



Quarterly Record

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October–December 2020



THE WORD OF GOD AMONG ALL NATIONS



Trinitarian Bible Society

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

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Children's Scripture Learning Programme

The Children's Scripture Learning Programme is one of the means that the Trinitarian Bible Society uses to promote the study of God's Word among children. This programme was commenced in 1972 to encourage English-speaking children to memorise the Holy Scriptures from the Authorised (King James) Version of the Bible.

Under the rules of the programme we provide lists of verses to be memorised by children in two age groups: ten years and under, and eleven to fifteen. To the younger children who memorise their verses we award suitably inscribed leather text Bibles with gilt page edges. For the older children suitably inscribed gilt-edged leather reference Bibles are awarded. Children who have received the junior prize may, upon reaching eleven years, receive the reference Bible if they learn the verses 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 children under their care to request further details of the Children's Scripture Learning Programme from the Grants Department (grants@tbsbibles.org) at our London headquarters, or from any of the Society's branches (for which the contact details are on the inside back cover of this *Quarterly Record*). Please note that, due to financial constraints, eligibility is limited to children in countries in which the Society has a branch.





Introduction from the Editorial Director

As the days, weeks and months of 2020 pass the Society continues to press on with God's help in the work for which we were established in 1831: the circulation of the Word of God among all nations. This is completed only according to the Lord's goodness and on behalf of all those who support and pray for this much needed work.

Each day members of staff deal with grant requests, Scripture sales and queries from our supporters. Editorial staff are checking, designing, uploading and project managing all the translations and materials that the Society publishes. Each month

our finance team labour to ensure everything is accounted for properly so that the Society's financial position can be carefully monitored and presented to the General Committee. Other departments ensure that money received from all sources is used in the best way for the Lord's work. Bibles, New Testaments, Scripture portions and other publications are sent out from our Warehouse (which we are thankful has been able to keep open throughout this year). These activities continue daily along with many other matters that enable the smooth running of a worldwide Scripture translation and distribution work.



Each item of Scripture that is sent out represents what is given by inspiration of God in His Word. It is this Word that is 'profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness' (2 Timothy 3.16-17), and it will not return unto the Lord void (Isaiah 55.11).

Each month we receive reports from our translators detailing the hours that they have spent labouring in the faithful translation of God's Word. These are not short periods of time but altogether amount to hundreds of hours. And each month we receive heartwarming reports from those who have received the Scriptures in various parts of the world.

In all the above, we can only say 'hitherto hath the LORD helped us' (1 Samuel 7.12). And as we remember the past we look to the Eternal God for the days, weeks, and months ahead. His grace is sufficient for each believer personally, and each of us engaged in the work do so that we may not labour as men pleasers but for the true and living God.

In this *Quarterly Record* you will find part one of a report on a remarkable distribution work in Cuba (God willing, part two will follow in 2021).

Additionally an article on the Pilgrim Fathers by one of our deputation speakers draws attention to the Pilgrims' love for the Word of God,

which paved the way for the Puritans who would join them in the New World a few years later. We draw attention to the Children's Scripture Learning Programme, in which we seek to encourage the memorisation of God's Word, and a devotional from our chairman reminds us of the spiritual work in which we are engaged. Together with these articles are a look at the Catalan Scriptures and our new

greetings cards, our usual reports on translations and resources, and—what some view as the best part of the QR—the letters from those who have benefited from our distribution of God's Word.

Through reading these articles in this last QR of 2020 we hope you will with us render thanks to the Lord for His goodness and faithfulness this past year. Further, we encourage you to continue praying that the Lord may be pleased to use the Society—and our generous and kind supporters—for His glory as we seek to distribute Protestant or uncorrupted versions of the Holy Scriptures.

As we remember
the past we look
to the Eternal God
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OUGHT NOT CHRIST TO HAVE SUFFERED THESE THINGS LUKE 24.26

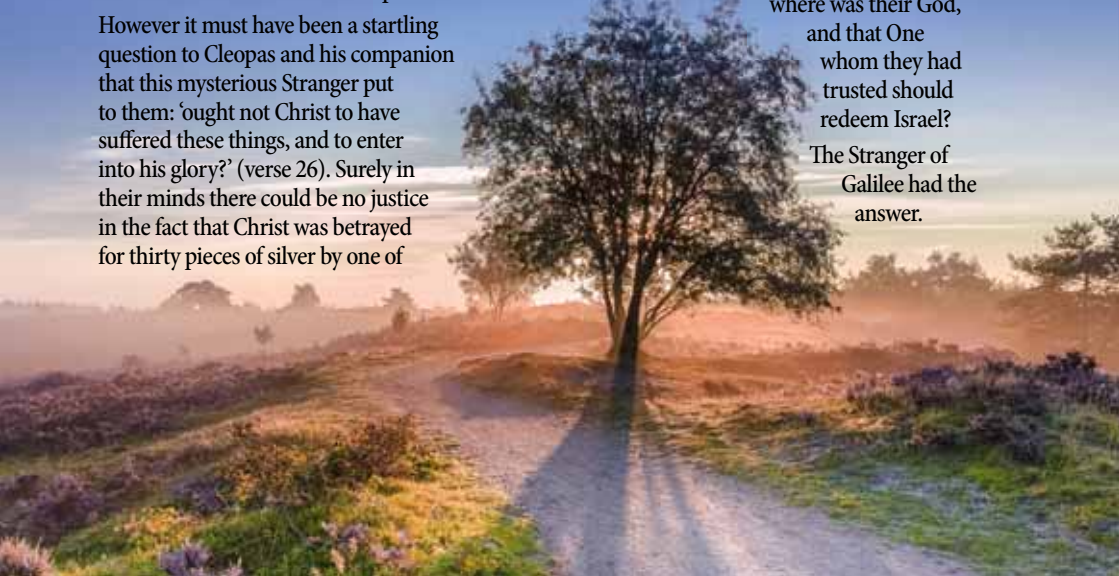
by Mr. G. D. Buss
Chairman of the Society

If there is one sermon many believers have wished they could have heard first hand, it is surely the one preached by the Prince of Preachers, the only perfect Teacher, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, on the road to Emmaus, recorded in Luke 24. The Holy Ghost has not seen fit to leave us the actual record, but it has been promised that He will take of the things of Jesus and reveal them to God's people. Certainly many things which Christ expounded on that memorable journey are recorded in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is so full of Christ 'in all the Scriptures'.

However it must have been a startling question to Cleopas and his companion that this mysterious Stranger put to them: 'ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?' (verse 26). Surely in their minds there could be no justice in the fact that Christ was betrayed for thirty pieces of silver by one of

His own apostles, arrested by a violent band of soldiers, given a mockery of a trial, passed to Pilate by the Jews, then to Herod, then back to Pilate; that He should have His holy back scourged, His holy head crowned with thorns, His face and visage marred with smiting and spitting; that a robber, Barabbas, should be preferred to Him, that He should be led out of the city and with two malefactors hung all those dark hours on the cross at Golgotha, at last yielding up His holy soul, experiencing death and the grave.

So the question still remained with these sorrowing disciples: where was justice in all this? Indeed, where was their God, and that One whom they had trusted should redeem Israel? The Stranger of Galilee had the answer.



‘Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?’ Then taking the whole of the Old Testament as His text He opened their hearts to receive the blessings that flow from the cross, the grave and the resurrection of the Saviour.

There are six reasons we may give why Christ must suffer before entering into His glory.

Firstly, it was His Father’s will that it should be so. He was the Servant of His Father in the immense undertaking on His holy shoulders. In the everlasting covenant of grace Christ had willingly undertaken to walk this path. ‘Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul delighteth’ (Isaiah 42.1).

Secondly, in that same covenant He had undertaken to be the surety of His church, foreknowing that the payment of her sins would be required of Him at Calvary. He did not shy away from the task before Him; as David tells us in Psalm 15.4, He ‘swaereth to *his own* hurt, and changeth not’.

Thirdly, the holy law of God lay in ruins around the fallen sons of Adam. Christ came to restore honour to it, and in so doing restored that which He took not away: ‘then I restored *that* which I took not away’ (Psalm 69.4).

Fourthly, the ceremonial law in all its types and shadows must be fulfilled if it were to pass away. When near the end of His life here below, He went into the temple and looked on all that was therein. He saw every type, every offering and all the blood-sprinkled altars which pointed to Him who was to fulfil all that they typified. Christ said: ‘Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil’ (Matthew 5.17).

Fifthly, all the prophecies which went before regarding Christ must be fulfilled. How often do we read in the account of His sufferings ‘that the Scripture might be fulfilled’ (e.g. John 17.12, 19.24,28). In Isaiah 55.11 it is said that God’s Word ‘shall not return unto me void’. The written Word did not return void as Christ the Incarnate Word fulfilled all that the prophets had spoken. Indeed, the Incarnate Word

Himself did not return to heaven void. No! He finished the work His Father gave Him to do (John 17.4). As He died He said ‘It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost’ (John 19.30).

Sixthly, Christ like the first Adam was a federal head. In the first Adam all of the future race died spiritually. Christ the last Adam came to give eternal life to His church. Such was and is the bond of sovereign grace between Christ and His church. As expressed in Ephesians 5.31–32, ‘For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife ... This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.’ If Christ is to have His bride with Him in glory, He must make provision for her, ensuring that she has the best robe without spot or blemish or any such thing, and that no sin defile her, for nothing that defiles can enter heaven (Revelation 21.27). And it is impossible that He could enter glory as her Mediator and Saviour without her ultimately being with Him. But without the cross there could be no crown for His bride. As one poem says, ‘Jesus hath loved me ... we two are so joined, He’ll not live in glory and leave me behind.’¹

No wonder as these precious truths were opened up to these wondering disciples their hearts burned within them for the Preacher. And when He revealed Himself in the breaking of bread they could not contain their joy, but must share these blessed tidings with others.

On the one hand we poor sinners should be ashamed of ourselves that Christ needed to suffer because of our ruined state. But on the other hand how thankful we should be that He was willing to go by the way of the cross to His crown, that we might one day enter His glory!

Endnote

1. William Walker, ‘O tell me no more of this world’s vain store,’ *Sweet Harmony* no. 59, www.ccel.org/ccel/walker/harmony/files/hymn/Sweet_Harmony.html.



Editorial Director's Report

by *Jonathan D. Arnold*

'Thy shoes *shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.*

Deuteronomy 33.25

The days in which we live are notable for the changes we are seeing both here in the UK and across the whole world. Nonetheless, through these means the Sovereign Almighty God continues to fulfil His purposes through difficulty and blessing, despair and joy. Some nations which once enjoyed the light of the Gospel are being shrouded in a cloud of atheistic darkness; there is widespread rejection of any dogmatic truth and contempt for the revealed Word of God.

In many parts of the world we see other religions use persecution to quell the spread of the Gospel. Yet in these places we hear of the Word of God being received with thanks; and the glorious Gospel of our great God is effectual in saving undeserving sinners. The Lord is giving glory and honour to His name in lands where there is not great freedom, and His Word is loved, recognised and valued by increasing numbers who see the Bible and the Saviour it declares as much more precious than fine gold. Yet His Word is being despised and rejected in lands where there is little or no persecution.

The Society has the distinct privilege of

distributing the Scriptures to numerous nations across the world: to Christians desiring a faithful copy of God's Word and to those whose fledgling interest in Christianity has caused them to seek out a portion of the Scriptures. It is a joy to do so and we recognise that this would be the work of God even if the Society were no longer to function. And although many of us in certain Western countries mourn the state of our nations and the Christian churches and organisations in our lands, we must not forget that the Lord continues to build His church in these countries and in other lands through His Word.

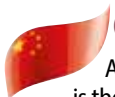
I reinforce this point here in this last *Quarterly Record* of 2020 to members and supporters of this Society whom I trust are engaged in prayer and desirous that God's Word be distributed among the nations of the world. We must heed the words of the apostle Paul, 'And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not' (Galatians 6.9). Such weariness may infect us if we have a dwindling church or despair of an increasingly atheistic society, but I hope through the reports we provide here you will realise that this is not so everywhere. As we heard at the recent AGM, in 2019 2.2 million Bibles and Scripture portions were granted

and 7.9 million sold (of which 7 million were under license to other publishers). This shows that the Lord's arm is not shortened that it cannot save nor has genuine demand for Scriptures ceased—indeed, if anything it has increased. May we be encouraged to 'cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days' (Ecclesiastes 11.1). There we leave it in the hands of almighty God that His Word might be used by Him for His glory and for the extension of His Kingdom among all nations.



Amharic

In recent days the completed translation of the Amharic New Testament has been received and is now being checked by our editorial team. It will be typeset along with the Book of Psalms once this is received, and Lord willing we will publish the New Testament and Psalms in 2021. We would earnestly seek your prayers for printing and distribution in Ethiopia. As supporters will know this is a project that has been laboured on for many years. There is a great demand for a faithful translation in this language and we trust that this will help meet that need.



Chinese

Another area of encouragement is the Chinese translation. The four Gospels have been translated and we intend to make these available along with Romans and Hebrews through the Society's website. God willing, this will be followed in twelve to eighteen months with the publication in print of the whole New Testament. We welcome feedback on the online edition of this work from Chinese speakers and would encourage our supporters to share this material with anyone they know.

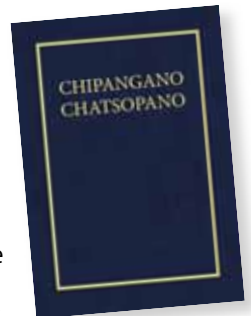
As noted in previous reports on the project there is a well-established version in China that has been a blessing to people through persecuted times and which is

understandably revered by those who use it. But this translation is from the English Revised Version. Thus it is based on the Critical Greek Text, and also has several other troubling issues. In producing our new translation, we need much wisdom as we seek to make it as accurate to the Hebrew and Greek texts as possible while maintaining the reverence of the earlier standard Chinese Bible. Please pray that, as we present our faithful edition, hearts and minds may be open to the need for diligent consideration of the preserved, inspired Word of God. I would urge any who wants to know more details about this to read 'The Biblical Translation Principles of the New Chinese Translation' available on the website¹ and inserted as an appendix in the Chinese/English bilingual version of the Gospel according to John.



Chichewa

By God's grace the printing of the Chichewa New Testament in Malawi is now complete, and copies are being distributed across the region to churches and organisations. We were not able to hold a thanksgiving service, but it is with great joy that after years of labour we have been able to publish this volume. One of the translators who is also a worker with an organisation (Free Grace Evangelistic Association) that we have granted the New Testaments to has sent the following report.



Chichewa New Testament

To me having the Chichewa New Testament is an answer to a prayer that has been prayed a long time ago. Since the time of my salvation that is when I noticed that the Chichewa version that we were using had some verses missing, had



Distributing the Chichewa New Testament

some portions of Scripture missing and also in some other ways we could find things in the English version that meant something else. Since then I opted for the AV.

Now having this Chichewa New Testament is a real blessing to us, and now I spend over half of my time reading this Chichewa New Testament. I had been reading the English version and translating it into Chichewa for the people. But now it is not that way; when I want to share from the New Testament I can use the Chichewa which has been faithfully translated in the same way that the AV was faithfully translated.

A few days ago we went to where we have an outreach and took a number of copies and it was a blessing to the church in Malawi. It's easy to

understand; we can read it in English and read it in Chichewa and it is the same. Now we're sending some to Zambia; the first lot went and now we're sending more next week. It's something we've needed for a long time. May God bless FGEA and TBS.

We have just scraped the surface of demand with 5,000 copies and we pray that we will be able to print more in the coming year. The translation team are already making significant progress on the Old Testament so we look forward to publishing the whole Bible in the coming years, if the Lord wills.



Bhojpuri and Hindi

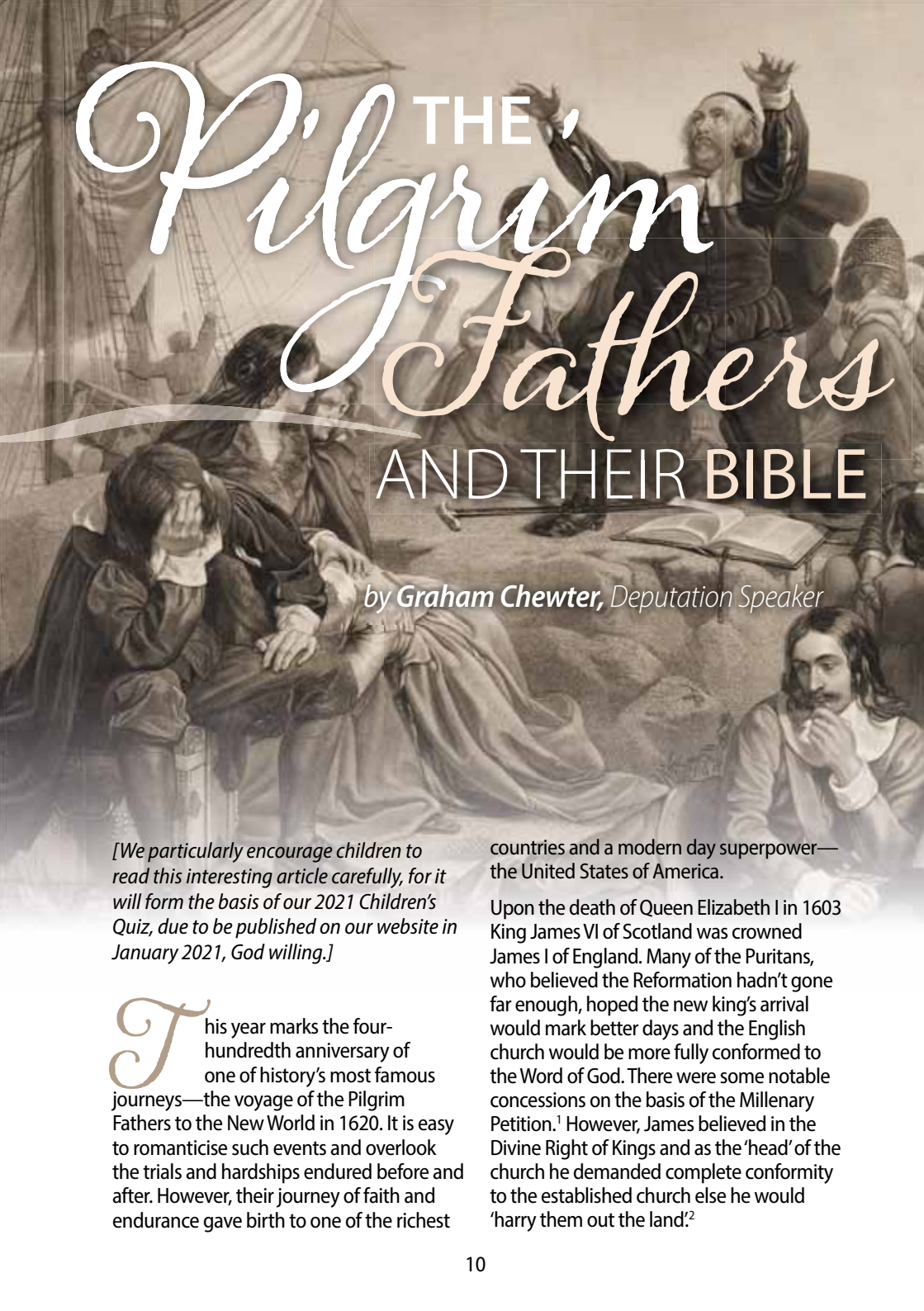
It has been a great encouragement that the request for those who can assist with translation work in Bhojpuri has yielded some who are suitable to help with this work. In the same manner I place before you the need for workers in the fledgling Hindi project. We seek native Hindi speakers who are in agreement with the Society's principles and who desire to assist with this translation work to be put in touch with us.

Thank you once again for your support this past year. Please remember our translators in prayer, that they may be kept safe and given all diligence. May the Lord hasten the day when we have copies of the Scriptures in the languages in which we labour to translate.

'Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.' (Ephesians 3.20–21)

Endnote

1. www.tbsbibles.org/page/TheBiblicalTranslationPrinciplesoftheNewChineseTranslation



THE Pilgrim Fathers AND THEIR BIBLE

by *Graham Chewter*, *Deputation Speaker*

[We particularly encourage children to read this interesting article carefully, for it will form the basis of our 2021 Children's Quiz, due to be published on our website in January 2021, God willing.]

This year marks the four-hundredth anniversary of one of history's most famous journeys—the voyage of the Pilgrim Fathers to the New World in 1620. It is easy to romanticise such events and overlook the trials and hardships endured before and after. However, their journey of faith and endurance gave birth to one of the richest

countries and a modern day superpower—the United States of America.

Upon the death of Queen Elizabeth I in 1603 King James VI of Scotland was crowned James I of England. Many of the Puritans, who believed the Reformation hadn't gone far enough, hoped the new king's arrival would mark better days and the English church would be more fully conformed to the Word of God. There were some notable concessions on the basis of the Millenary Petition.¹ However, James believed in the Divine Right of Kings and as the 'head' of the church he demanded complete conformity to the established church else he would 'harry them out the land'.²



*The Departure of the Pilgrim Fathers,
by Charles Lucy 1847*

Around the country, especially in London and the eastern counties of England, God-fearing men and women found they could not in good conscience conform. However, they were not permitted legally to meet outside the established church. Thus these 'separatists' secretly met for worship and, as they were accustomed to say, 'for the godly and comfortable exercise of prayer and hearing the Word of God'.

One of these Separatist groups met in the home of William Brewster (later regarded as 'the Father of New England') at Scrooby Manor, Nottinghamshire. The gathering was pastored by Richard Clyfton³ and John Robinson. Through their ministries

the people's hearts were touched with heavenly zeal for the truth.

Robinson had been educated at Cambridge and began his ministry at St Andrews, Norwich; he was later to describe the call to separate as a fire shut up in his bones. This led him with his people to make a covenant before God 'to walk in all God's ways made known, or to be made known unto them, according to their best endeavours, whatsoever it should cost them, the Lord assisting them'.⁴ Interestingly, sixteen-year-old William Bradford—in spite of the loud objections and scoffs of relatives and neighbours—joined them for worship. The two Williams—Brewster and Bradford—were later to play a key role in the settlement in New England both in a civic capacity and as ministers of the Gospel.

Scrooby Manor was now under close scrutiny, and government spies travelling the Great North Road soon learnt of the illegal meetings from local informers. Fines were imposed; some separatists were subjected to imprisonment and others even had their houses destroyed. Longing for freedom to worship and acting upon the Saviour's admonition that 'when they persecute you in one city, flee to another' (cf. Matthew 10.23), they set eyes upon the Netherlands and after much prayer agreed plans to depart England unnoticed.

In 1608 Robinson's members secretly packed their belongings and set out on foot



The Village of Scrooby, Nottinghamshire

for the sixty mile journey to the seaport town of Boston in Lincolnshire. Awaiting them was the sea captain who had agreed to smuggle them out of the country. But before they even arrived at Boston he had betrayed them to the authorities. They were searched, their money taken and their belongings ransacked. They were then put on display for the crowds and afterwards confined in cells in the Boston Guildhall. However, rather than deterring this group it aroused interest in their faith and the principles that motivated them.

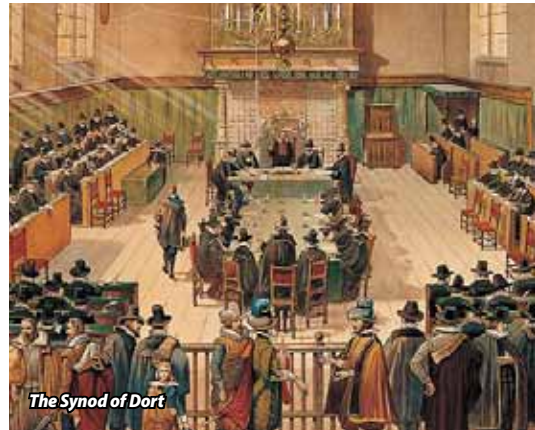
TO THE OLD WORLD

Distressingly a second attempt of departure also failed. But later successfully slipping away from Immingham, Lincolnshire, they settled briefly in the Dutch capital Amsterdam, proceeding some months later to the heavily populated city of Leiden. There they purchased a suitable building which provided upper-storey accommodation for their pastor, who could then freely minister to his people in the ground floor rooms. In time as many as three hundred gathered, delighting to hear the Word of truth from his lips. Years later William Bradford, looking back in affectionate remembrance of Robinson, could say,

It was hard to judge whether he delighted more in having such people, or they in having such a pastor. They continued many years in a comfortable condition, enjoying much sweet and delightful society and spiritual comfort together in the ways of God. So, as they grew in knowledge and other gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, and lived together in peace and love and holiness, many came from divers parts of England, so they grew a great congregation. If at any time

differences arose, as differences will arise, they were so met with and nipped in the head betimes, or otherwise so well composed that love, peace, and communion were still continued.⁵

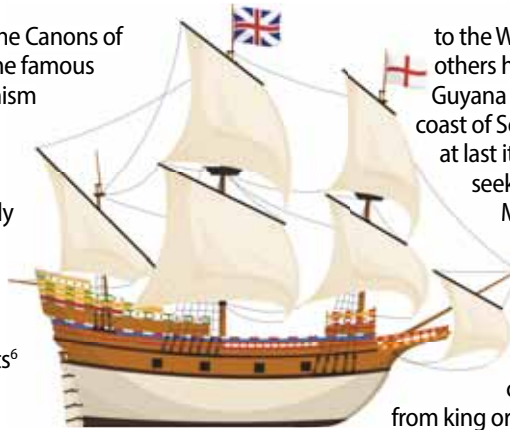
But all was not easy: they were strangers in a strange land and obliged to learn a new language. And as many formerly had only known agricultural labour, new skills had to be learnt equipping them to become wool combers, hatmakers, tailors and glovers, as well as masons, carpenters, cabinet makers and stocking weavers.



Now new concerns exercised their minds. Even here they were distressed by the King of England's attempts to interfere with their liberties. In addition, the city people showed scant regard for the sabbath, and to the grief of many some of their young people were drawn into sinful ways. Although they found fellowship among Dutch believers, the churches in the Netherlands were in a state of ferment.

The famous Synod of Dort (Dordrecht) sat in session for six months until May 1619. Such was the high regard for John Robinson he was invited to participate. The

Synod articulated the Canons of Dort (from which the famous five points of Calvinism were later derived), believing that the Calvinistic viewpoint accurately reflected the teaching of Holy Scripture and provided a rebuttal to the Remonstrants⁶ who had swerved from the truth.



The Mayflower

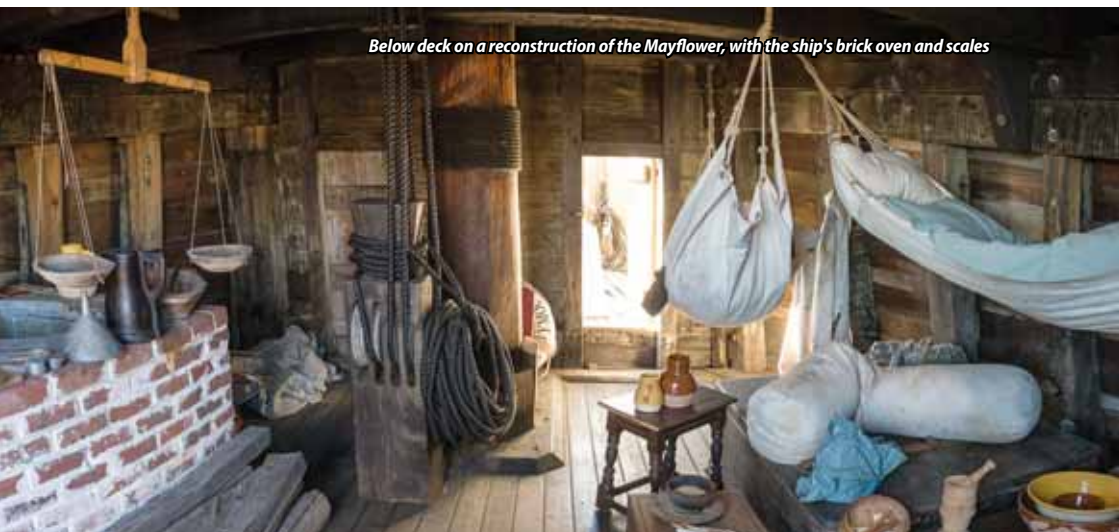
However, new dangers arose for the English Pilgrim Church. The emotion of theological controversy spilled into the streets. One day the sixty-three-year-old James Chilton⁷ and his daughter Isabella were mistaken for the resented Remonstrants because they failed to worship in any of the recognised churches. Being surrounded by twenty youths they were pelted with cobble stones. James was knocked to the ground and received a near fatal blow to the head.

Could it be the Lord had somewhere better for the English church, they wondered? With exercised hearts they prayed and fasted, earnestly seeking the Lord's guidance. Some were for starting anew

to the West Indies and others had thoughts of Guyana on the north-east coast of South America. But at last it was agreed to seek permission of His Majesty King James to establish a colony in the New World. No formal grant of liberty to worship could be obtained

from king or bishop but, reading between the lines, the Pilgrims concluded that if they conducted themselves peaceably the king would accommodate their going.

With the outbreak of another war between the Spanish and the Dutch in 1620 it was agreed that arrangements should be made at least for some to depart urgently and for others to follow later. William Bradford (to whom we owe an excellent firsthand account of events) states, 'So they left that goodly and pleasant city which had been their resting place near twelve years; but they knew they were pilgrims, and looked not much on those things, but lift up their eyes to the heavens, their dearest country, and quieted their spirits.'⁸



Below deck on a reconstruction of the Mayflower, with the ship's brick oven and scales



A LONG JOURNEY

With a fair wind they hoisted sail and crossed to Southampton in the *Speedwell*, a 60-ton pinnace which had been part of the English fleet sent to destroy the Spanish Armada thirty-two years earlier. They had purchased the ship intending to use it as a trading vessel once they had crossed the Atlantic. The *Mayflower* had preceded them to London carrying the English portion of the emigrants. Regrettably the *Speedwell* started to take on water and had to put into Dartmouth for repairs. Having set sail again the passengers were dismayed to discover another serious leak, obliging them all to wait at Plymouth for another repair. Was this sabotage they wondered? A few decided to remain in England; the rest reluctantly agreed to sell the *Speedwell* and some of their supplies, whilst those who were resolved to emigrate joined the *Mayflower* company, finally setting sail on 6 September 1620.

Summer was over. Now much later in the year than originally planned they were at greater risk from the elements. It has been reckoned that in those days their three-thousand-mile journey was as dangerous as flying to the moon! Terrific mid-Atlantic storms arose. On the merchant cargo ship the conditions were

not conducive to comfort, and for safety's sake the passengers had to remain in the cramped conditions below deck. One of their number, John Howland, ventured above deck and was immediately washed overboard. Desperately grasping a sail rope trailing in the water he was hauled back on board more dead than alive. Despite this ordeal he was to live on until 1673, rising to a high position both in the church and community. He was eventually the last man left of those that went over on the *Mayflower*. Today two and a half million people can claim descent from this godly man.

Such adverse conditions reduced their speed to an average of less than two miles per hour. The Pilgrims' original plan was to arrive in the New World by October but after sixty-six trying days land was sighted and on 11 November the anchor was dropped at Provincetown Harbour, Cape Cod (now in Massachusetts). Out of the one-hundred-and-two passengers one had died and one born—Oceanus Hopkins. Bradford tells us that 'they fell on their knees and blessed the God of heaven who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean and delivered them from all its perils and miseries'.⁹

TO NEW PLYMOUTH

The Pilgrims continued aboard ship for some time, as it provided shelter in the New World winter. Before leaving the Netherlands, John Robinson had wisely suggested the need for a written agreement. Being now in danger of mutiny from 'strangers'—probably hired labourers who were claiming an end of all authority—the leaders seeing the peril and seeking to quell the unrest called all the adult males into the ship's cabin. Here a solemn compact was drawn up which became the basis of the constitution for the

infant colony and the first American charter of self-government.

In y^e name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyall subjects of our dread soveraigne Lord, King James, by y^e grace of God, of Great Britaine, France and Ireland, King, defender of y^e faith, having undertaken for y^e glory of God and advancement of y^e Christian faith, and honour of King and country, a voyage to plant y^e first colonie in y^e Northern parts of Virginia, doe by these presents solemnly and mutually in y^e presence of God, and of one another, covenant and combine our selves together into a civill body politick, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of y^e ends aforesaid; and by virtue hearof to enact, constitute and frame such just and equall lawes, ordinances, acts, constitutions and offices from time to time, as shall be thought most meete and convenient for y^e generall good of y^e Colonie, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In Witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cap-Codd y^e 11 November, in y^e year of y^e raigne of our soveraigne Lord, King James of England, France and Ireland y^e eighteenth, and of Scotland y^e fiftie fourth, Ano. Dom, 1620.¹⁰

All forty-one men signed, indicating that each person would submit to majority rule. The first subscriber, John Carver, 'a man godly and well approved among them',¹¹ was appointed first colonial governor.

After Carver's much lamented death in 1621 William Bradford was elected governor. Reflecting in later days on their near-

desperate conditions he wrote that there were

no friends to welcome them, nor inns to entertain or refresh their weather-beaten bodies, no houses ... to repair to ... Whichever way they turned their eyes (save upwards to the heavens) they could have little solace ... For summer being done, all things stand upon them ... and the whole country, full of woods and thickets, represented a wild and savage hue. If they looked behind them, there was the mighty ocean ... What could now sustain them but the Spirit of God and His grace?¹²



In bitterly cold weather, so cold that their clothes froze upon them, an exploration party of thirty-four men set out in a shallop¹³ and a long boat to 'spy out' the land, seeking to determine the most suitable place to settle. Upon their return the *Mayflower* crossed the bay where the Pilgrims disembarked. Old James Chilton had very recently died; tradition has it that his daughter Mary was the first female to set foot on Plymouth Rock.

However their trials were not over. Although the work to build a meeting house and private dwellings began in real earnest, the unhealthy conditions they had been



The Colonnade in Plymouth, Massachusetts, that houses Plymouth Rock, the alleged spot on which the disembarking Pilgrims first stood.



subjected to on board ship began to take their toll. Over the next few months half of their number died, mainly through malnutrition. There was also fear of wolves, a plague of mosquitos and rattlesnakes, and the threat of massacre by members of the native Wampanoag tribe. Yet the Lord was with the Pilgrims as they sought to reproduce in the New World what was best in the Old.

Some of the tribe members were friendly, instructing the newcomers when and how to grow Indian corn and other crops using

fish as a fertiliser. With thankful hearts the Pilgrims praised the God of all grace for providing an excellent harvest, holding a day of thanksgiving in November 1621 at which the fifty Pilgrims were joined by ninety native people.

Here then were a people who loved God and His Word and had gone to great lengths to find freedom of worship.¹⁴ Believing in the priesthood of all believers every family had a copy of the Geneva Bible, which was read daily in family worship, fathers taking seriously their responsibility to minister to their own families. They had embraced the confidence of their pastor back in the Netherlands (who sadly died before being able to join them in the New World) that 'the Lord hath more truth yet to break forth out of His Holy Word'.¹⁵

THE BIBLE OF THE PILGRIMS

The Geneva translation was widely used by English Protestants. During Mary Tudor's cruel reign of 1553–1558 nearly one-thousand well-educated Protestant preachers fled from England to the Continent, some settling in the free city of Geneva—the 'holy city of the Alps' and the home of John Calvin. Here the Reformer encouraged his brother-in-law William Whittingham to unite with Miles Coverdale, John Knox and others to produce the first complete English Bible translated in its

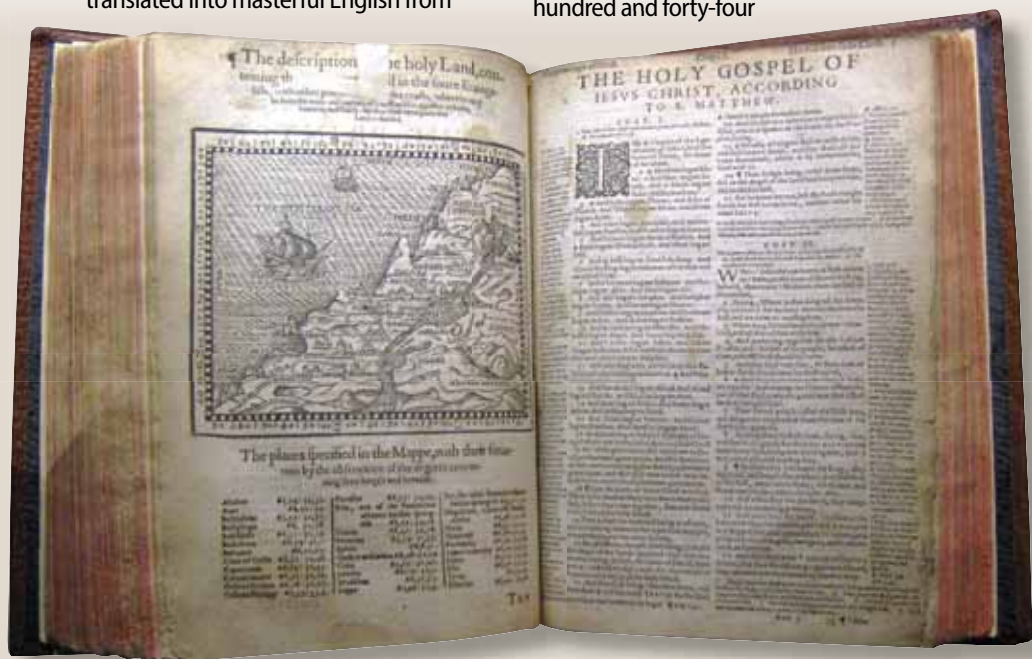


The first Thanksgiving.

entirety from the Biblical tongues, Hebrew and Greek.

About twenty years earlier William Tyndale was cruelly put to death at Vilvoorde having persevered despite numerous difficulties in translating and publishing the New Testament and translating part of the Old (which his friend Coverdale completed—not being familiar with Hebrew he translated into masterful English from

Genesis 3.7 (the Authorised Version has ‘aprons’), it was the first Bible printed in easy-to-read Roman type, and had not only chapter divisions but verses as well. It was supplemented with numerous marginal annotations, some carried forward from Tyndale, others supplied by Calvin and Beza and some from the translators themselves. This was a useful Bible, with maps and charts to help the diligent student. At least one hundred and forty-four



The Geneva Bible

Luther's German Bible). The Geneva scholars sought to make improvement on these great endeavours and provide a translation that conformed even more closely to the words in the Biblical languages in which the Holy Spirit had inspired the Word of God. The Geneva New Testament was issued in 1557 and the whole Bible rolled off the press just three years later.

It was an instant success. Nicknamed the 'Breeches Bible' for its translation of

printings were produced over the next several decades before it was eventually superseded by the increasingly popular Authorised Version of 1611. The language was terse and accurate but sometimes pedantic and lacking in musical flow, such as John 14.6, 'I am that way, and that trueth, and that life'. Being one of the many former translations diligently compared by the King James translators in 1604–1611 it nevertheless set a high standard of accuracy and faithfulness.¹⁶

Armed with their much-loved Geneva Bible each family would gather for public

worship whatever the weather. One visitor to Plymouth in 1627 penned the following description of the Pilgrims' place of worship and assembling:

Upon the hill they had a large square house [the Fort] . . . the lower part they use for their church, where they preach on Sundays and the usual holidays. They assemble by beat of a drum, each with his musket or firelock, in front of the captain's door; they have their cloaks on, and place themselves in order, three abreast and are led by a sergeant. Behind comes the Governor, in a long robe; beside him on the right hand comes the preacher with his cloak on, and on the left hand the captain with his side arms and cloak on, and with a small cane in his hand; and so they march in good order, and each sets his arms down near him. Thus they enter their place of worship, constantly on their guard night and day.¹⁷

Here they sat on rough-hewn log benches whilst Elder Brewster preached 'powerfully and profitably'. In the winter the women would bring their foot stoves—a receptacle in which hot coals were placed—providing at least a little

warmth. At times such were the conditions that the Communion bread froze and as it was broken dropped with a clatter onto the plates. Their services were some hours in length, and if any began to show signs of sleepiness they would be given a poke with the verger's wand.

One of the great ambitions of the Pilgrim Fathers in their bold adventure to the New World was the propagation of the Gospel, or least to be as a stepping-stone for others. This desire was indeed fulfilled. In 1631 John Eliot arrived from England with a deep, prayerful burden for the Native Americans, longing that they might be delivered from their superstitious darkness by the light of Christ. He learnt their language and gathered a church of converted tribesmen in 1651 and gave them the Bible in their own tongue. By 1687 there were no fewer than six churches of baptised Native Americans plus eighteen gatherings of those seeking instruction, ministered to by as many as twenty-four native preachers who helped four English missionaries.

In Britain Charles I, having succeeded his father King James in 1625, appointed the cruel and heartless Archbishop William Laud. Suspected by many of being a closet papist and seen as an evil genius he



relentlessly pursued those who could not in good conscience conform to practices of the Established Church. Many of those in the Puritan party emigrated and sought to establish a 'true English church'. In some cases whole churches emigrated, such as that of John Cotton, minister of the famous Boston Stump, St Botolph's, who thereby originated the city of Boston in what is now Massachusetts. Within twenty years some twenty-six-thousand immigrated, including in 1637 John Harvard, the original benefactor of Harvard University.

Many more, especially from the eastern counties of England, fled the Old World. It is of no surprise therefore that the first three counties in New England were named Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex. A brief glance at a map reveals numerous other place names carried over such as Haverhill, Braintree, Dedham, Cambridge and Chatham, as well as Chester, Leicester and Truro. Today as many as thirty-five million people worldwide claim descent from the Pilgrim Fathers. Among their descendants are six American Presidents (James Garfield, John Adams, Zachary Taylor, Franklin Roosevelt, George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush), George Eastman of Kodak fame, and of particular interest to Christians Fanny Crosby, the famous and prolific hymnwriter, author of 'Safe in the arms of Jesus' and 'Pass me not, O gracious Saviour'.

Over the years the light of the Gospel has spread to all parts of America, and from that vast country to all parts of the globe. We must let the highly esteemed William Bradford, Plymouth Governor from 1621 until his death in 1657, have the last word:

As one small candle may light a thousand, so the light here kindled hath shone unto many, yea in some sort to our whole nation; let the glorious name of Jehovah have all the praise.¹⁸

Endnotes

1. The list of Puritan requests given to King James in 1603.
2. Neil A. Hamilton, *Rebels and Renegades: A Chronology of Social and Political Dissent in the United States* (New York: Moschovitis Group, Inc., 2002), p. 10.
3. He was deprived of his living at Babworth, Nottinghamshire because of his nonconformist views.
4. Stephen Tomkins, *The Journey to the Mayflower* (Cambridge, England: Pegasus Books, 2020), p. 258.
5. Henry Johnson, *From Scrooby to Plymouth Rock* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1896), p. 39.
6. Remonstrants were Dutch Reformed Church followers of the theology of Arminius.
7. My wife's paternal grandmother was a Chilton before she married. There is a strong family tradition that she descended from James Chilton's son (also James) who appears to have remained in England.
8. "The Mayflower", *Eastman: the First Encounter*, easthamthefirstencounter.org/the-mayflower, accessed 12 October 2020.
9. Bradford, *History of the Plymouth Plantation* (1620-1647), www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/bdorsey1/41docs/14-bra.html.
10. "Mayflower Compact", michmayflower.org/compact.htm, accessed 12 October 2020.
11. Bradford, excerpts from *History of Plymouth Plantation, 1620*, "United States History 1", Lumen, courses. lumenlearning.com/ushistory10s/chapter/primary-source-bradford-history-of-plymouth-plantation-1620, accessed 12 October 2020.
12. "Excerpts from William Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation", sageamericanhistory.net/colonial/docs/bradford.htm, accessed 12 October 2020.
13. A small sail boat used mainly for coastal fishing.
14. Most of those on the *Mayflower* had the Geneva Bible.
15. "King James, the Puritans, and the Colonizing of America", archive.openheaven.com/template/rtfield/popups/history/king_james_puritans_colonizing_america.htm, accessed 12 October 2020.
16. Interestingly, while most of the Pilgrims carried the Geneva, John Alden, the ship's carpenter on the *Mayflower*, had brought his brand new 1620 edition of the King James Bible with him. This Bible is now on display in the Pilgrim Hall Museum, Massachusetts.
17. Emma C. Brewster Jones, *The Brewster Genealogy* (New York, NY, USA: The Grafton Press, 1908), 1.ii.
18. "Illuminate 2019 was inspired by William Bradford's immortal words", *1620-2020 Mayflower 400*, www.mayflower400uk.org/education/who-were-the-pilgrims/2019/november/illuminate-2019-was-inspired-by-william-bradford-immortal-words, accessed 12 October 2020.



Product News

Greetings Cards

The Society is pleased to announce publication of our new set of greetings cards. These cards have attractive full-colour images with Scripture verses from the Authorised Version appropriate for all occasions. Blank inside for personal message, complete with envelopes.

Page size: 144 x 144mm (5.7" x 5.7")

Prices for pack of 6 single title: CFR1-CFR6

UK £3.00 | AUS \$5.00 | CAN \$4.00 | NZ \$4.75 | USA \$3.00

Prices for pack of 6, one of each title: CFRSET

UK £3.00 | AUS \$5.00 | CAN \$4.00 | NZ \$4.75 | USA \$3.00

front

front



*The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not want.*

Psalms 23.1



*Thanks be unto God for his
unspeakable gift.*

2 Corinthians 9.15



*The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall not want. He maketh me
to lie down in green pastures:
he leadeth me beside the still
waters. He refresheth my soul:
he leadeth me in the paths of
righteousness for his name's
sake. Yea, though I walk
through the valley of the
shadow of death, I will fear no
evil: for thou art with me;
thou art with me, and thou art
with me.*

Psalms 23.1-8



THE SOCIETY OF THE CROSS
AND THE RESURRECTION
111 Great Park Road
London NW10 7JH
020 8996 1111
www.societyofthecross.org



*And to show praise for you,
which keep alive your life for the
everlasting glory of God in you.
Thanks be unto God for his
unspeakable gift.*

2 Corinthians 9.14-15

*Every good gift and every
perfect gift is from above,
and cometh down from the
Father of light, with whom is
no variableness, neither shadow
of turning. Can he ever will
decease to us with the word of
truth, that we should be a kind
of witnesses of his concern.*

James 1.17-18



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144

back

back



Thanks be unto God for his
unspeakable gift.

2 Corinthians 9:15

Product Code: **CFR1**



For unto you is born this day in
the city of David a Saviour, which is
Christ the Lord.

Luke 2:11

Product Code: **CFR2**



The LORD is my shephend;
I shall not want.

Psalms 23:1

Product Code: **CFR3**



I love them that love me; and those
that seek me early shall find me,

Proverbs 8:17

Product Code: **CFR4**



God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble,

Psalms 46:1

Product Code: **CFR5**



This is the day which
the LORD hath made; we will
rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalms 118:24

Product Code: **CFR6**

Catalan

Introduction

Catalan is a language spoken by seven million people in Andorra, Catalonia (where it is the official language), the Balearic Islands, Valencia, and Northern Catalonia (which is under the administration of France). Historically Roman Catholicism prevailed in these regions, but secularism is now dominant.

During the twentieth century Catalan was forbidden and excluded by the Rivera dictatorship (1923–1931). Its use was revived and given official status

again during the Second Spanish Republic (1931–1939), but during the fascist Franco regime (1939–1977) the use of Catalan was again banned in schools and in public administration. Since the Spanish transition to democracy (1977–1982) Catalan has been recognised as an official language and has gained respect. As a result of the complex history of Catalan there has been varied receptiveness to the Catalan Bible.

The TBS Catalan Bible Translation

The TBS Catalan Bible project began in 1977 as the desire of a young Catalan student to have a copy of the Bible in his own language. The Catalan Bible he had at the time had many failings, including numerous unhelpful study notes. In 1979 whilst studying Biblical Greek he began to prepare an interlinear translation of the Greek into Catalan. By 1982 he had completed his initial draft of the Gospel according to John, and in 1984 he first made contact with the Society.

In 1987 he moved to the UK with his wife so that he could engage in more helpful studies whilst translating the New Testament full time. During this time a revision session was held in London, with the Society taking on administration of the work. That entailed ensuring that the text was translated in accordance with the TBS Greek Received Text using the principle of formal equivalence. By 1989 the Gospel according to John had been published.



Barcelona

A Reading and Revision Committee was established in 1990 with the task of checking the ongoing draft New Testament translation. The New Testament was finally completed and accepted by the Society, and printed in 1999. Work moved on to the Old Testament, with a smaller team comprising the translator and a reviser/ secretary, and the whole Bible was published in 2009.

Following its publication the Catalan Bible has been distributed as widely as possible

in Catalonia. Much distribution has been done under the name of 'Cristians Catalans', a charity set up by the family of the translator using funds for distribution. In 2011 a separate TBS distribution warehouse was set up in Cardedeu-Terassa, from where a campaign was conducted to place a Bible in every library and school in Catalonia.

It is with gratitude to the Lord that this work was accomplished, and we pray that His Word in Catalan will continue to bless the people who speak this language.

Bibles

CATBLP/ABG large print, burgundy vinyl covered hardback with references

ISBN: 978 1 86228 359 6

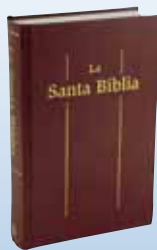
page size: 215 x 136mm (8.5" x 5.4")

thickness 34mm (1.3")

print size: 9.8 pts

UK £11.75 | Aus \$23.15 | Can \$18.75

NZ \$22.00 | USA \$14.00



CATB/FBG medium, burgundy vinyl cover with references

ISBN: 978 1 86228 377 0

page size: 173 x 115mm (6.8" x 4.5")

thickness 25mm (1")

print size: 7.8 pts

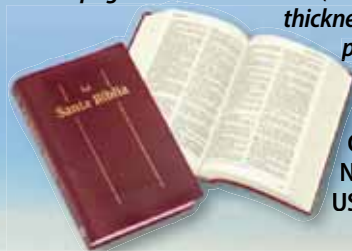
UK £10.50

Aus \$20.65

Can \$16.00

NZ \$20.00

USA \$13.00



Gospel

CATJN Gospel according to John

ISBN: 978 1 86228 378 7

page size: 184 x 128mm (7.3" x 5")

print size: 9 pts

UK £0.85 | Aus \$1.65

Can \$1.25 | NZ \$1.65

USA \$0.80



Calendar

CATWLC21 Words of Life Calendar

Twelve-page calendar with attractive photographs and Scripture texts per month

page size: 297 x 210mm (11.7" x 8.3")

UK £0.70 | Aus \$1.15

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The Treasury

From **David J. Broome**
Resources Director

We read in 2 Timothy 3.16 that 'All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.' We do well, then, to observe the small details given in God's Holy Word as well as the great doctrines. For example, the seaside is mentioned eight times, three times in the Old Testament and five times in the New. The seaside was a favourite and most suitable setting for our Lord when He taught the people, often from a boat (Matthew 13.1; Mark 2.13, 4.1). It was the location of Simon the tanner's home in Joppa, the scene of Peter's trance, where he was staying when Cornelius sent for him under God's direction to come to Caesarea to explain his own vision (Acts 10.6, 10.22).

Have we ever stood on the seashore and observed some of the profound spiritual truths illustrated for us there? We may see the greatness, majesty and power of our God as expressed in Jeremiah 5.22, 'fear ye not me? saith the LORD: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?' We read in

Isaiah 57.20, 'But the wicked *are* like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt,' giving us a sad picture of the natural state of unregenerate man, but also of the old nature that still dwells in the believer (cf. Romans 7.14–25), even though his new nature cannot sin (1 John 3.6, 9). But have we also seen by faith the remedy for sin set forth, as we stood with the sea washing over our feet, thinking of Jesus's own words to His disciples—'He that is washed needeth not save to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit' (John 13.10)? Or perhaps we have meditated on Micah 7.19—'thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea'?

Again, what a wonderful sight it is to stand on the shoreline and see a complete rainbow from end to end, reminding us of God's covenant with the earth (Genesis 9.12–17). But more particularly we may think of the everlasting covenant engagements of the Trinity (c.f. 2 Samuel 23.5), and of Christ seated on the throne of grace beneath the rainbow (Revelation 4.3), interceding on behalf of His people and receiving their adoration. Or perhaps we have looked out over the vast deep ocean and seen by faith a little of what Paul desired for the Ephesians; that they

‘may be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge ...’ (Ephesians 3.18–19)?

We say these things because, as a Bible society, we do not merely rejoice in the numbers of Scriptures sent forth although that can be a great encouragement as the Lord opens doors of opportunity. Rather, we desire that the substance of such rich blessings may be received by those who obtain the Scriptures that we publish, both to the unconverted for the first time and also by way of renewal to those who may have walked many years in the Lord’s ways. This is first and foremost a spiritual work and we seek spiritual fruit; we covet your earnest prayers that the Society’s objective may continue to be fulfilled—‘to promote the Glory of God and the salvation of men, by circulating, both at home and abroad, in dependence on the Divine blessing, the HOLY SCRIPTURES’.

But there are also many practical aspects to the delivery of the Society’s objective. It feels as if 2020 has been dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown which has caused major changes to the way that the Society has operated from March 2020, with our London head office essentially closed from 18 March to mid-July. However, through the great Lord’s mercy the Society’s London operations have continued largely unhindered (apart from the continued closure of our Showroom), and this despite most of our staff having to work from home and/or some being on furlough for periods of time. We are thankful that our Warehouse could remain open throughout the lockdown period; and although Deputation meetings have been sparse since March 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions, some have gone ahead online, which has been an encouragement. We

come in with David in Psalm 109.27—‘that they may know that this *is* thy hand; *that* thou, LORD, hast done it’.

Additionally, we are thankful that voluntary income levels have held up well during 2020: we are very grateful to all our members, supporters and friends for all their financial support to this vital work, particularly at this challenging time. We thank the Lord for all who support us financially, as we seek Him for future financial provision, knowing that He will bless you (Matthew 6.4). Not unexpectedly, the Society’s sales have been down somewhat on normal expectations this year, but we have been very encouraged by several reports of private individuals and churches/assemblies placing Bibles and New Testaments outside their premises for those passing by to take freely during the lockdown period; in the providence of God many people have done so.

The project for the replacement of the Society’s financial system with a new one called Xledger has been a big focus since April 2020. God willing, the new system will be transformational for the Society’s financial processes and reporting; the system went live in London on 1 October 2020 and we hope to roll it out to most of our overseas branches during 2021. In due course it will allow us to achieve a long-held ambition: to be able to analyse and report on our costs across our main areas of activity (Translating, Publishing, Distributing and Upholding & Promoting).

The Strategic Review work has continued during 2020, although the amount of Senior Management time taken out by Covid-19 and the Xledger Project has slowed the pace considerably. We are currently working on the Staffing Review, including Senior Management arrangements; we hope to say more

publicly early in 2021. The Society's draft Financial Plan 2021–2025 will be reviewed and updated over the coming weeks, if the Lord will, as part of our 2021 Budget preparations.

We give thanks for the Lord's help and overruling with our recent AGM, which for the first time was run online from William Tyndale House with just a handful of members physically present due to the Covid-19 restrictions, though many more were present online. We would thank all who attended, not only from the UK but from around the world, and we would welcome any constructive feedback relating to any improvements that could be made if we ever had to run the AGM in this way again (we pray that it will not be necessary).

We were deeply shocked to hear of the sudden death of our dear brother, the

Society's former Assistant General Secretary (later Operations Director), Mr David Larlham, following a heart attack on 14 July 2020. Remarkably, David had survived serious illness with Covid-19, having had a spell in hospital at the start of the pandemic in London. When we last spoke to him some weeks later he seemed renewed in zeal for his Saviour's work on earth, but we believe the Lord had prepared greater things for him (John 17.24). David only fully retired from the Society in April 2018, having served in various capacities for almost twenty years; we thank the Lord for David's dedicated service over so many years and extend our heartfelt sympathies to Monica and the family.

'Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have *free* course, and be glorified, even as *it is* with you ...' (2 Thessalonians 3.1).



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2021 ARE NOW DUE.

We are very grateful to all those who have identified with us this year by being members of the Society, and we now take this opportunity to invite you to renew membership for 2021.

We also warmly invite all our supporters and friends to become members of the Society. As a member you can identify more closely with the work and witness of the Society, and your annual subscription fee helps support the Society in our day-to-day activities as we seek to translate, publish and distribute the Scriptures.

Membership, which runs from January to December and is renewable annually, can be taken out online at www.tbsbibles.org/membership. Alternatively, the enclosed form can be completed and returned directly to any of the TBS addresses given in the back of the *Quarterly Record* or to your local auxiliary secretary.

To all who have faithfully supported us through membership, and to those who will take this opportunity to join, we and those around the world who have received faithful copies of the Scriptures are deeply thankful.

David Larlham



Friends of the Trinitarian Bible Society will be saddened to hear of the sudden death of David Larlham, our esteemed brother in Christ and former colleague, on Tuesday 14 July 2020 following a heart attack. But while we mourn we also rejoice that he is now with Christ, which is far better.

David was born on 24 November 1948. As a young man in 1966 David came under initial conviction of sin while attending an evangelistic meeting; he soon went on to taste the riches of God's grace through conversion. For most of his Christian life he served God at Camberwell Evangelical Church in South London, being a part of its inauguration in 1972 and in attendance on the last Lord's Day before his death. He became known for his earnest evangelistic outreach and hardworking ethos, which made him a key part of the church as he helped administrate, evangelise, and preach to the glory of God.

Before David came to TBS he spent thirty-two years in banking, much of that time in senior positions. He retired from the bank and served the Lord for the last twenty years of his working life at TBS. Much of that time he held senior roles, spending some years as the Assistant General Secretary and then as Operations Director. He was instrumental in facilitating the distribution and translation of the Scriptures for people around the world. His superb attention to detail and his ability to find mistakes others had missed often came in useful, particularly in proofreading this magazine!

David was affectionately referred to recently as Mr Greatheart (from Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*), a valiant labourer for the Lord. He was a zealous servant of God and a true Christian professional.

We will miss David's zeal for God's cause; it has been said he could turn any conversation into an opportunity to spread the Gospel. He always had time for other people, whether at church or TBS, in shops or on the street. Throughout his retirement he remained a strong and abiding proponent of the principles of TBS. He was a dear Christian, a husband, father, brother and grandfather. He is survived by his wife Monica, three children (Elizabeth, John, and Timothy) and six grandchildren.



AN OPEN DOOR: God's Word to CUBA

By William Greendyk

General Secretary, TBS (USA)

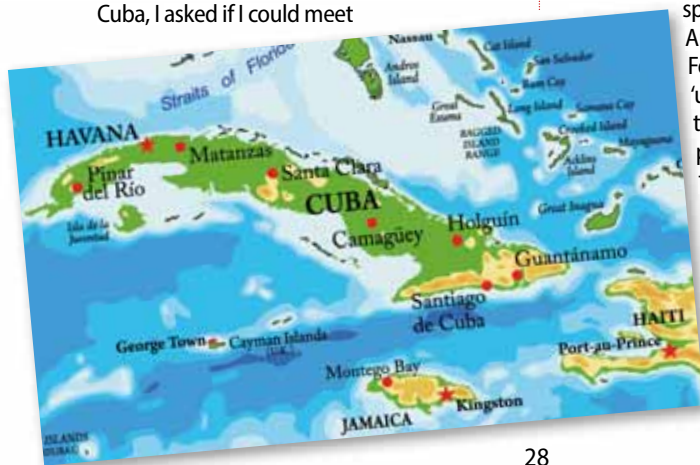
It was a hot, humid September day; the weather felt more like that of a tropical island than the United States. After finishing the business for which I had visited the offices of a Bible printing ministry located in the midwestern part of the US, I stood up to shake hands with my kind host, a devout man who had dedicated much of his life to printing Bibles. Just then I heard someone speaking Spanish in the distance. Having worked in different Spanish ministries over many years my curiosity got the best of me, and I mentioned to my host that I heard Spanish being spoken. The man's tall frame stiffened a bit and he responded casually, 'Oh, those are the Cuban pastors who've arrived', as he walked me to the open door of his office to bid me farewell. Filled with intrigue upon hearing that the Spanish-speakers were from Cuba, I asked if I could meet

them, and I wondered why my host seemed uncomfortable with my request. 'We have a lot to do today, maybe some other time,' was his polite but firm reply. Something about the way he responded, combined with a prescient sense of urgency that I would only understand later, caused me to plead with him, 'May I just greet the Cuban pastors and then be on my way?' The dear man looked me intensely in the eyes for a long moment and he assented. 'Alright, let's go, then'.

A long-held desire

My desire to meet these men from Cuba was rooted in far more than mere curiosity. Since beginning my work at TBS in 2006 and as coordinator of the Society's Spanish Bible revision project, I had visited every Spanish-

speaking country in Latin America—except for Cuba. For me, Cuba had always been 'unreachable' in every sense of the word. US citizens are not permitted to visit Cuba unless they receive a special visa that is difficult to obtain, and I knew several well-known American pastors who had applied for and been denied a religious visa. Occasionally when I flew out of Miami towards some other Latin American destination, I



would look down at the lush, green island just ninety miles south of Florida and think, 'There lies the only Spanish-speaking country where I'll never be able to speak about God's Word, faithful Bible translation principles and the Spanish Bible revision we are undertaking.'

Over the years we at TBS (USA) had shipped boxes of the Spanish Gospel according to John to Cuba only to have them returned as undeliverable. Later we had tried shipping calendars and other Spanish materials via Canada, England, the Netherlands and Bolivia, but the shipments were always returned. After doing some investigation online and with other ministries I learned that books could only be shipped to Cuba one at a time—one package, one book. In 2009 when we began sending Greek New Testaments to interested pastors and seminary students we received many handwritten letters from Cuba requesting them. Some of the letters had taken six months to reach us. We did ship several individual Greek New Testaments to Cuba, but most of those packages were also returned and marked 'undeliverable'. We only knew of a handful of cases in which the New Testaments were actually received; months later we had gotten letters of thanks from the few pastors who had received them.

In my travels to other Spanish-speaking countries nearby, I had often heard about the growing hunger for God's Word in Cuba. However, apart from a few packages of calendars or single copies of the Spanish New Testament that the Society managed to get into the country, Cuba was simply not accessible to us. A few friends of the Society from Canada would occasionally visit the island and they faithfully carried TBS Spanish materials in their luggage for us: posters, calendars and Gospels. There was no way to communicate with anyone in Cuba to arrange for printing there; furthermore, it was and still is forbidden to print Bibles or Bible materials in the country, or even to import them on a private basis. Cuba's government

has appointed a body of men to what is called the 'Religious Council', which is exclusively responsible for the few shipments of Bibles that are sent to Cuba in collaboration with United Bible Societies. From the many letters I had received from Cuban pastors it was evident that most people, and even many pastors, did not have their own Bible in this impoverished and isolated country.

A providential meeting

My host and I walked down the corridor to the room where two Cuban pastors were speaking with an American who spoke Spanish, and I introduced myself. The young pastors told me they had left Cuba early that morning and had just arrived at the printer. When I mentioned that I worked for Trinitarian Bible Society their eyes lit up, and to my surprise they told me that they knew about the Society and had received TBS Spanish posters and calendars from Canadian visitors in recent years. As my host prepared to lead me out of



Copies of the Spanish Gospel according to John awaiting shipment

the room the men asked if they could speak with me more about my work. I interpreted their request for my host but I doubted that this would be possible since he and I had agreed that I would only be permitted to greet these men. My host looked at his watch—it was exactly twelve o'clock noon. I could hardly believe my ears when he replied, 'Well then, it's noon and these men must be



Looking across Havana

hungry. Why don't we all go for lunch?' I didn't need a second invitation.

What followed during our remarkable lunch meeting and what has taken place since then can only be seen as the providence of Almighty God. How wonderfully the Lord brings people together to carry out His divine purposes! How insignificant we are in ourselves and yet how blessed we are to be used in some small way to bring God's Word to the most isolated regions of the world! Although I had discounted Cuba as being unreachable to me, with God all things are possible. I was living out the truth of Isaiah 55.8: 'For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD'.

The Cuban brethren explained to me how over a period of several years they had been making brief trips to the USA, carrying back with them each time the different parts and machinery of a rudimentary printing press with the goal of printing Christian literature in Cuba. Since virtually every aspect of life in Cuba is controlled and monitored by the country's government it would have been impossible for these men to import a printing press. Determined to print sound literature they had been able to bring in all of the necessary equipment over the course of many trips.

As mentioned, Cuba's government has established an official Religious Council. This body is responsible for deciding which

Bibles and other religious literature can be distributed in Cuba (very little indeed!), as well as deciding to whom special religious visas can be granted—and particularly to anyone traveling from the USA since the country has not had formal diplomatic relations with Cuba since the early 1960s.

I then told the men in more detail about my work with TBS, particularly regarding the revision being carried out of the Spanish Reina-Valera Bible. The men showed much interest. I mentioned that we had printed the Gospel according to John, the Spanish New Testament with Psalms and Proverbs, and other Scripture items in Spanish, and how we had been able to distribute these items freely in every Spanish-speaking country except Cuba. Further we had been praying that someday the Lord would open a providential door to allow us to distribute in Cuba as well. I saw tears forming in the eyes of the Cuban pastors, and one of the men told me with an emotion-filled voice that they had often been praying to be able to print Scriptures and Scripture items in Cuba, but the few Bibles or Scripture items in Cuba are those which are occasionally donated by UBS under the auspices of the Religious Council. He told me that their printer was capable of producing Gospels, Scripture calendars and leaflets, and even the entire New Testament on plain bond paper. Blinking away tears, he said to me, 'You have prayed to be able to distribute the Scriptures in Cuba, and we have prayed that God would lead us to someone who could

finance the printing and distribution of God's Word. This is an amazing providence of God! Would you allow us to print for you in Cuba?'

I agreed entirely that this was clearly an open door in God's providence and assured my Cuban brother that the Society would be happy to print Scripture items in Cuba. We shared our contact details and he promised to send me an email with a formal printing offer. After praying together in the restaurant we parted ways with the typical Latin American-style hug, and I began my return trip to Grand Rapids. The five-hour drive provided much time for me to reflect upon the remarkable events of the day. I wondered to myself if our Spanish promotional budget had sufficient funds to print the Gospel according to John and other Scripture items in Cuba, but I trusted that the Lord would provide. I also allowed myself to wonder if perhaps someday the Lord might open the providential door even wider and allow me to present the work of the Society to pastors in Cuba. With God all things are possible!

Opening doors

When I arrived home there was an email from one of the Cuban pastors awaiting me, expressing how thankful he was to the Lord for the way in which we had providentially met. He also wished to inform me that he was able to extend an open invitation for me to visit Cuba on behalf of the Society in order to inform Cuban pastors about our Spanish Bible revision. This was the culmination of a day in which I had seen the Lord's hand opening virtually every previously closed door to Cuba.

The following day I shared this remarkable story with the office staff and my colleagues about the Spanish Bible revision project. We acknowledged the Lord's goodness and prayed that He would enable us to bring His Word to the isolated Cuban island in the near future. Later that same day one of the office staff informed me that we had just received a substantial donation from a dear friend and supporter of the Society. This brother regularly donated to the Society with the request that

his gifts be used where needed most. This time, however, he requested that I call him to discuss his donation. When I called him he



shared with me that he had recently attended a presentation at a local church where a pastor from Cuba had shown how the Lord was working in that country, planting a desire in the hearts of the Cuban people for the Word of God. The generous supporter on the phone expressed the desire that this specific donation be earmarked for 'Scriptures to Cuba'. It was difficult for me to contain my emotion as I witnessed the Lord providing just what we had prayed for that day!

A subsequent article will relate how the Lord wonderfully opened the next and final door in His providence, allowing me to travel to Cuba and present the work of the Society from one end of the island to the other as well as to visit the clandestine printing press. During events such as these one feels humbled and extraordinarily grateful to the Lord for fulfilling His blessed promise to '... do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think' (Ephesians 3.20). We conclude this portion of the story of how the Lord opened the door to Cuba with the words of the next verse: 'unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen' (v. 21).



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 a prison in England

Firstly, I should like to acknowledge safe delivery of 269 copies of 'Words of Life' 2021 calendars. I have duly signed the grant receipt notice which is enclosed. Secondly, I would also like to express my sincere thanks for your generous donation. Your calendars not only brighten up the cells of many here, but the words of Scripture contained therein also provide inspiration and hope. The calendar is distributed individually to our men at Christmas and on admission to the prison. We never fail to make the men aware that these are gifted to us by your organisation and they are overwhelmed that they have not been forgotten. Thank you for continuing to support our ministry throughout the year and we pray God's blessing upon you and your loved ones in what has been a very difficult year. Every blessing.

From a mission in London

Thank you for the calendars in various languages. I shall leave them out for Team Day—a day where all the missionaries come to HQ. They will then return back

to their respective communities and use them for evangelism and in relationships that they have built over time; some of whom speak little English but are learning. Many missionaries have appreciated this tool in the past, especially when they cannot afford much. God bless your ministry as you continue to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

From Edinburgh, Scotland

A brief bit of distribution news as a result of one of the 10,000 copies of Gospel according to John (Edinburgh edition) purchased and distributed by the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. 'Thank you for the delivery this morning, via Royal Mail, of John's Gospel. Apart from the intrinsic value of reading it, the delivery to all the neighbours will be a useful conversation point. My wife and I have said for over sixty years that John's Gospel is our favourite Book in the Bible, and it is good to see it made so widely available.'



From Moldova

Regarding our Calendar distribution for 2020. First of all I just want to thank you for supporting the work of the Lord in the Republic of Moldova through TBS

calendars. I have received 9,000 calendars this year which was a real blessing not only for Moldova but Ukraine as well. This year the brothers from Chisinau had an outreach with the Gospel and about 3,000 were distributed in the capital. These were distributed in many (around 30) villages by the local brethren. In Cahul all the universities and colleges have received the calendars as well the prison in Leova. We had people contacting us and it was a joy to know that people are still interested in God's Word. May the Lord bless you.



From Romania

Greetings from Romania! I hope it's not too late to bring you and your organization our thanks for the help you gave us in our 2019 winter mission season. We received the 2020 Romanian calendars in time in order to distribute them during our Evangelical Mission done in many locations. As you know, our



Distributing Romanian calendars

supply was not based on our need, it was a lot less, but praise the Lord, we've got what we got and we spread the Word of God with thanks. I attach a picture and please advise us how to send the request for the 2021 Romanian Calendars.



Africa



From Nigeria

I have today received my grant Bibles from your reputable outfits. I express my deepest gratitude for your consideration in support of my projects of Bible distribution



to the Christian world. I on behalf of my congregation thank you immensely. I'm so sorry for the delay in sending you my reports on distribution of the Bibles plus the photo of the recipients. I had my Bibles at the time we were in lockdown, when churches, schools and many organizations, etc., were closed or in shutdown, so I couldn't distribute or give out any Bibles amid the pandemic of Covid-19. Now restrictions and bans are eased so I can go ahead with my distribution. I promise to give my reports soon as possible. Thanks so much for your patience.



From Zambia

Hello TBS. Here is a pastor from Lusaka, Zambia. I am reading your book on 'Bible versions do they matter' and I am instructed. Please continue publishing this kind of book because it helps the body of Christ.



From Uganda

Greetings through the Almighty God. I wish you love, power, glory in this year. May God continue to grant you all you need for the ministry of Christ.



New Bibles in Uganda

Below is the report of the materials you sent to me in early 2020, and I kindly ask for more 50 Bibles and 150 New Testaments as many people have come to Christ and they need to be helped to grow in Christ. We gave over 13 Bibles to those who are teaching the 13 Muslims who confessed Christ (got saved) last year 2019 when we had a door to door evangelism. In Mafudu over 130 people got saved as they were being taught more about Christ; we had to put into consideration to give particularly to the ones who changed from Islam to Christianity to read the Word of God. Pray for them because they are always beaten by the others in the community. Bible was given to a health worker; she uses it when she has gone to visit the sick on the ward. She gives medicine treatment but encourages them that they should be saved. We thank God that 25 from her ministry this year confessed Christ. We have given to the youth leader who helps the youth in one of the schools and many have become saved

in this school. One from Mbale works with the communities so he teaches them and shares the word of God too. This picture is of those who got the Scriptures; they are using them well and the calendars are making many to read the Bible every day in offices, homes, prisons, churches, schools, hospitals, and individuals. You have created culture of reading the Bible in the people of Uganda, and thereafter they too go and teach others the word of God. Pray for them to grow and stand firm in the Lord. Don't get tired, continue to pray for me and support me for the ministry of Christ.



From Ghana

Kindly grant Hebrew/Greek Bibles and English Bibles. Thanks for your yearly Bible grant. I send to you greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I hope and pray that all would be well with you and your entire family. The Lord as usual has blessed this year through free Bibles and Golden Thoughts Calendars distribution work in Ghana and Burkina-Faso. All the beneficiaries of these free Bibles and Golden Thoughts Calendars expressed their profound gratitude and thanks to you and to all the staff and Management Board of the Trinitarian Bible Society in general. I took delivery of all the consignment. Every box was intact with its contents. I was very happy to receive them very early enough to transport some to the north for the annual believer's conference before Christmas. Afterward, before my departure to the north I left two boxes of the French Golden Thoughts Calendars to be sent to Togo and Ivory-Coast. Our conference started on 26 December. The theme of the Conference was 'Biblical Prayer and Worship'. The conference was very well attended. The attendance was over two thousand excluding the children. The Golden Thoughts Calendars were enough for everybody. The demand for

Bibles is still very high among the youth. The conference ended well.

We were a team of three who left Lawra to go to Burkina-Faso. One was our interpreter into the French language. We left Lawra and passed through all the immigration laws and procedures between Ghana and Burkina-Faso where our first stop was Djebougou where we left three boxes to distribute on Sunday. From Djebougou we continued our journey to Bobo and we stopped at Kien—a small village—where there is an assembly by the road. The pastor wasn't at home but we met the wife and left two bundles of the Golden Thoughts Calendars there as we usually give to them. We finally left Kien and arrived in Bobo-Dioulasso at about 12:30pm. After we rested we used the Friday and the Saturday to go round and distributed the calendars to the pastors for the distribution to be done in their churches on the Sunday. All the sound churches on the list (including the villages) are twenty that benefited. These churches and many individuals who benefited from this free Golden Thoughts Calendar distribution send their word of appreciation and greetings. We attended two church services on that Sunday. This is my longest free Bibles and Golden Thoughts Calendar distribution trip ever made to the north. I have enjoyed every single day that I have spent in this free distribution trip to the north. Please see attached this report to show how the free distribution of the Bibles and the Golden Thoughts Calendars was done. All the beneficiaries in Ghana, Burkina-Faso, Togo and Ivory-Coast expressed their sincere gratitude and thanks to you and to Trinitarian Bible Society for feeding them with the Word of God.

'To God be the glory great things He has done'. I am so happy and privileged to work in partnership with you in this free distribution of Bibles and Golden Thoughts

Calendars since the year 1997 up to date. God bless TBS, the individuals and organizations that donate financially to give more to this ministry of printing and spreading the Word of God to all nations. God bless you.



The Americas



From Wisconsin

Thank you so much for providing the grant so that we could have free Koine Greek New Testaments for our students in Elementary Greek 102 this semester. Below is a description of how the New Testaments will be used as well as a picture of the students who are using the New Testaments. I have also attached the grant receipt note. Please let me know if you need anything else. The professor says: 'In



Greek 102, we finish up the textbook with time to spare in the semester. For the weeks remaining we divide into committees to translate 1 John, simulating missionary Bible translation efforts. That is when the Greek New Testament will be used. We are very grateful for the kindness of the Trinitarian Bible Society in providing these volumes so that the students will not only learn more of the Word of God, but experience what it is like to translate the Word of God for an unreached people group.'

From the USA

[From TBS (USA): I am forwarding these pictures to you for possible inclusion into the QR. Perhaps it would pique interest in the Children's Scripture Learning Program (see page 2 of this QR) here in the States. Anyway, these children completed the program and their family was so pleased that TBS offers this opportunity for young children.]



I am writing to apply for the Royal Ruby Text Bible for our five year old daughter. She has successfully recited all of the verses for the 'Words of Truth' Bible memorization program! As you mentioned that there are now options for the color of cover, she would like a burgundy cover.

[A few weeks later] Our daughter received her Bible a little while ago—time certainly is flying by!—and was delighted beyond measure! I thought I would send a photo of her along with her prized possession!



Online

[Ed: We get lots of positive feedback about the service and products offered by TBS offices worldwide, and if you need some encouragement I would recommend looking through them. The reviews can be found on our website at www.tbsbibles.org/page/store-testimonials (the page takes a while to load). Two specific pieces of feedback about our Westminster Reference Bibles caught my eye this morning, and I thought I would share them with you for your encouragement.]

▶ I've used newer translations of the Bible most of my life, but I'm really beginning to enjoy the classic King James translation. The Westminster Reference Bible format makes it much easier to use with the translators notes and archaic word definitions in the margins. This is a remarkable Bible!!! The Compact Westminster Reference Bible in blue hardcover looks great and it's very well bound. I bought this one because the large print version is a bit much to carry with me, and the compact certainly is easy to take on the go. The print is very crisp and clear, but a little small for my aging eyes. I ordered the standard size Westminster in black hardcover this morning, and I'm looking forward to receiving it later this week!

▶ I purchased the Westminster Bible for my wife who is very pleased with it. The print is very clear. I have had one for about seven years now and am very pleased with it. It is good to have the clarifications of words that have changed their meaning and of various words or phrases. Thank you for ensuring that reliable translations of the Scriptures are produced. May God richly bless you in your most worthy work!



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The aims of the Society

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

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

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

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

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

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



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