scriptures that the Dan/Gio Bible in Liberia is attested in the blood of martyrs.

Praise God, and pray for rich fruit to His glory.

Endnotes:

1. English explorers of the 18th century also referred to the region as the Windward Coast, because of notoriously choppy waters off the coast of Cape Palmas, the tip of southern Liberia, very difficult for European ships to navigate.
2. The Nile regions and Ethiopia were the earliest.
3. This is true of Sierra Leone also, and a serious factor in recent civil wars in these nations, aided by troops, weapons and training from Libya, across the Sahara.
5. Those in a sanankuya relationship can treat one another as if cousins or close family members, exchanging familiar jokes, humorous insults and practical jokes. This essential element of Mandé/West African society was reputedly established as a civic duty in the Kurukan Fuga, the oral Constitution of the Mali Empire, c. 1236. A French observer describes it as ‘Pleasant pour éviter les conflits’—‘Joking to avoid conflict’ (or ‘Pleasantries prevent punch-ups’).
7. The slave trade was still going on, and British and American naval vessels were operating off these coasts to intercept slavers and land their pitiful cargo in Liberia (US) or Sierra Leone (UK).
8. Joseph Jenkins Roberts (15 March 1809–24 February 1876) was also to be the seventh President of Liberia (1872–1876) and the second governor (1841–1848). Born free in an evangelical black family in Norfolk, Virginia, Roberts emigrated to Liberia in 1829. He opened a trading store in Monrovia, and later engaged in politics: hence Roberts International Airport, Robertsport and various similar street names.
9. Liberian rubber was vital for Allied victory in World War II.
10. There are about sixteen major ethnic groups, speaking thirty-four distinct languages.
11. In one place the fresh-water treatment plant was inundated in sea-water.
12. It really is a magnificent life and testimony, especially with regard to the beginnings of West African Christianity. Something even less than a snapshot is all that can be given here.
14. The building was used for Liberia’s first Legislative Assembly and Providence became revered as ‘The Cornerstone of the Nation’.
15. Some of the information in this section is derived from articles on Liberia and on Lott Carey in the Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions (Grand Rapids, MI, USA: Baker Books, 2000).
16. I sometimes wonder how T. H. Brown avoided the attention of the security services at Heathrow Airport as he accomplished yet another time-constrained conclave with missionaries and translators passing through on their way to or from their field of service. And even more: the handing over of precious film or proofs of the translation in hand!
17. Associated Press, 28 March 1990. Later reports from the mission speak of thousands being shot. They reported that June died instantly, but Tom staggered towards the rebels, looking upwards and crying ‘Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.’
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 Piatra Neamt, Romania:

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ from the north-east of Romania! We pray for you to have a wonderful new year with the Lord, a year blessed by God in many ways as you work to outreach the people with the Word of Life. Here in Piatra Neamt we continue to share the good news of Jesus Christ our Saviour to others. Recently the church choir, the youth choir and the children made special programs celebrating Jesus’s birth, not only at the church, but also in other places in the town, to friends, at the orphanages, and in the villages around, and we gave Words of Life on calendars. We started this year with a week of prayer. Each evening in the first week of the year we gathered at the church and prayed together for the Lord to give blessings upon His children over 2011 year and for a dedicated personal life to Him. We hope to do this again in 2012.

From a mission in Germany:

I received yesterday a very encouraging report from some Italian missionaries. The English Bibles arrived and they had immediately a wonderful chance to hand them out to English speaking African Christians. They had to leave everything behind them when they entered the boat to cross over to Europe, even their beloved KJVs. The boat was rescued in last minute. And the first thing that was offered to them was a KJV Bible. What a great joy they felt!
From Salisbury, Wiltshire:
The church here decided to pay for this billboard to appear in Fisherton Street, Salisbury, on the way to the Railway Station. We pray that it will draw people’s attention to God’s Word and also to our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. [Ed.: This poster was designed and produced by the church concerned, and is not of a sort available from or planned by the Society. It is instead an excellent example of what can be achieved by individual Christian churches and organisations.]

Fisherton Street, Salisbury

From Guildford, Surrey, England:
I thought you might be interested to see the floral display at Guildford Castle grounds. G A represents George Abbott, one of the KJB translators who was born in Guildford (promoted to become Archbishop of Canterbury in 1611) and is buried in Holy Trinity church, Guildford.

From Kendal, Cumbria, England:
Visiting the town of Kendal during the spring of this year, which we have done for the best part of twenty years, we found ourselves on a road leading out of the town which we’d never been on before. After travelling for several miles we saw a sign to a church and viewpoint. We decided to take this turning and we found the view most delightful and the church interesting. My wife stayed in the car enjoying the view, whilst I went to look around the church. On entering the church I found two middle-aged people looking at the bookstall. I said to them ‘Anything worth reading?’ They replied, ‘We don’t know.’ They followed me down the aisle into the chancel, when I heard them say one to another, ‘It’s not here.’ I said to them ‘What’s not here?’ They said, ‘The Bible. There’s no Bible on the lectern.’ I said, ‘Can I can help you? I’m a retired Christian pastor.’ ‘Yes, you can. We are both seeking God.’ Seeking God! I couldn’t believe my ears! They went on to say they had heard about the 400th anniversary of the Authorised Version and wanted to read it! We walked down the aisle and through the churchyard, having a rich conversation about the things of God. On reaching my car I gave them some Gospel tracts and pointed out the way of salvation. I asked them, ‘Do you go to church?’ They said ‘Oh, no.’ I pointed out some churches where they lived where they would hear the Gospel (hard task in these days). Before we parted company they consented to me praying with them. I prayed they might be saved and led to a church where they would be taught God’s Word. On returning home, I sent them an Authorised Version Bible.

Floral display at Guildford Castle
After a few weeks we had a letter from these dear people thanking us very warmly for the Bible, and saying, ‘We are studying the Bible together and learning more and more as we go along. We believe our meeting was not a coincidence: that day has set us upon the path to finding God!’ Correspondence still continues. Ask your readers to pray that if they are not already saved, then very soon they will be.

From Lavender Hill, London:
Attached is a picture I took of Cornerstone bookshop on the way home and as you will see the repairs are already in the process following the rioting and looting of last week. I suspect some general community scheme has gone into operation because these repairs have gone swiftly into place all over Clapham Junction. The whole area was teeming with people obviously looking at the damage, along with a large police presence. But we also see people working together to do the repairs. It’s not often we see a World War 2 atmosphere with folk pulling together but it seems that we have some of it here in a measure.

From south London:
A friend was on a train one day and it broke down. While he was still on the train waiting, he noticed one of our large posters at the station and through that poster, he became a Christian. Unfortunately, I don’t know what the text was or which station it was, but I thought it was a very interesting and encouraging story.

From Northern Ireland:
We were delighted when we were able to get into the next block of flats. Inside these flats we met a lovely African lady, very nicely dressed, really smart looking, cleaning and dusting the hall stairway. We gave her a TBS New Testament. She was so delighted she got a little tearful as she said, ‘This is of the Lord! It just shows you how the Lord is looking after us.’ She was such a lovely lady. She asked us to pray for her twenty-eight year old daughter, Rosalind, who had health problems, and we said we would (and later when we had finished for the day we did pray for her daughter). This lady obviously knew and loved the Lord. As we
went on upstairs she thanked us again and said, ‘You don’t know how much this is a blessing for me; I have a Bible at home but it is too big and heavy to carry with me so I am so happy to have this, thank you so much!’ She let me take a photo of her and she is holding up the New Testament. We also gave her a Hebrew-English New Testament to pass on to a Jewish person whom the Lord led across her path. She said she would be glad to do that and we know she would too.

**From Truro, Cornwall, England:**
The Lord really blessed us over the weekend with the KJV celebration. He drew lots of interesting people to us. We had quite a few of the clergy who were very interested to find out what we were doing; they also took books, etc., from off the table. Some people knew what we were doing and had heard of the many different celebrations going on up and down the country to do with the KJV’s anniversary. There seemed to be such a hunger coming from churchgoing people for the Word of God. Some wanted to share their testimony, others wanted to find out all about the different translations, many people took booklets, tracts, etc., and we also gave away three Bibles. The Lord just opened the way for us to be a witness for Him. We give thanks and praise to the Lord for that! And now we look forward to the next event coming up later in the year!

**Africa**

**From Kenya:**
I got a letter the other day from a former Bible college student with his plea for Bibles. The letter is so typical of the pleas I get. There seems to be such a dearth of Bibles in this country. I think many of them are because of all the new churches springing up everywhere. And I keep in mind perhaps in the future there is going to be a real dearth of the Word.
of God here, if missionaries are forced out or entry is denied to new ones, or if Islam takes over, or the country descends into chaos at the next election. Whatever, there must be some reason why the appeals for Scriptures are so continuous and so insistent. One of our lady students in my church history class came to me the other day to tell me that the Bible I had given her for her brother, was not taken by him, but it went to someone else, who loves it so much and has come to believe. She wanted me to know that. So I am praying with you all at TBS.

**From Ghana:**
Sincere greetings to you in our Redeemer’s precious Name. Please I have enclosed a photo of the distribution of the Bibles. However, I also minister to the young offenders at the school where several of them have come to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I also distributed the Bibles to individuals in the church who needed them. Thank you very much and may the Lord continually bless you exceedingly abundantly.

**From Imo State, Nigeria:**
Islam in north-west Nigeria has grown up by an amazing 700% since 1990. In the urban area, Islam has become a very popular social fashion, which makes it very difficult for any other religion to penetrate the Islamic stronghold. But today the stronghold is being broken through your Bibles and literature. We distributed free of charge to patients in hospitals, in retirement homes to people deserted by relatives, to old folks who have no relatives or friends, leprosy centres, etc.—the Scriptures have opened a new door for the gospel in this Islamic stronghold. Praise God, we have established two Bible study centres with over sixty abiding souls serving in various churches and ministry activities.

**From Lagos, Nigeria:**
To God be the glory, great things He has done. I hereby appreciate and say a big thank you to Trinitarian Bible Society for the Scriptures sent to me. I pray that the Society will continue to grow in Jesus’s name, amen. The Scriptures will be distributed accordingly and I will write again to inform

![Ruby Bibles distributed in Ghana](image)
you of the blessings upon the receivers. I commend the Society for their efforts to spread the Word of God. I know the Society will not rest until there is a Bible in every home throughout the world.

From Addis Ababa, Ethiopia:  
I am living in Addis Ababa and by now I have attained sixty years of age. I have established a business company and living out of its proceeds. I had no request about a spiritual affair at any time in the past. I had developed a presentation denying the existence of God and the spiritual world. Despite that I had money and pleasure, I was impiety from inside. In the meantime, I had got the chance to acquaint with a Christian at a wedding ceremony. He called and found me and taught me about religious things. God miraculously opened my heart deeply and I determined to study Bible willingly. Then I forego my nothingness life and secular knowledge, and I accepted Jesus as the Saviour of my soul. It means I have become a Christian, confirming that I am inheritor of God's kingdom. I received Bible from the Christian brother so that I can have understanding. He also told me that the Bibles are sent from Trinitarian Bible Society. I am now freed from all the imprisonments. Despite my husband being separated from me due to death about a year ago, I am happy in Christ.

From Kerala, India:  
We pray for you. Bibles, posters, calendars are very useful and helpful to the people and this ministry. We gave Bibles to English medium school students.

Please send new edition Bibles and New Testaments, posters with calendar parcel.

From Sriperumbudur, South India:  
Thank you for your support for the Bibles in our surrounding area five colleges and two medical colleges. Those college boys and girls are coming to church. We are reaching the students and young people in so many companies and job work. We need more Bibles to distribute to unsaved youths. We await your kindly reply and support for our ministry.

The Americas

From Greenville, IL, USA:  
Hello. I am currently serving a fifteen-year sentence in prison. I am in need of a Bible, and if at all possible one with large print. My eyes are very bad. I would truly appreciate it if you could help me. I would also like for you to please pray for my wife, who is fighting cancer.

From Saraland, AL, USA:  
We would like to officially thank everyone laboring at the Trinitarian Bible Society. The generous grant of such a large amount...
of literature for our ministry to seamen is very much appreciated. We trust the Lord will supply your every need as you labor for the Lord and give you a bountiful spiritual harvest for His glory.

From Matanzas, Cuba:

It is a joy for me to greet you in the name of our Lord and at the same time thank you for such a fantastic parcel. Thanks to God and to you, who have been the human instrument for so much pleasing, that I could receive the Holy Bible in the English language, as I requested. I am profoundly grateful for this; without your help I would not have been able to acquire one. May God bless you abundantly and make you prosper in this marvellous ministry which He has placed in your hands and laid on your hearts.

From São Paulo, Brazil:

Attached are photos of people who received Bibles and New Testaments. Portuguese Bibles were given to new converts and to visitors to our church on various occasions. All received the Scriptures with much gladness and satisfaction. One is a Lebanese Muslim lady who received a New Testament in Arabic. Although not a believer, she received it with respect, as the Muslims respect and reverence the Arabic Bible. Many thanks for the Scriptures you sent. Through them, we are being blessed.
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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.

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

ISSN 0049-4712

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