

QUARTERLY Record

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MAGAZINE OF THE TRINITARIAN BIBLE SOCIETY



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THE REVISED DELITZSCH
HEBREW NEW TESTAMENT
LAUNCHED IN ISRAEL**





Trinitarian Bible Society

The Word of God Among All Nations

THE AIM OF THE SOCIETY

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, which are given by inspiration of God, and are able to make men wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

To find out more about supporting the Society visit: tbsbibles.org/supporting

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**‘For God so loved the world,
that he gave his only begotten
Son, that whosoever believeth
in him should not perish,
but have everlasting life’
(John 3.16).**

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Welcome

*From Jonathan Arnold,
TBS General Secretary*

The Apostle Paul asks, ‘What advantage then hath the Jew?’ and answers, ‘Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God’ (Romans 3.1–2). It is a remarkable statement of Divine providence. To the Jewish people God entrusted His Old Testament revelation; through them He carefully preserved those sacred writings of the Old Testament that we possess today. These Hebrew Scriptures testify throughout to the Messiah and form an indispensable part of the Word of God.

These words were particularly in my mind as I attended the thanksgiving and launch meetings in Israel for the newly published Hebrew New Testament in the same volume as the Hebrew Masoretic Old Testament. We seek to place before the people to whom the Old Testament oracles were first entrusted, in Hebrew, the testimony of the New Testament concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

We give particular thanks to the Gereformeerde Bijbelstichting (GBS), the Finnish Bible Institute (through the late Olavi Syvanto), the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland (especially the Rev. John Goldby), the da Costa Foundation, and the Deputaatschap voor Israël. Such a publication is the fruit of many years of prayer, diligent labour, and the Lord’s gracious providence. We pray earnestly that He will now bless its distribution, and that many will be brought to see that Jesus is indeed the Messiah.

‘Our responsibility is to faithfully translate, publish, distribute, and uphold what God has given’

take responsibility to stand for its integrity as a whole. We have not been given liberty to reshape the Word of God according to the preferences of our own generation. The same God who inspired His Word has, in His providence, preserved it for His church.

At the close of Scripture there stands a solemn warning concerning the words of the book of Revelation: ‘If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book’ and, ‘if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life’ (Revelation 22.18–19). These words express a principle of reverence which should govern our handling of all Scripture. Our responsibility is to faithfully translate, publish, distribute, and uphold what God has given.

May the Lord keep us faithful to that trust and use His Word, unchanged and undiminished, for His glory and for the salvation and building up of His people. ■



 Credit:
Joel Virgo Photography

Scripture is given by
God, and we are to

THE FAITHFULNESS OF WILLIAM TYNDALE

*By Pastor D. Cadapen,
Member of the TBS
General Committee*



‘Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life’
(Revelation 2.10).

The Lord Jesus Christ, in addressing the angel of the church in Smyrna, includes this stirring exhortation: ‘be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.’ These words were to serve as a blessing to the church to help them overcome any fear of suffering, persecution, or even death.

Faithfulness is highly commended in the Scriptures. In Hebrews 11, we read of men and women, such as Abraham,

Isaac, Moses, Rahab, and Samson, who demonstrated great faith and are therefore declared to be those ‘of whom the world was not worthy’ (Hebrews 11.38). We read similarly of believers throughout the Gospel age, and particularly during the time of the Protestant Reformation, who through their devotion to Christ and His Word

have blessed the church with inspirational examples of faithfulness. One such example is William Tyndale (c.1494–1536) who, 500 years ago, published the New Testament in English, translated for the first time from the Biblical Greek text.

Let us consider three ways in which Tyndale showed himself to be faithful.



‘Tyndale was prepared to follow his calling even if it required great sacrifice’

TYNDALE WAS FAITHFUL TO HIS CALLING

The Lord placed upon Tyndale a great burden to make the Scriptures accessible to the common people. He famously declared to a friar during a heated debate in the Great Hall of Little Sodbury Manor, ‘If God spare my life, ere many years, I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost’.

Tyndale was prepared to follow his calling even if it required great sacrifice. In 1524 he had to make the painful decision to leave England because it was too dangerous. No doubt he knew that he may never be able to return, but his calling came first. Tyndale was later involved in a shipwreck while sailing from Antwerp to Hamburg which led to the loss of his translation of the Pentateuch—the first five books of the Old Testament. With months of meticulous work swallowed up by the sea Tyndale could have easily succumbed to despair. However, such was his faithfulness to his calling that he painstakingly retranslated the entire Pentateuch and it was printed in 1530. A faithful believer never abandons

his calling, even despite the deepest discouragements.

TYNDALE WAS FAITHFUL TO THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Tyndale was fully persuaded of the Divine inspiration of the Word of God and the rich blessings known by all those who believe. In the prologue to his translation of the Pentateuch, Tyndale declared, ‘The Scripture is a light and sheweth us the true way, both what to do, and what to hope, and a defence from all error, and a comfort in adversity that we despair not’.

Such faith in the Word of God was reflected in Tyndale’s scrupulous approach to translation. According to John Foxe, Tyndale said ‘I never altered one syllable of God’s Word against my conscience, nor would this day if all that is in the earth, whether it be pleasure, honour or riches might be given me’.

Tyndale’s passion was not only to translate the Scriptures into English, but to do so as accurately and as faithfully as possible. The work of the Trinitarian Bible Society seeks to emulate this noble principle by translating the Scriptures only from the most faithful texts—the Hebrew Masoretic Text of the Old Testament and the

Greek Received Text of the New Testament.

TYNDALE WAS FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

Betrayed by a false friend, Henry Phillips, Tyndale was arrested, imprisoned, and finally put to death in Vilvoorde, near Brussels, on 6 October 1536. He was strangled, then burned at the stake.

Tyndale died in a foreign land but his work has had an unprecedented impact on the language and culture of his beloved England. Tyndale had no wife or children, but countless brothers and sisters in Christ were led to eternal life through reading his enduring translation of the Scriptures. However, we must not forget that in his death, Tyndale was only following the example of the Saviour who had died for him.

Christ is the finest example of ‘be thou faithful unto death’, that unworthy sinners may receive a ‘crown of life’. Christ was the strength of Tyndale’s faithfulness. May the Lord be pleased to raise up further men and women of great faithfulness to bless the church and the ongoing work of the Society. ■

THE LONG JOURNEY OF THE VAIPHEI BIBLE

By Natalie Hanks,
Lead Editor



TWO EAGER STUDENTS

Over a hundred years ago, two young men named Thangkai and Lungpau lived in Manipur, Northeast India. They belonged to the Vaiphei people, one of the many tribal communities living among the rugged hills of the region. Each tribe has its own tribal language, and many were originally head-hunters and spirit worshippers.

One day a representative of the British government visited Thangkai and Lungpau's village to help distribute food during a famine. The villagers were amazed when he jotted their names down on a piece of paper and then read them out when he visited several months later. They had never come across reading and writing before and initially thought he had memorised the names. Thangkai and Lungpau were intrigued and made up their minds that they must master this skill and learn to read and write for themselves. They made the long and difficult journey to Aizawl, in a neighbouring state, hoping to be accepted at a school there. Their first attempt



‘In the Lord’s providence, something that seems very small at the time can have far-reaching benefits, whose effects may be felt for eternity’

 Arrival of Vaiphei Bibles

was unsuccessful, but they were not discouraged. The following year they made the journey again.

The second time things had changed. A young Welshman called Watkin R. Roberts had arrived in Aizawl. Roberts had originally worked in slate mining, but he had felt called to serve the Lord. After training in pharmacy and dispensing, he travelled to Aizawl to assist in a

missionary clinic. He was willing to accept Thangkai and Lungpau.

However, Roberts was about to undertake a dangerous journey. The day after the two new students had arrived and settled into their hostel, they accompanied Roberts on a journey that would have life-changing implications not only for Thangkai and Lungpau, but for the tribes of Manipur.

'SIR, COME YOURSELF, AND TELL US ABOUT THIS BOOK AND YOUR GOD'

In the Lord's providence, something that seems very small at the time can have far-reaching benefits, whose effects may be felt for eternity. In 1909 Roberts received a gift of £5 from a lady named Emily Davies in England. Through the hand of God, this gift set in motion a chain of events which eventually led to the conversion of many souls in Manipur. Roberts spent the money on printing the Gospel according to John in Lushai (today called Mizo). Somehow, these Gospels made their way to the chief of Senvon, a village in the south of Manipur. As a result, Roberts received an invitation from the chief of the village to come and explain the message of the book, an event which Roberts considered a 'Macedonian call'. The message read: 'Sir, come yourself, and tell us about this book and your God'.

Roberts requested permission from the British government agent in the area to travel but was refused as it was too dangerous. However, Roberts courageously decided to go anyway

in 1910, taking his new students Thangkai and Lungpau with him.

THE FIRST CONVERTS

Roberts preached about the Lord Jesus Christ in village after village as they made the long journey to Senvon. Thangkai and Lungpau looked on thoughtfully. At Senvon several people were converted, eventually forming the foundations of the Thado-Kuki Pioneer Mission which was later renamed the North East India General Mission.

After visiting Senvon, Roberts and his two Vaiphei students commenced their journey home. Travelling on foot through dense jungles and steep mountains, they faced immense physical exhaustion. As they travelled, the Lord opened the eyes of the two young

men. They believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and, with great rejoicing, were baptised.

A BURDEN FOR THEIR TRIBE

Thangkai and Lungpau were the first Christians in the Vaiphei tribe. Both men felt a great burden for the tribe and became evangelists, taking the Gospel to their people. The number of believers multiplied in Vaiphei villages. The two men also longed to see the Word of God available in their own language, and so translation work began. In 1917 the Gospel according to John was published in Vaiphei.

The Vaiphei Christian Association (VCA) was formed in 1943, with Lungpau, now a pastor, as chairman. The committee



approached the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) for assistance, and in 1957 the New Testament was published for the first time.

Many decades passed without a complete Bible but the desire for this prompted the VCA to contact TBS in the 1970s as the project had not progressed further. A fresh translation had to commence as one of the original translators refused to let the manuscript be used and improved by the VCA. This commenced in 1978 with translation camps held to discuss views on the translation of important words.

Within two years the translation was completed and mailed to the TBS in London, ready for checking and typesetting. Proofs were posted to the Vaiphei team

‘Lungpau, in a similar way to Simeon in the Bible, felt that he would not see death until he saw the whole Bible in Vaiphei’



 Vaiphei Gospel Memorial

for checking, arriving at the Post and Telegraph Office in Imphal, where remarkably the man in charge was the brother-in-law of one of the translation team and who swiftly passed the precious pages on to them. The pages were checked and changes marked on them, before being posted back to London. By 1982 the Bible was ready to print, arriving in Manipur the following year.

THE AGED SERVANTS

Many years had passed since Lungpau and Thangkai had first been converted. Thangkai died in 1969, and therefore never saw the completed Vaiphei Bible. However, Lungpau, in a similar way to Simeon in the Bible, felt that he would not see death until he saw the whole Bible in Vaiphei. He was 100 years old when the Bible was published. As soon as copies arrived it was immediately arranged for the frail pastor to be brought to see them. He was able to hold the completed Vaiphei Bible in his hands before his death the following year, in July 1984, aged 101.

The 1983 Bible was a great blessing, but as the years passed, many felt the need both to revise the text and to reprint the Bible as few copies were available. Therefore, over 30 years since it was first published, revision work began.

UPHEAVAL AND VIOLENCE

Today, Christians make up around 40% of the population of Manipur. This

mainly consists of the hill tribes, the majority of whom are Christian. The rest of the population are predominantly Hindu, especially the Meitei people who occupy the plain. For decades there have been ethnic tensions, political and religious issues, and competition over land and resources between these two groups.

In May 2023, these tensions erupted into widespread violence, and from that point on the suffering, bloodshed, and violence have continued with the Christians suffering greatly. Hundreds of churches have been burned down, many villages destroyed, and tens of thousands displaced from their homes.

Situated on the boundary between these tensions, the Vaiphei people (numbering approximately 42,000) have suffered significantly in this violence, with their homes burnt and destroyed. Many Bibles were lost in the flames and many Vaiphei lost their access to the Word of God. The revision and printing of the Vaiphei Bible became even more urgent.

A PERILOUS JOURNEY

In March 2025 the revised Vaiphei Bible was completed and sent to the printers, Bearing Precious Seed in



Milford, Ohio. The Bibles were shipped to India, and then faced a long and difficult journey of 2,000 miles by lorry from Mumbai to Manipur. Like Watkin Roberts's first journey to Senvon, this was beset with dangers and obstacles.

Humanly speaking, it was the worst possible time for the shipment to travel these roads to Manipur, especially after an explosive device was detonated, tragically claiming the lives of two children and injuring their mother in April 2026. Immediately, movement along the roads leading to Manipur was severely disrupted, and reports emerged of vehicles being stopped and even set on fire. The situation remained volatile for weeks, but we are thankful that the Lord intervened and the Bibles were able to pass through unhindered to their destination.

GREAT REJOICING

The lead translator gave thanks for the safe arrival of the Bibles.

Praise the Lord! We are so very happy and words are inadequate to express our gratitude to see and hold the TBS Bible in our hands.

What a remarkable chain of events led to this moment. When Watkin Roberts spent the £5 donation on printing Gospels he could never have imagined what fruits would follow. And Thangkai and Lungpau never suspected what would happen when they travelled to Aizawl for education. Yet the Lord overruled every moment for the salvation of many souls in Manipur.

Each time the Trinitarian Bible Society prints and distributes the Scriptures, we do not know who will read them or what the Lord may accomplish through them, but we do know that the Lord has said, 'So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it' (Isaiah 55.11). ■



VAIPHEI BIBLE DISTRIBUTION



The journey of the Vaiphei Bible did not end with the arrival of the 10,000 copies in Manipur. The Vaiphei people had been over 40 years without the TBS Vaiphei Bible, so there was much thanksgiving and rejoicing. They were eager to start distribution as soon as possible, so a dedication thanksgiving service was held just a week later. The lead translator was overjoyed to receive the Bibles, and wrote:

Thank you so much for your unwavering support and prayers for the publication of the TBS Vaiphei Bible ... Let us keep praying that all 10,000 copies of the Bible be distributed quickly but meaningfully, so that it may bear much fruit and that Vaiphei language speakers may have a lasting relationship with the Lord as a result of reading this Bible.

The return of the Bible was an emotional occasion for those who remembered receiving a copy over 40 years ago.

Many of our older folks are filled with nostalgia, remembering the day they first held the Vaiphei Bible in their hands back in 1983, which was dedicated by Rev. Lungpau, the first convert in Southern Manipur.

Distribution has extended beyond churches and local communities to Vaiphei people displaced by the conflict. Teams have visited several relief camps where internally displaced Vaiphei families are currently being housed, bringing copies of the Bible directly to them.

The distribution has proceeded more rapidly than anticipated, and only a few thousand copies now remain. It is expected that these will be distributed by the end of the year, Lord willing, and a second print run has already been requested.

Our prayer is that the Lord would bless the Vaiphei Bibles to the salvation of many souls, and that reading the Scriptures would bring encouragement and hope to Vaiphei-speaking communities across Manipur. ■



A photograph showing two men from behind, wearing green robes and head coverings, herding a flock of goats on a dusty path. The scene is set at sunset or sunrise, with a warm, golden glow. In the background, a group of people is visible, and the overall atmosphere is one of a rural, possibly developing, region.

ACCESSING SCRIPTURE IN THE WORLD'S HARDEST PLACES

*By Matthew A. Vogan,
Editorial Director*

The Word of God is used by God for the salvation of sinners, the gathering of His church, and the edification of His people. Christians live and thrive through the same Scriptures that testify of Christ. Yet millions of Christians throughout the world still struggle to obtain God's Word.

Christians in the West can easily buy the Bible of their choice and own multiple copies, as well as being able to download one onto a mobile device. Yet in many parts of the world, believers face barriers created by persecution, restrictions, conflict, poverty, geography, or the absence of Scripture in the language they understand best.

The 2026 Bible Access Initiative (bibleaccesslist.org) estimates that around 125 million Christians worldwide still lack adequate access to a Bible. It highlights countries where access is restricted and others where severe shortages continue despite the presence of large Christian populations.

The statistics are striking and raise searching questions. What does it mean for the Bible to be available in a country if believers cannot afford to obtain one? Can we truly speak of access when Christians must read Scripture in a language they scarcely understand? How can the Scriptures be translated and distributed in

countries where believers face persecution? Bible access is more complex than the numbers alone suggest.

A SHORTAGE THAT IS ALL TOO REAL

At a recent Bible seminar in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) attended by 236 Christians, only 16 people possessed a Bible of their own. More than 90% of those present depended upon hearing Scripture read by others, rather than reading it for themselves. This is a widespread problem within the country: the Bible Shortage List (which forms part of the Bible Access Initiative) ranks the DRC first with around 10 million Christians estimated as without access to Scripture.

‘Millions of Christians throughout the world still struggle to obtain God’s Word’

Many people in the DRC speak French, which is the official language used in government, although over 200 local and regional languages are spoken across the country.

Around 430,000 people speak Kisanga, chiefly in the mineral-rich Katanga region of the DRC. Despite historic translation work, local Christians

report that no one they know possesses Scriptures in Kisanga since it has been out of print for several decades. We are labouring to provide printed copies of the Kisanga Gospel according to John in the next few months, Lord willing.

The same need for Scriptures was highlighted in the recent distribution of TBS French New Testaments in Bunia, a city in the DRC affected by conflict and displacement. Through a local church partnership, 240 New Testaments were distributed to churches, a school, and a health clinic. One local pastor described TBS as ‘an answer to my prayer’. However, while the recipients rejoiced, many others remained

disappointed because demand far exceeded supplies.

BIBLE ACCESS AND THE BARRIER OF POVERTY

These examples demonstrate that the greatest obstacle to Bible access is not always hostility. In many countries it is poverty. In rural Mozambique some pastors have ministered for years without owning a Bible of their own. Churches meet in simple grass shelters and communities often lack even the most basic amenities. Bookshops and libraries are virtually unknown, and opportunities to obtain Christian literature are extremely limited, yet believers continue to gather faithfully.

Recent TBS grants have placed more than 1,500 Bibles into the hands of believers across several provinces in Mozambique. Their joyful response reveals how greatly God’s Word is valued where it has long been absent.

Such scenes remind us that hunger for Scripture remains profound. Believers still need access to the means God has appointed for growth in grace. Through carefully assessed grant applications, Bibles

and Scripture portions are supplied free of charge to believers, churches, and Christian workers who would otherwise be unable to obtain them. This work is made possible through the generosity of faithful supporters.

TRUE BIBLE ACCESS REQUIRES BOTH TRANSLATION AND DISTRIBUTION

Bible access is not identical to there being a Bible translation in that language. A language may possess a translation of Scripture, yet believers may be unable to obtain copies. Equally, a country may have many Bibles available, while whole language communities within that country remain without Scripture in the language they understand best.

True Bible access requires both translation and distribution. Translation without distribution leaves God's Word unavailable; distribution without translation leaves many people dependent on languages that are not their own or with unfaithful copies of the Scriptures. This is why the Society's work seeks to address both needs through faithful translation, careful revision, strategic publication, and practical distribution.

This is clearly seen in Nepal. Around 500,000 people speak Doteli in western Nepal, yet they have never possessed a complete Bible in their own language. While Nepali Scriptures are available, many Doteli speakers find it difficult to understand fully. Our Doteli translation work is being undertaken by local believers who understand both the language and the cost of following Christ in their own community.

WORKING IN RESTRICTED CONTEXTS

In some parts of the world, access to God's Word is difficult because following Christ itself carries significant personal risk. The Bible Restrictions List highlights more than 500 million Christians in countries where restrictions and pressures make Bible access especially difficult. We are well aware of the challenges of Scripture reaching the hands of Chinese Christians, while Afghanistan and Pakistan also feature prominently among those countries where believers face serious difficulties. Behind many translation projects are believers who have paid a high personal price to help bring God's Word to their own people.

The Doteli translation project is being undertaken by local believers who know the cost of following Christ. After coming to faith from a Hindu background, the translator and his wife faced rejection and hardship. The man, who once opposed Christianity, is now helping to translate the Scriptures for his own people, even though resistance from Hindu extremism and entrenched tradition remain strong.

Likewise, for Pashtun believers in Afghanistan and Pakistan, faith in Christ can come at tremendous personal cost. Converts may face rejection, exclusion, threats, violence, or intense social pressure. Some are forced to conceal their faith; others have had to relocate or flee. Someone assisting the Northern Pashto project recalled secretly reading her brother's carefully hidden New Testament when he had left the house.

The work on this project progresses, although the identities of those involved must remain confidential because public recognition could endanger them, their families, and their ministries. Nevertheless, they continue faithfully in the task of making Scripture available to Northern Pashto speakers.

A believer assisting with our Southern Pashto translation work experienced severe opposition after becoming interested in the Bible. Following his profession of faith, he faced family persecution, threats, and hostility. At one stage he was kidnapped by militants and held captive for several days before escaping during a military operation.

The challenges extend beyond translation itself. One of the teams involved in the Society's Hindko work serves in a predominantly Muslim area of Pakistan while operating a Christian orphanage. On occasions they have been forced out of locations where they were ministering, yet they have continued to care for vulnerable children while continuing to support the work of Scripture translation.

Across the border in the Muslim-majority region of Kashmir, believers report that Kashmiri Scriptures remain unavailable. Our prayer is that our revision work on the Gospel according to John may soon be provided to them. Alongside these projects we continue to work in other languages spoken in restricted or sensitive

‘The work of the Trinitarian Bible Society seeks to meet these needs by bringing translation and distribution together’

contexts. In several cases, digital Scriptures can be accessed through mobile phones, although the Bible Access List highlights both significant restrictions and lack of online access.

Scripture translation is challenging in itself, but in some countries those engaged in Scripture work have endured constant surveillance, intimidation, and even severe physical assault because they are Christians. These examples remind us that Bible translation and revision is not merely an academic undertaking. It is often carried forward by believers serving in difficult circumstances, sometimes at considerable personal cost.

THE NEED REMAINS GREAT

The Bible Access List has helped quantify a challenge that many Christians rarely see. Yet behind every statistic there are real people: a

pastor in Mozambique preaching without his own Bible; Christians in the Democratic Republic of Congo gathering for Bible teaching while only a handful possess Scripture; Doteli, Kisanga, and Kashmiri speakers longing to read God's Word in their own tongue; and Pashtun believers risking much to help translate it.

If God has entrusted us with abundant access to the Scriptures, should we not use those privileges to help provide His Word for others?

The work of the Trinitarian Bible Society seeks to meet these needs by bringing translation and distribution together. Much has been accomplished, but the task is vast and unfinished. By God's grace, the same Word preserved for His church in every generation continues to go forth into new languages and difficult places. ■



'TO THE JEW FIRST':

THE REVISED DELITZSCH HEBREW NEW TESTAMENT LAUNCHED IN ISRAEL

'For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek' (Romans 1.16).



More than a century after Franz Delitzsch first set himself the task of translating the New Testament into Hebrew—the language of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—a new generation of Hebrew readers has been given the opportunity to receive his work afresh.

This autumn saw the official launch in Israel of the Trinitarian Bible Society's revised edition of Delitzsch's Hebrew New Testament, the fruit of 16 years of careful, prayerful labour. Launch meetings were held at Yad Hashmona, near Jerusalem, and in Haifa and were attended by many believers and pastors. Further meetings were held at local congregations.

It was fitting that this edition should be launched in Israel itself, so we can explain to Hebrew speakers that our desire was to build on the legacy that Delitzsch established, while giving readers an updated text that is readily understood by Hebrew speakers today while retaining the character of Biblical Hebrew.

A DEBT RENEWED

Franz Delitzsch gave his life to a double calling: to open the Old Testament to Christians, and to open the New Testament to the Jewish people. Commencing his translation in 1864 (years before Hebrew had been revived as a spoken language) he laboured through 11 successive revisions.

Never satisfied that his work was finished, he continually sought to bring his Hebrew New Testament closer to the language and cadences of the Hebrew Old Testament.

We first published Delitzsch's text in 1964 and have sought to distribute it widely since. It became clear that revision was necessary, not to replace Delitzsch's work, but to renew it. Work was undertaken to retain its literal accuracy and dignity, while rendering it into a Hebrew that a generation raised on the modern, spoken tongue could readily understand. This was particularly important given that some words had altered in meaning due to the development of the language. Where it is possible, the words that were changed were replaced with words from the Hebrew Old Testament and Mishnaic Hebrew, in order to increase the uniformity in style and language between the Old and New Testaments.

A team skilled in modern Hebrew, Biblical Hebrew, and New Testament Greek prayerfully examined the text verse by verse. Drafts were tested with native Hebrew speakers and new immigrants, and where a rendering was not understood, it

was reconsidered and refined. The result seeks to render the Greek text with even greater precision, as in John 5.18, where 'making himself equal with God' was preferred to a vaguer earlier phrase, in order to preserve the force of the Greek text.

Delitzsch desired Jewish readers to encounter the New Testament not as a foreign book, but as the continuation and fulfilment of the Scriptures they already knew. That same desire has guided those who have undertaken this revision.

A LABOUR OF LOVE CONTINUED

Alongside the Hebrew New Testament, we produced a short film telling Delitzsch's story. Released in Hebrew for use in Israel, an English version has also been published on YouTube and SermonAudio.

At the launch meetings, reports described the film as the most memorable and affecting part of the whole programme. At each gathering, Israeli pastors and scholars first set the scene (one tracing Delitzsch's place in the history of Hebrew translation, another dwelling on the German scholar's love for the Jewish people and the conviction that first moved him to undertake the work) before the film itself was shown. Believers responded warmly, not merely to the story of a 19th century scholar, but to the recognition that his ministry continues, in a very direct sense, in the Bible now being placed in their hands.

Further sessions at the meetings addressed the practical use of the new translation and the opportunities for reaching Hebrew speakers online, while attendees also heard of our long history of Hebrew Bible work and ongoing commitment to see this continued.



FOR SUCH A TIME

We give thanks to the Lord for the publication of this New Testament, and are grateful to be able to place into the hands of modern Jewish readers, in the language Delitzsch spoke and loved, the good news that the Messiah of Israel has come.

We also record our sincere thanks to the organisations whose prayerful interest and practical assistance have helped this project forward, including the Finnish Bible Institute, the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the da Costa Foundation, the Gereformeerde Bijbelstichting, and the Board for Israel.

Please pray for the congregations in Israel now receiving this translation, for continued open doors for the printed Word, and that many, encountering Messiah in the words of their own tongue, might believe unto life everlasting. ■



View the documentary:
tbsbibles.org/DelitzschFilm



**NOW
AVAILABLE:**

THE HEBREW BIBLE WITH THE REVISED DELITZSCH NEW TESTAMENT



This new edition of the Hebrew Bible unites the revered Ginsburg edition of the Bomberg/ben Chayyim Masoretic Old Testament with the newly revised (2025) TBS Delitzsch Hebrew New Testament in one beautifully presented volume.

EDITION FEATURES

- Hardback Bible
- 9 point print size
- Sewn binding
- Marker ribbon
- Bible paper
- Size 174 x 117mm

Product Code:
HBOHEBB2/ABK



Visit our website for more
information or contact
your local Branch.



THE CHALLENGE OF PRESERVED PRONOUNS IN FAITHFUL BIBLE TRANSLATION

—
By Matthew A. Vogan,
Editorial Director

In recent years Western culture has witnessed unprecedented attention given to personal preferred pronouns, often concerning attacks on God's creation of male and female. There is also an important question concerning translating pronouns in Scripture. The answer significantly affects how millions understand the Bible.

A UNIVERSAL LINGUISTIC FEATURE

One of the remarkable consistencies across many human languages is the distinction between addressing one person and addressing multiple people. French speakers

know the difference between *tu* and *vous*. This pattern extends globally: Swahili, Arabic, Chinese (along with every other language except one obscure tribal tongue) all preserve this fundamental distinction.

Biblical Hebrew and Greek are no exception. Scripture's original languages consistently distinguish singular from plural pronouns, and the distinction carries meaning. In some passages knowing whether a pronoun is singular or plural is essential to understanding who is being addressed and a verse's meaning.

WHEN THE DISTINCTION IS CRITICAL

The distinction between singular and plural pronouns can affect interpretation. In Luke 22.31–32, Jesus addresses Peter by name: ‘Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have you*, that he may sift *you* as wheat: but I have prayed for thee’. The plural ‘you’ includes all the apostles in Satan’s sifting, while the singular ‘thee’ identifies Peter as the particular object of Christ’s intercession.

The same principle appears elsewhere. In 1 Kings 9.5–6, God promises Solomon personally, ‘I will establish the throne of thy kingdom’, but then warns the people collectively, ‘if ye shall at all turn from following me’. In Isaiah 7.14, the sign is given not merely to Ahaz but to a wider audience, ‘the Lord himself shall give you a sign.’ In Matthew 26.64, Jesus answers Caiaphas personally, ‘Thou hast said’, but then addresses the whole council: ‘Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man.’

The same distinction is found in John 3.7. Jesus addresses Nicodemus individually, ‘I said unto thee’, but widens the application with ‘Ye must be born again.’ The shift shows that the new birth is not a requirement for Nicodemus alone, but for all.

These are only a few examples of where the distinctions affect who is addressed, what is promised or commanded, and whether the application is individual or corporate: distinctions that context cannot always determine (see tbsbibles.org/pronouns for more examples).

‘The distinction between singular and plural pronouns can affect interpretation’

Unless the reader knows the Biblical languages, these distinctions can only be visible if they are translated.

THE TRANSLATION PRINCIPLE

Careful translators preserve the original as literally as possible and only as freely as necessary, reflecting its distinctions wherever possible. When Hebrew uses a particular verb tense or Greek employs a specific construction, translators seek equivalents.

In the languages into which the Society translates, preserving the singular/plural distinction presents no particular difficulty because the language already possesses appropriate forms. The translator simply uses the form required by the inspired original.

THE ENGLISH EXCEPTION?

Since the beginning of the 17th century, Bible translators have had to deal with the fact that conversational English no longer maintains distinct pronouns: *thou*, *thee*, and *thy* for singular; *ye*, *you*, and *your* for plural. Over time, the plural forms came to be used for both singular and plural address. As a result, the modern English ‘you’ can refer either to one person or to several people without indicating which is intended.

This created a dilemma for Bible translators: preserve the grammatical distinctions of the original languages, or conform to conversational usage? For centuries, English Bible translations preserved the distinction through the use of the traditional pronouns. However, during the middle of the 20th century some translators began using ‘you’ for both

singular and plural throughout, removing a grammatical distinction that is present in the Hebrew and Greek texts.

THE FALSE FRIEND PROBLEM

Here we encounter what linguists term a ‘false friend’: a word that looks familiar but functions differently than expected.

In English Bible translation, ‘you’ has become the ultimate false friend. While it may appear clear on the surface, it obscures whether the original addresses one person or many. It doesn’t alert readers to whether there may even be any ambiguity.

How widespread is the problem? One concordance estimate reckons that the word ‘you’ appears over 14,000 times in the English Standard Version. In every case, the translation has collapsed a distinction present in the original Biblical languages between singular and plural pronouns. While context can sometimes bring clarity, in key passages it is impossible to know. The reader must infer the number, as the information is no longer carried by the word itself. Crucially, few read so closely as to inspect context for an invisible ambiguity they do not know is there.

Exodus 29.42 shifts within one sentence from plural ‘you’, whom God meets at the tabernacle, to singular ‘thee’, Moses, whom He addresses; the context does not reveal the grammatical change.

The distinction may even be removed deliberately. In 2 Samuel 7.23, the distinct pronouns reveal David’s unexpected mid-prayer turn to Israel, but modern versions actively erase this shift.

This issue is far more serious than encountering an archaic word. An unfamiliar term may prompt a reader to consult a dictionary. ‘You’ creates an invisible ambiguity, leaving readers unaware that anything is missing.

COMPREHENSION: OF WHAT?

Those defending the removal of traditional pronouns argue that it aids comprehension: modern readers find older pronoun forms confusing. But this raises a fundamental question: comprehension, but of what? Are we seeking to comprehend what the text seems to say in modern English, or what the Holy Spirit actually inspired?

Western individualism means modern readers naturally interpret ‘you’ as singular. We think in terms of personal faith and individual salvation. We instinctively read ‘you’ as personal. But often the

original uses plural pronouns, addressing God’s people collectively.

Paul’s closing benedictions provide examples. In 2 Timothy 4.22, singular ‘thy spirit’ shifts to plural ‘you’; in Philemon 21–25, singular ‘thy’ and ‘thee’ shift to plural ‘your’, extending grace beyond each letter’s singular recipient. Without the distinction, we import individualistic assumptions into the text.

‘The question is whether translation should prioritise contemporary familiarity at the expense of grammatical distinctions present in the original text’

A QUESTION OF STANDARDS

In translating into other languages we may choose a theological word that needs explanation or one whose meaning has narrowed because it renders the point more accurately. We don't abandon words that require explanation; we teach people what they mean.

Why should English be different? The pattern is simple: *thou, thee*, and *thy* address one person; *ye, you*, and *your* address multiple people. Once learned, this becomes a valuable interpretive tool.

THE PATH FORWARD

The question is whether translation should prioritise contemporary familiarity at the expense of grammatical distinctions present in the original text. True comprehension requires grasping what God actually inspired, even when

that requires modest effort. The question is not so much whether certain pronouns sound old-fashioned, but whether we're willing to preserve the distinctions and meaning God gave us.



'The grammatical features of the original Biblical languages are not obstacles to overcome but gifts to preserve'

The grammatical features of the original are not obstacles to overcome but gifts to preserve. Faithful translation should communicate their meaningful distinctions clearly—in English as in every language. ■

Does it matter?

John 5.39

AV/KJV

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

ESV

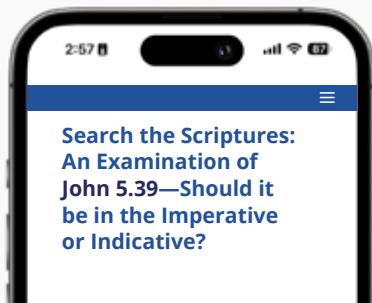
You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me,

It does matter.

Because Christ is exhorting His hearers to search the Scriptures, while many modern versions present the words as a statement about what they were already doing.

The Greek verb is better translated as the imperative 'search', not an indicative 'you search'. The Authorised (King James) Version preserves Christ's direct command to search the Scriptures. This has been a precious encouragement to generations of Christians to read and examine God's Word for themselves, finding that all Scripture testifies of Christ.

*To find out more, read the article,
John 5.39: Imperative or Indicative? at:
tbsbibles.org/John5verse39*





Translation Update:

OROMO

Location: Ethiopia

Speakers: 40 million

Project Status: Gospel

Oromo, a Cushitic language of the Afroasiatic family, is widely spoken in Ethiopia and parts of northern Kenya. It is the largest ethnic and first language for over 40 million speakers in Ethiopia, serving as a language of wider communication across much of the Oromia region and beyond.

Oromo has several dialects, though there is a high degree of mutual intelligibility among them. Our Oromo translation project, which commenced with the Gospel according to John, is in a standardised form of Oromo based on widely understood central dialects.

Oromo translations of the Scriptures have a long history, with earlier versions produced in both Ethiopic and Latin scripts. A complete Bible is available and widely used; however, most existing translations are based on modern critical texts and often employ dynamic equivalence methods.

The work has been carried out by capable native speakers and with careful attention to accuracy, clarity, and reverence. The Gospel has been approved for publication, and we are now working towards preparing it for release. We look to the Lord for resources needed for a New Testament project.



HOW TO PRAY FOR THIS PROJECT

- Pray for the print and digital publication of the Gospel to go quickly, accurately, and smoothly.
- Pray for many distribution channels to be made available through our distribution centre in Ethiopia.
- Pray for Oromo speakers to receive the Gospel gladly and that it would be used for the salvation of millions. ■



Information on the status of many of our translation projects can be found on the TBS Translations Hub: tbsbibles.org/translations-hub

By Natalie Hanks,
Lead Editor



Language Summary: **KANNADA**



Kannada (also called Kanarese) is spoken in the south of India, parts of Pakistan, and north-east Sri Lanka. Approximately 44 million people speak Kannada (with a further 15 million using it as a second language). The majority of speakers live in the Indian state of Karnataka, where it is the official and administrative language.

Kannada-speaking people have a long literary and cultural history, yet there remains a need for faithful Scripture in the language. We are therefore working to provide Kannada-speaking Christians with an accurate and faithful translation of the Scriptures.

A CLASSICAL LANGUAGE OF INDIA

Kannada is one of India's officially designated 'Classical Languages', which means they have great antiquity and a valuable and original literary heritage. Kannada has a long-standing literary tradition, including written inscriptions dating back more than 1,500 years. The history of the Kannada language is commonly divided into several stages. Old Kannada was used in the 5th to 12th centuries, before flourishing in the medieval period. From the 18th and 19th centuries onwards, the language underwent significant changes in vocabulary, grammar, and literary style.

Kannada is a Dravidian language. Dravidian is a major language family of around 70 different languages predominantly spoken in southern India. Although these languages are distinct, they share various grammatical and linguistic features.

CHRISTIANITY AND KANNADA

Protestant missionaries first started arriving in Karnataka in the 19th century. This included missions such as the Basel Evangelical Mission which was established at Mangalore in 1834, with missionaries working among the Kannada and Tulu-speaking peoples of the region.

The missionary work was not without difficulty. Missionaries worked in a society with deeply established religious traditions and social structures.

Today, Christians remain a minority within the state, with the percentage of evangelical Christians about 0.5% of the population. Most of the state's population is Hindu, with Muslims forming the largest religious minority. Christians in the state have experienced opposition, harassment, and persecution.

THE BIBLE IN KANNADA

The history of Bible translation into Kannada goes back to the beginning of the 19th century. The first attempt to translate the Bible into Kannada is thought to have been by the Serampore missionaries associated with William Carey. William Carey and his fellow workers had established an important centre for Bible translation and printing, with the aim of making the Word of God available in the languages of India. They appear to have completed the Kannada New Testament by 1809, but this was tragically lost in the 1812 fire at the Serampore mission press which destroyed a great deal of



material. Nevertheless, they continued work, and a New Testament was published in 1823.

The Serampore translators began work on the Pentateuch, but gave up on their work when they heard another missionary, John Hands from the London Missionary Society, was also working on a New Testament translation, published in 1830.

Hands and fellow missionary Reeve continued work on the Old Testament, published in 1831. Various missionaries worked on a revised New Testament, which appeared in 1850,

followed by another revision in 1854. A further complete Bible was issued in 1865. This version, translated by 'a committee of missionaries of the German, London, and Wesleyan Missionary Societies for the Madras Auxiliary Bible Society', was revised in 1934, and since then widely used although sadly not based on the Greek Received Text. Other versions, such as one equivalent to the NIV have also been published.

THE TBS AND KANNADA

Historically, TBS has worked in Kannada, producing various tracts and booklets from around 1938 to 1981. In 1987 we published our first Kannada Bible, a translation from the Authorised (King James) Version; it was then reprinted in 1991. Then in 2021 we commenced a revision to bring the Bible up to the Society's textual and translational standards.

The Gospel according to John has just been published, and a series of promotional meetings and events have been held across India. Meanwhile, work is continuing on the New Testament. It is our prayer that the Lord would bless these Scriptures to many souls in India. ■

THE FIRST SCRIPTURES IN HALAM



The Halam tribe (who mostly live in the north-eastern part of the Indian state of Tripura) has, until now, had no written materials in their own language—there are no dictionaries, grammars, or digital spell checkers. Most significantly, there were no Scriptures available in Halam at all. For the predominantly Christian Halam people, some of whom have faced intense persecution, this has been a long-standing burden and a matter of prayer.

‘CAN WE REALLY HAVE THE SCRIPTURES?’

When Halam believers first heard that the Gospel according to John was being translated into their language, their initial response was one of disbelief: ‘Can we really have the written Scripture in our language?’ This soon turned to eager anticipation: ‘How long will it take?’

That hope has now become reality, as the Halam people received the Scriptures in their own language for the first time earlier this year, when the Gospel according to John was completed, printed, and distributed. This was the first ever publication into the Halam language, and the 5,000 copies sent to the translators to distribute were received with much rejoicing.

Around 400–500 copies were distributed in July. We were encouraged when the translator wrote to us, ‘I believe the teenagers and adolescents are enjoying it. They asked me if they could have another copy because the previous copy had almost spoiled’.



A WORK UNDERTAKEN IN PRAYER

The translation is in a standardised form of Halam that seeks to encompass the three principal tribal varieties. Although the language is still developing, the translation team has worked carefully to make the text understandable without sacrificing accuracy.

The seriousness with which the Halam translators approach their task is deeply encouraging. The Scriptures are being translated from the Authorised (King James) Version, with reference to

translations in two other languages that the team understands—Hmar and Mizo. (TBS is also working on New Testament and Bible projects in these languages.)



‘This was the first ever publication into the Halam language’





Our lead Halam translator has expressed the weight they feel in handling the Word of God: 'We are afraid that we will mistranslate the Word of God. We know very clearly that our mistranslation will lead the reader to misunderstand the Word of God.'

THE WORK CONTINUES

Now the Gospel according to John has been completed and work is continuing on the rest of the New Testament. The lead translator feels a deep sense of calling to this work; 'I am called by God to do the work. How can I just give up? The Bible in our language is going to help many to understand God. How can I just give up? I believe that many souls will be saved from the translation.'

We give thanks to God that, for the first time, the Halam people can receive the Scriptures in their own language. Please join us in praying for the translation team, those assisting with distribution, and the Halam believers who will read these Gospels. ■



TBS Definitions

Received Text
(*Textus Receptus*)

DEFINITION

The Greek New Testament preserved in the Byzantine manuscript tradition and represented in the printed Textus Receptus editions published by Erasmus, Beza, and Stephanus from 1516 onward. Also known as the 'Received Text', it is the text upon which the English Authorised (King James) Version and other Reformation-era translations were based.

WHY IT MATTERS

It underlies the Authorised Version and reflects the historic text used by the church, as providentially preserved by God.

REFERENCES

Used by Reformers
Elzevir Preface (1633)



CHILDREN'S SCRIPTURE LEARNING PROGRAMME

'And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus' (2 Timothy 3.15).



HELPING CHILDREN HIDE GOD'S WORD IN THEIR HEARTS

For more than 50 years, the Children's Scripture Learning Programme has encouraged children to learn the Scriptures by heart.

By committing carefully selected passages to memory, young people are helped to know, love, and treasure the Word of God.

HOW THE PROGRAMME WORKS

10 years and under: children who complete the required passages receive a beautifully inscribed leather text Bible with gilt-edged pages.

11–15 years: older children who complete the Scripture requirements receive a specially inscribed gilt-edged leather reference Bible.

Those who receive the junior prize may continue when they reach 11, and work towards the reference Bible in the older age group.

COULD A CHILD YOU KNOW TAKE PART?

We warmly invite parents, church leaders, Sabbath school teachers, and others with a care for children's spiritual good to encourage eligible young people to take part. Full details are available from the Grants Department at our London Headquarters (grants@tbsbibles.org), or from any Branch. Owing to financial constraints, the programme is currently open to children living in countries where we have a Branch. ■



*Discover how a
child can take part:
tbsbibles.org/cslp*



BECOME A FAITHFUL STEWARD FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

THE FAITHFULNESS OF BIBLE TRANSLATION MUST BE GUARDED IN EVERY AGE

For nearly two centuries, the Trinitarian Bible Society has sought to ensure every generation has access to faithful, accurate copies of God's Word, translated from the original Biblical languages.

Yet a society is only as steadfast as the people who, by God's grace, uphold it. If you are not already, we would invite you to step beyond being a supporter and become a member of the Trinitarian Bible Society.

By becoming a member, you take up your place in the line of those who:

HELP US FULFIL OUR VITAL WORK

Your membership fee directly supports promoting the Glory of God and the salvation of men through the circulation of the Holy Scriptures.

SECURE THE LEGACY

Ensure that TBS remains a bulwark for the generations to come.



FORMALISE YOUR COMMITMENT

Publicly align yourself with upholding the purity of the Word of God and participate more fully in the work and witness of the Society. Members must agree with the Society's three membership requirements: be a Protestant, believe in the Holy Trinity, and believe that the whole Bible is the inspired and inerrant Word of God, the sole, supreme, and infallible rule of faith and practice.

STEWARDED OUR AIMS

Your vote at the AGM is an important part of the stewardship of the Society. It helps support consistent governance in line with our objectives and principles.

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.

**Stand with us on the frontline
of faithful Bible translation and
distribution** by becoming a member
today at tbsbibles.org/membership or
contacting your local Branch
for a membership form. ■



Trinitarian Bible Society

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Lord willing
TBS (UK)

17 November 2026

GREATER LONDON AUXILIARY AGM

The Free Presbyterian Church, Zoar
Chapel, Varden Street, London E1 2AW

23 January 2027

WESSEX AUXILIARY AGM

Market Lavington Community Hall,
Market Lavington, Wiltshire SN10 4DG

20 February 2027

SOUTH WEST AUXILIARY AGM

Beacon Park Baptist Church,
Plymouth PL3 4LR

27 February 2027

ESSEX, SUFFOLK, AND NORFOLK AUXILIARY AGM

Friston Baptist Chapel, Saxmundham,
Suffolk IP17 1PH

27 February 2027

WEST ANGLIA AUXILIARY AGM

St Nicholas Church Hall
Barton-le-Clay, Bedfordshire, MK45 4LA

*Please see our website for deputation
meetings within the UK. This list
contains other special meetings.*

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

P S A L M 4 6 . 1

AUTHORISED (KING JAMES) VERSION

