



Quarterly Record

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April–June 2023



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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Quarterly Record

Issue Number: 643

**April to
June 2023**

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WEDNESDAY 14 JUNE | 10.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m.

Registration and Coffee from 10.00 a.m.

T3 Conference and Event Centre

House of Vic-Ryn, BT28 2RF

Speakers:

DR JEFF RIDDLE

How has God Preserved His Word
for Us Today?

and

John 1.18: Only Begotten God or
Only Begotten Son?

REV. SAMET ŞAHİN

The Need for an Accurate Turkish
Translation of Scripture

LONDON

Lord willing:

FRIDAY 16 JUNE | 10.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Registration and Coffee from 10.00 a.m.

William Tyndale House

29 Deer Park Road, SW19 3NN

Speakers:

DR JEFF RIDDLE

How has God Preserved His Word
for Us Today?

and

John 1.18: Only Begotten God or
Only Begotten Son?

REV. JOHN GREER

The Biblical Doctrine of the Trinity

MR LARRY BRIGDEN

Only Begotten or One and Only?
Translating Monogenes

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The Need for an Accurate Turkish
Translation of Scripture

2023 CONFERENCE

TRINITY & TEXT

Admission is **FREE** | Lunch will be provided | Bookstall

Booking is essential for catering purposes

Register for free at tbsbibles.org/2023conferences



THE 192ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

ADVANCE NOTICE

GOD WILLING ON

Saturday, 16 September 2023

at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London SE1 6SD

The Business Meeting at 11.00 a.m. will include reports and updates on the Society's work.

After the Business Meeting,
at **2.00 p.m.**

Mr Gerald D. Buss

Vice-President of the Society

is expected to preach.

All are invited to attend. Please see our website
for most up-to-date details.

THE WORD OF GOD AMONG ALL NATIONS



The General Secretary's Introduction

Jonathan D. Arnold

This edition of the *Quarterly Record*, with information on the Chinese New Testament, French New Testament, and the Amharic New Testament and Psalms, displays the Lord's mercy in bringing these projects to a point at which we have been able to publish them. We trust that these translations might be used for the glory of God.

In faithful translations of God's Word we have the revealed truth of God. Thus we should strive to distribute the Scriptures and make them available in many languages. This should be an activity that is driven out of our own love for God's Word, not for self glory nor because it is in any way salvific (we are not saved by works). In our distribution efforts may the Lord grant us grace not to be those who give out the Word but don't truly know it ourselves. May He bless it to us as He did to the Psalmist.

I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies *are* my meditation.

I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.

I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.

I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me.

How sweet are thy words unto my taste!
yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

(Psalm 119.99–103)

In God's wisdom we have perfect wisdom. That wisdom by the Holy Spirit reveals Christ, the only Saviour. May we taste and see that the Lord is good; may we behold Christ through the whole Scriptures so that our hearts burn within us as the followers of Christ did when they were taught on the road to Emmaus. By God's grace and with love for Christ and His Word we have the distinct privilege at TBS as worker, member, and supporter to be engaged in the activity of distributing God's Book.

It is a busy time for the Society, and we are grateful for the prayers of our supporters. Along with translation work, the complexity of shipping and logistics remains constant. We give thanks to the Lord for His continued provision and strength granted to those engaged in the Society's work, both paid staff and volunteers, without whom we could not function.



Chinese New Testaments printed for the event

In February the TBS held a thanksgiving service for the completion of the Chinese New Testament. Given the millions of Chinese speakers this is a significant step for the Society, and we believe it provides an accurate and trustworthy translation of the Scriptures in Chinese. The full background to this translation is set out in this QR by the Editorial Director. Our distribution efforts are concentrated on the Chinese diaspora throughout the world. We are grateful to the Gereformeerde Bijbelstichting for supporting this translation effort and for the printing of the New Testament. We trust the Lord will bless His Word for His glory.

In June, Lord willing, we will hold two Trinity and Text conferences, one in London and the other in Northern Ireland. The Society from its outset—and as its very name indicates—stands on the Biblical doctrine of the Trinity. The doctrine of the Biblical Trinity also intersects with the text of Scripture as it is from the text we get

our doctrine. The text of the Greek and Hebrew that underlies our Bible therefore shapes our theology, and its adaptation or amendment has consequences.

It is often said that the difference in broad categories of the Critical Text and the Received Text do not affect Biblical doctrine. It might be argued that the Critical Text does not eliminate any doctrine completely. However, the number of the omissions is of doctrinal importance and has the effect of diminishing the testimony of Holy Scripture, especially concerning the deity and sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is done by the removal of verses or the use of different words when referring to Christ, as in 1 Timothy 3.16 with God being replaced by 'he' or similar.

This concern over text and Trinity is no new thing. Irenaeus (AD 130 to 202) accused a group that denied the orthodox Biblical doctrine of the Trinity of 'adapting the Holy Scriptures to their own figments and leading captive from the truth those who do not retain a steadfast faith in one God,

the Father Almighty, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God.’¹ Irenaeus denounces them for dismembering the truth and ‘adapting the oracles of the Lord to their baseless fiction.’²

Irenaeus then proceeds to evidence how this group adapted the opening verses of John’s Gospel to their false system. The Bible states: ‘All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made’ (John 1.3). The opponents of Irenaeus taught that the Word was the author of form and beginning to all who came into existence after Him. They continued their adaptation by changing the first part of John to ‘What was made in him is life ... and the life was the light of men’. Irenaeus asserts that this was a Valentinian adaptation of the Scriptures to their own fiction.

We, with Irenaeus, assert the true text as translated is: ‘... without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life ...’. This signifies that all made things were made by Him. The altered text says that all things were made by the Word, a rendering designed to fit in with the Valentinian error that Christ and the Holy Spirit were among the ‘all things’ that were ‘made by the Word’.

The English Standard Version today adds this in the margin at this verse: ‘Or was not anything made. That which has been made was life in him’. This is similar to the RSV which has in the margin, ‘Without him was not anything made. That which hath been made was life in him; and the life’. In so doing we find in the margins as a valid alternative the very words condemned by Irenaeus as a Valentinian corruption.

Not only are there historic attacks and debate on the text and the Trinity, but in the modern critical edition of the Greek New Testament, either in the NA28 or the UBS5, various verses are brought into doubt.³ In an attempt to show the

significance of this, in the following paragraphs I have set out where translation and text affect key verses that are the proof texts for the Trinity. You will see that where there are deviations from the traditional Received Text there is a consequential impact on evidence for the doctrine of Christ’s deity and sonship. I appreciate that this may not be comprehensive, but it is illustrative of the issue at hand, which will be explored more at the conferences.

Mark 1.1 - The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God

In the Greek Received Text, Mark 1.1 reads, ‘The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God’. However, translations based on the Greek Critical Text omit ‘the Son of God’ so it reads something like, ‘The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ’.

As ever, Critical Text advocates point us to older manuscripts discovered in recent history, abandoning the text found in many other manuscripts and quoted by the early church fathers. Its inclusion is consistent with the overall New Testament teaching about Jesus as the Son of God. In removing the phrase the witness to Christ’s sonship is diminished in Scripture.

Acts 8.37 - ... I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

The Received Text maintains the confession of faith by the Ethiopian eunuch. For the most part this entire verse is omitted in editions based on the Critical Text or doubt placed upon it in the margin.

Mark 16.19 - So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

Amongst the twelve verses at the end of Mark that are doubted or removed in

the Critical Text is the verse, 'So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God'. This verse indicates that after speaking to His disciples Jesus ascended into heaven and sat at the right hand of God. The above verse testifies to Christ ascending into heaven; deleting it removes a witness from a Gospel writer to the Lord's ascension.

Matthew 28.17 - And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

Modern critics say that 'him' after 'worshipped' is not in the best manuscripts. By dropping the pronoun 'him' it makes the worship general rather than of Christ. The Christian Standard Bible reads, 'When they saw him, they worshiped' with a footnote to say 'other manuscripts add 'him''. The Received Text reading clearly indicates that Christ is worshipped. While this difference in wording may seem minor, it reflects a subtle difference and an instance where Christ is worshipped, which would be sin if He were not God. This is another redaction of the testimony to Christ as God and therefore to be worshipped.

John 6.47 - Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

Here Christ states belief on Him as the object. The force of this is lost in the versions that omit 'on me' such as the ESV, which states: 'Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life'.

Romans 9.5 - Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

The verse refers to Christ as 'God blessed for ever', which is a clear

affirmation of the deity of Christ. The issue we find in some translations is over punctuation in the translated language. Whilst, thankfully, some translations avoid this trap, the 1984 New International Version is representative of the approach to the Greek that was in vogue in that period, and includes the following footnote for this verse: 'Or Christ, who is over all. God be forever praised!' or 'Christ. God who is over all be forever praised!' (NIV 1984), creating a doxology of 'God who is over all' rather than a testimony to Christ's divinity.

1 Timothy 3.16 - And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

With almost all modern versions substituting, 'he was manifested in the flesh' in place of 'God was manifest in the flesh', this creates a world of difference in the testimony to the deity of Christ in this text (see the TBS article, tbsbibles.org/1Timothy3verse16 dealing with this verse). Some argue it is the impact of a Unitarian on the Revised Version Committee that encouraged this amendment and others that have impacted the recent generation of Bible translations. Without going into the similarities between the Greek words, we find 'God' used in the Tyndale, Geneva, Authorised Version, and other Reformation era translations in English, as well as in the Italian Diodati, French Osterwald, Spanish Valera, German Luther, and Portuguese Almeida. This key witness to Christ as God manifest in the flesh is removed in many translations today.

1 John 5.7–8 - For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

The three witnesses, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, are removed or bracketed in recent translations. Yet this verse is quoted in all the main confessions that are held by those who assert reformed teaching. The English translation of the annotations to the Dutch Statenvertaling deals with this issue excellently:

This verse seeing it contains a very clear testimony of the holy Trinity, seems to have been left out of some copies by the Arians, but is found in almost all Greek copies, and even by many ancient and worthy Teachers also, who lived before the times of the Arians, brought out of them for proof of the holy Trinity: and the apposition of the witnesses upon earth ver. 8. sheweth clearly that this verse must be there; as appears also by the ninth verse, where is spoken of this testimony of God.

In the above verses we see the issue: these verses show the Biblical backing for Trinity and particularly the deity and sonship of Christ. I hope this demonstrates where Trinity and text interact, and the necessity for Biblical doctrine and the truth of the Trinity for us to stand for the providentially preserved Word of God. This is why the Trinitarian Bible Society seeks to circulate the Holy Scriptures that are given by inspiration of God, translated accurately from the Hebrew Masoretic Text of the Old Testament and the Greek Received Text of the New Testament.

In the upcoming conferences, as we consider the Trinity and Text, we will emphasise key translation terms such as ‘only begotten’, defending and reaffirming them. Please join us in London or Northern Ireland as we seek to address these issues and point to the providentially preserved Word of God that overwhelmingly sets out the sonship and deity of Christ.

I commend this *Quarterly Record* to you; it is rich in content that staff have laboured over, and I am grateful to all who contributed to it and prepared it. A further article in the series on our branches looks at the Australian branch and the excellent work of Bible distribution done in that vast country. The branch there recently published a special edition Bible commemorating the first sermon preached in Australia, which was from the Authorised Version. We hope this will be distributed to various schools there as a testimony to the Word of God.

Brethren pray for us.

Endnotes:

1. Irenaeus, Book 1, *Against Heresies*, chapter 3 - www.google.co.uk/books/edition/Against_Heresies/TKHSDwAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0
2. Irenæus, *Against Heresies*, www.logoslibrary.org/irenaeus/heresies/108.html
3. It is appreciated these supply an apparatus of the varying readings and a preference for certain readings in the Greek. The assertions and comparisons with the Critical Text in this article draw from the preferred readings for the most part in these editions of the Greek NT.

THE BLESSINGS OF A TRIUNE GOD

BY G. D. BUSS

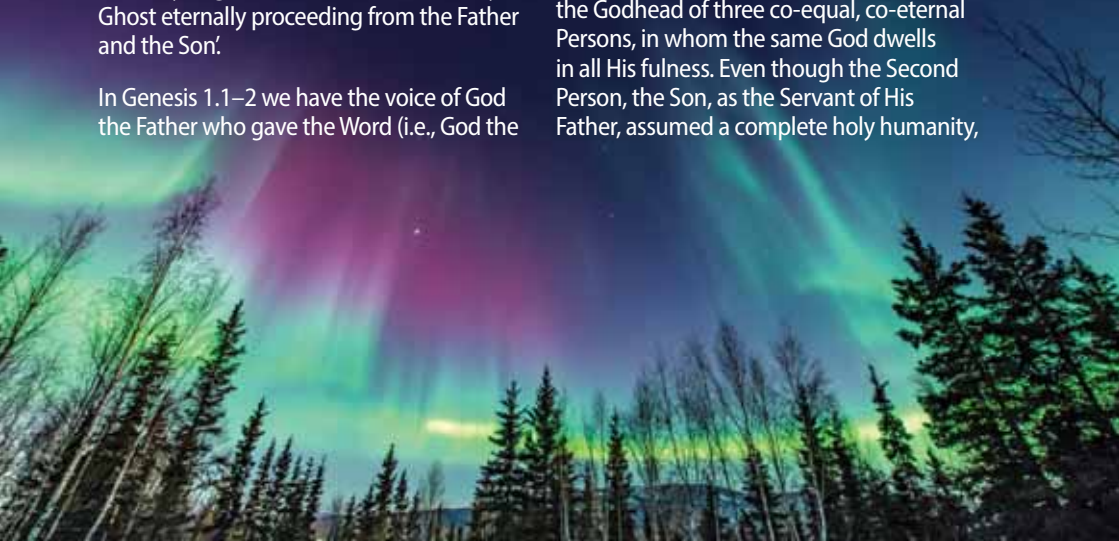
A Vice-President of the Society

The doctrine of the Trinity is one proclaimed throughout Scripture, and one inferred from its earliest pages. Though there are those who have sought to expunge the precious truths in 1 John 5:7–8, they could sooner drag God from His throne than annul the blessed foundation so aptly expressed in the Westminster Confession: ‘In the unity of the Godhead there be three Persons of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.’

In Genesis 1:1–2 we have the voice of God the Father who gave the Word (i.e., God the

Son), and God the Holy Spirit who moved upon the face of the waters, as sent by the Father and the Son, creating the world in which we live. The act of creation is thus ascribed to each of the three Persons, as confirmed elsewhere in John 1 and Hebrews 1.

Likewise in Isaiah 6:8 we read, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?’ The singular ‘I’ and the plural ‘us’ speak of two sacred and certain facts concerning God: there is one God and only one God, and yet He is also referred to in the plural as ‘us’. This plainly teaches us of the plurality within the Godhead of three co-equal, co-eternal Persons, in whom the same God dwells in all His fulness. Even though the Second Person, the Son, as the Servant of His Father, assumed a complete holy humanity,



yet within that finite compass dwelt, and still dwells, all the fulness of the Godhead (see Colossians 2.9).

In the miracle of the giving of water out of the rock (Exodus 17.5–6), ‘and that Rock was Christ’ (1 Corinthians 10.4), the action of a Triune God was revealed. This is shown in Moses being the type of God the Father in divine justice in smiting the rock who is the type of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the waters gushing out into the dry places which is the sacred type of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

At the baptism of the Lord Jesus Christ each Person of the Trinity gave their divine approbation to the ordinance. This is seen in God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, in being baptised; God the Spirit descending and remaining on Him like a dove; and God the Father testifying, ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased’ (Matthew 3.17).

Likewise, in Revelation 22.1 we have these words, ‘And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb’. God the Father sits on His throne, and His dearly beloved Son, Christ Jesus, shares the honour at His right hand as the Lamb of God, slain but now risen and glorified. The pure waters flowing from beneath the throne are the Holy Spirit conveying to the church triumphant above and the church militant below the benefits of the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus in His precious blood, and the Word of God as revealed in the Gospel. What a sacred stream, in its source, in its nature, and in its power!

At the end of public worship how welcome are the desires of what we call the ‘Benediction’, as each Person of the Trinity is implored, ‘The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with

you all. Amen’ (2 Corinthians 13.14). It is a mark of the condescending grace of the Triune God that it was to Corinth of all the churches to whom Paul ministered that this benediction should first be pronounced. We might have understood it better if it had been Philippi or Ephesus for whom Paul had such a high regard and commendation. But no, it was to Corinth: the divided church, the church assailed by heresy, the church where discipline had failed. How this proves to us the principles of sovereign grace in dealing with sinners! It was the blessings of a Triune God which alone could heal the church at Corinth. As Paul wrote to Titus: ‘But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour’ (Titus 3.4–6).

It is also implied that we may approach in prayer each of the three Persons. We come to God the Father, through the Son, by the aid of the Holy Spirit. We have records in Scripture of prayers offered directly to each Person: the Father (Acts 4.23–31), the Son (Acts 7.59–60), and the Holy Spirit (Song of Solomon 4.16).

All true believers have reason to thank God for each of these three sacred Persons: God the Father in His eternal choice of His own; God the Son in His redeeming love so clearly demonstrated at Calvary; and God the Holy Spirit to whom we owe any spiritual life we may have in our hearts.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.¹

Endnote:

1. T. Ken in *Gadsby's Hymns* no.506A.



Editorial Director's Report

by Matthew A. Vogan

Continuing the History of Chinese Bible Translation

Many people believe that the Bible distinctly refers to China in Isaiah 49.12, 'Behold, these shall come from far: and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim'. Sinim is another word for China, and we still use Sino to refer to Chinese things (e.g., Sinology is Chinese studies). Thus the mention of it in a chapter that prophesies of Christ and His kingdom is significant; it indicated a significant turning of this people unto Christ the King. This is a truly stirring realisation when we consider that one-fifth of the world's population is Chinese.

Protestant Bible translation in the Chinese language has a rich history extending back two hundred years. In 1822 Joshua Marshman and Johannes Lassar published parts of Scripture from the original Hebrew and Greek. The following year British missionaries Robert Morrison and William Milne finished translating the Old Testament from Hebrew. They published this together with the New Testament

Morrison had translated from Greek ten years earlier. It was completed with the help of Chinese assistants and in a classical literary Chinese.

Throughout the nineteenth century other translators did further work in various Chinese dialects as well as the common language. The Peking Version of 1874 was the first translation of the whole Bible in Mandarin. In this version the New Testament was translated from the original Greek by five missionaries assisted by Chinese co-workers. The Old Testament was the work of converted Lithuanian Jew Samuel Schereschewsky who was fluent in the original Hebrew. The Peking Version was produced at a time when Mandarin was mainly a northern Chinese dialect used by officials. Today Mandarin is by far the largest of the Chinese dialect groups, spoken by 70% of all Chinese speakers, with close to one billion native speakers.

Mandarin continued to undergo significant changes as it became more widely used

in the decades that followed, meaning that there was a need for a further project to build on the Peking Version. This new endeavour also drew significantly from the English Revised Version of 1881 in both Old and New Testaments, the latter of which was based on the Critical Greek Text. As we shall see, the Critical Text was a text reconstructed from manuscripts hidden for around 1,500 years and was used to replace the Received Text—the text of the New Testament historically used by the church and forming the basis of nearly all vernacular translations from the Reformation until the late nineteenth century.

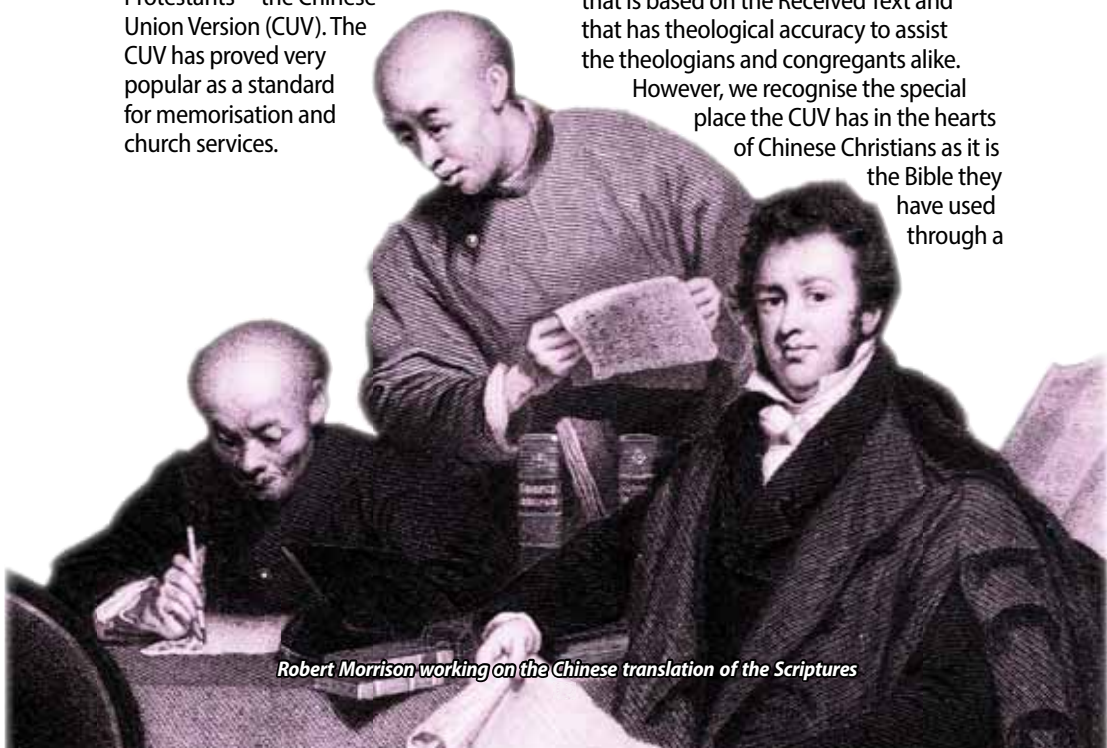
While the Chinese translators had knowledge of Greek and discussed the original, it has been said that they often translated mostly from the English of the Revised Version, as well as committing themselves to the underlying texts used in it. This resulted in 1919 in the most famous and commonly used Bible among Chinese Protestants—the Chinese Union Version (CUV). The CUV has proved very popular as a standard for memorisation and church services.

Continuing the History Today

H. B. Rattenbury, an English missionary, noted on the occasion of the publication of the Chinese Union Version that it was probably ‘the last and the greatest translation of the Scriptures where the burden of the work ultimately rests on foreigners, but that the final Chinese version will be very different, especially in the New Testament’. He went on to recognise the limitations of translation by non-natives and predicted that, ‘the final Chinese version will never come until we have Chinese scholars, deeply versed in the original tongues, masters also of Mandarin, translating into their own native tongue.’¹

Understandably the Chinese language has changed over time. Many agree that some of the language of the CUV needs to be revised in order to give greater clarity for today’s Chinese readers. It is necessary (as we shall see later) to have a translation that is based on the Received Text and that has theological accuracy to assist the theologians and congregants alike.

However, we recognise the special place the CUV has in the hearts of Chinese Christians as it is the Bible they have used through a



Robert Morrison working on the Chinese translation of the Scriptures



Shanghai is China's largest city

time of persecution, growth, and blessing. We hope that a new translation, which is respectful of the established Biblical terminology in the Chinese church, will provide a firmer foundation for Bible study and exegesis and be appreciated for the degree of access it gives to the original.

One notable example of where the translation can be rendered in a better way is in Genesis 3.4, where the Chinese Union Version states 'You may die or may not die' rather than 'Ye shall not surely die' as in the Authorised (King James) Version. In Genesis 3.6 the words 'with her' are omitted in the CUV. In Romans 8.3 the AV reads 'For what the law could not do, in that it [i.e. the law] was weak through the flesh' whereas the CUV has 'because the flesh was weak'. In 1 Timothy 3.11 and Romans 16.1 the words 'wives' and 'servant' are rendered 'deaconess' in the CUV, and on the basis of this translation almost all Chinese churches have deaconesses.

Now, a century after the CUV was published, a team of native Chinese translators with considerable abilities in the original Biblical languages have been undertaking a new faithful translation of

the Chinese Bible. This project is overseen by the Trinitarian Bible Society (TBS) in partnership with their sister society, the Gereformeerde Bijbelstichting (GBS).

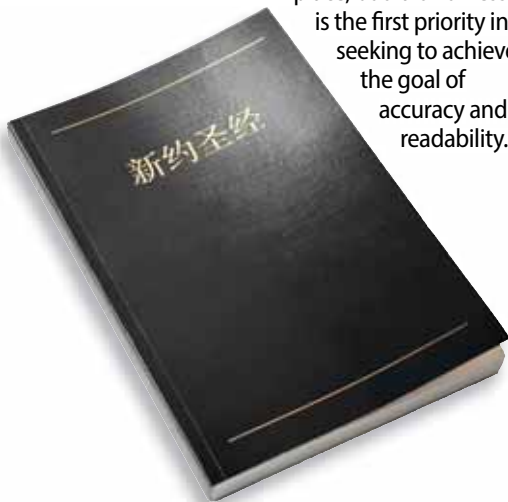
The TBS Chinese Bible project strives for an accurate translation directly from the Biblical languages. While remaining faithful to the original languages, it will be easier to read and understand since it is in current literary Chinese. It makes use of the accepted ecclesiastical and theological terminology that are standard in the Chinese language, and seeks to be as accurate as possible in the theological language used. The team are very mindful of the widely used and much-loved Chinese Union Version and seek to maintain some continuity with it as long as this is consistent with accuracy to the underlying Hebrew and Greek.

We believe that translation must be 'as literal as possible but as free as necessary'. That is to say, only free where it is necessary to make sense and conform to the sentence structure of the receptor language. Scripture is fully inspired by God in every word and in all parts, not just in its main teachings. Translators must respect this

so that every word of the original is taken into account and interpretation kept to a minimum. As William O. Einwechter has observed, translation 'is not only concerned with what God said in the original, but also with how He said it'.² The TBS team therefore seek to parallel as closely as possible the grammatical structure and wording of the original languages. Where this results in less familiar renderings it is due to reflecting the original. This sometimes presents a challenge in relation to idioms, figures of speech, and difficult vocabulary in the original but it is vital that they are translated carefully and with reverence.

There are, indeed, challenges in translating into Chinese from the Biblical languages including a different approach to plural forms and the lack of a definite article as well as different syntax word order. There are also no participles, prepositions, or clear connective words in Chinese. This means that an absolutely literal translation is not always possible where there is no direct equivalent. On the other hand, the purpose is not to seek the most beautiful sounding language but rather the most accurate rendering of the Biblical text. Expressiveness and elegance have their

place, but faithfulness is the first priority in seeking to achieve the goal of accuracy and readability.



Continuing the Historic Text Today

The TBS Chinese translators had the benefit of surveying the history of Bible translation as well as engaging in careful analysis of Bibles currently available in Chinese. They compared them to the original texts and assessed the method of translation used.

One key aspect of this review was assessing the original Greek and Hebrew texts used. All modern Chinese Bibles have been translated from the modern Critical Text to a greater or lesser extent. The Society's translation is the first in recent times to be rendered from the Hebrew Masoretic and Greek Received Texts. This was the historic text used in Protestant translations such as the Statenvertaling in Dutch and the Authorised (King James) Version in English, and by Robert Morrison two hundred years ago in producing a Chinese Bible. The issue is one of vital importance though it is not always widely understood in China or the West.

In 2017 the Society produced a Chinese language translation of the article *The Lord Gave the Word* by Malcolm Watts, which explains how God preserved His Word. Divine inspiration demands Divine preservation. The Most High did not give the Scriptures originally only to abandon them to be irretrievably corrupted by the ravages of time and human frailty or malice. Scripture promises that the Word will be preserved by Divine providence in all generations. As the reformed theologian Francis Turretin asked, 'What would become of the wisdom, goodness and power of God if He willed that such a precious treasure be shown to His Church and then withdrawn and Scripture exist only in a torn and wounded state?'³

TBS Chinese New Testament



Chinese New Testament launch

Scripture, however, both states and promises that God's Word will be available to the church in every generation (Deuteronomy 29.29; 30.11–14; Isaiah 34.16, 59.21; Matthew 4.4; 5.18–19; 2 Peter 3.2; Jude 17). God commanded in the Old and New Testaments that His words would be carefully guarded, transcribed, and passed on. God has given the Word of God to the church as the deposit which it is privileged to guard in all generations. As we read in Isaiah 59.21, 'My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever'. This speaks of the church's continuous possession of the Word. The historic Biblical texts of the Hebrew Masoretic Old Testament and Greek Received New Testament have been witnessed to by the general consensus of the church in all generations.

The claim of modern Biblical criticism is that manuscripts discovered during the past 180 years—which were not used or available to the church in the preceding 1,500 years—are more authentic than the standard text kept pure in all ages. However, God has preserved the Scriptures down through the ages for the salvation of men and the edification

and comfort of His church, not buried away secretly but publicly in the usage of His church.

There is a vital point here that we need to grasp: the choice is between a text providentially preserved in the church in all ages, or a text for ever provisional that is always changing and never established. It will always be provisional because new manuscripts are being found and new methods are being developed. Scholars constantly disagree about which readings should be preferred and even whether it is possible to reconstruct the earliest text by such methods.

In reality the Critical Text is not a text that may be 93% or 97% settled. Every single verse is in question as there may be a new manuscript or method that may change things altogether. There are thousands of words at stake, enough words are removed in the standard Critical Greek Text to equal the size of both epistles of Peter. Whole passages of Scripture such as Mark 16.8–20 and John 7.53–8.11 are being questioned as to whether they are authentically the Word of God. If God has not perfectly preserved every word for us today, we have no complete authoritative Word. Yet we can have complete confidence that our Reformation and Puritan forefathers were in possession of the faithfully preserved text of Scripture.

This is why it is so important to have a faithful and accurate translation in Chinese from the Received Text rather than the modern Critical Text. In doing so it follows in the steps of historic Protestant translators, especially Robert Morrison. In the Lord's goodness the TBS New Testament has been published this year, the two hundredth anniversary of the first Chinese Bible. Please pray for the TBS Chinese Bible translators and others who work on this project and that the published translation would bring great glory to God and be a great blessing to the Chinese speaking church.

The Chinese New Testament is available online at tbsonlinebible.com/#zh.

Endnotes:

1. Quoted by Jost Oliver Zetzsche in *The Bible in China: The History of the Union Version or the Culmination of Protestant Missionary Bible Translation in China* (Sankt Augustin, Germany: Monumenta Serica Institute, 1999), p. 335.
2. William O. Einwechter, *English Bible Translations: By What Standard* (Pensacola, FL, USA: Chapel Library, 2010), p. 13.
3. *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* by Francis Turretin, trans. George Musgrave Giger, ed. James T. Dennison, 2 vols. (Phillipsburg, NJ, USA: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1992), 1.96.

DOES IT MATTER?

The Triune Witness

1 John 5.7–8

AV/KJV

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

ESV

For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree.

It does matter ...

Because every word of God matters (Proverbs 30.5). This phrase was accepted as the Word of God by Protestant churches, preachers, and writers for many centuries with good reason. They used it to assert and defend the doctrine of the Trinity. When the words are removed it creates a grammatical difficulty in Greek.

These words were also quoted in the early centuries of the church and early Latin Bibles. Although the Greek manuscripts that support these words are late, most of the Greek manuscripts available for 1 John are of a similarly late period. To find out more, read the article: tbsbibles.org/1John5verse7and8



FRENCH PROTESTANTS AND THEIR BIBLE

By Natalie Hanks, Lead Editor



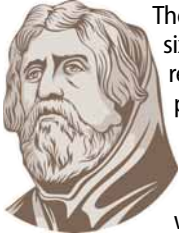
Title page from a 1669 edition of the French Bible

The TBS French New Testament was published at the end of 2022 with much rejoicing, and in April we were able to hold launch and thanksgiving services in France and Canada.

The history of the French Bible and French Protestantism goes back centuries, despite

France traditionally being regarded as a Roman Catholic country. The historian Merle d'Aubigné wrote of the French church, 'Nowhere did it so often dwell in dungeons, or so resemble primitive Christianity in faith, in charity, and in the number of its martyrs.'¹

The Waldensians: An Early Witness



Peter Waldo

The Reformation in the sixteenth century is often regarded as the starting point for Protestantism and a breaking away from the darkness of Rome.

However, in France a witness had commenced many years earlier. This was in the form of the Waldensians, a group of people who were named after Peter Waldo (c. 1140–1218), a twelfth century merchant from Lyon. Through the Lord's grace Waldo's eyes were opened to the truths in God's Word and some of the errors in the Roman Catholic Church; he arranged for the translation and hand copying of parts of the Scripture from Latin into Romance, the language of the Lyon area.

Waldo and a band of followers who became known as Waldensians travelled around the Lyon area reading and preaching the Gospel and gathered like-minded people to worship in secluded places. Wylie in the *History of Protestantism* writes, 'The Church of the Alps, in the simplicity of its constitution, may be held to have been a reflection of the Church of the first centuries. The entire territory included in the Waldensian limits was divided into parishes. In each parish was placed a pastor, who led his flock to the living waters of the Word of God.'²

The number of Waldensians increased and became more organised. Initially the authorities were lenient towards them, but hostility grew as Rome became more aware of their views—the Council of Valencia in 1229 forbade men who were not priests to read the Bible. The Inquisition meant that many thousands were tortured

and killed with extreme barbarity. Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* details some of the awful deaths and tortures that these people suffered. It was especially terrible in the area known as Piedmont (an area in the Alps, bordering Italy and France), where believers fled to the mountains for safety but were hunted down. In one instance, 400 women and children were hidden in a cave while the men were away; when the enemy discovered this a fire was lit at the entrance and all within were killed. Despite persecution, this band of believers continued faithful to the Word of God, and indeed, as time went by, their understanding of its truths deepened.

Jacques Lefèvre and Marguerite of Navarre



Jacques Lefèvre

Around 1507, ten years before Luther nailed his ninety-five theses to the door at Wittenberg, a man called Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, who was nearly 70 years old, discovered the Word of God for himself for the first time. He was the chair of the Theological Hall of the Sorbonne and was writing a book about the lives of the saints, whom he devoutly worshipped. Lefèvre decided to use the Bible as reference for some of these lives, but instead found the pure doctrine of Christ, which had been hidden for centuries. He wrote, 'They seemed to me to give off a perfume whose sweetness was beyond all compare, beside them all human studies are a fog and shadow.'³ He devoted his time to studying the Scriptures, beginning to teach what he found at the university, including justification by faith alone. Lefèvre was almost to France what Wycliffe was to England: he translated the New Testament

into French from the Latin Vulgate in 1523, and the Old Testament by 1525.

Gradually, Lefèvre's teaching began to have an influence on those around him. One of his students was Pierre Olivetan, cousin of John Calvin, and another was William Farel. Guillaume Briçonnet, Bishop of Meaux, was also disillusioned with the state of the church and Lefèvre gave him a New Testament which opened his eyes to the true religion. Briçonnet went on to use his wealth to print more copies of this New Testament, and around him a group of people grew called the *Circle of Meaux*, with the aim of improving the quality of preaching and religious life in general. One of the supporters of this circle was Queen Marguerite of Navarre (a small independent kingdom occupying lands between present day France and Spain); she was the sister of Francis I, the French monarch of the time.

Persecution started to arise against this growing group of early reformers. In 1525 Francis I was taken prisoner by the Spanish after the battle of Pavia. His mother, the Queen Mother, appealed to the pope for help, but he replied that the defeat of France was punishment because they had allowed heretics to multiply in the land. The queen called parliament together, and punishment and persecution was advocated for those who followed the Reformation. Sadly, Briçonnet's strength failed and he recanted his beliefs. Lefèvre and Farel managed to escape—Lefèvre to Strasbourg and Farel to Geneva.

Eventually, Francis I was released and returned to France. Lefèvre was recalled to the country, and even given the task of tutoring the royal children. He later went to live at Navarre, where Marguerite was queen. Marguerite did a lot to help and protect Reformers, offering them sanctuary in her small kingdom. It was not easy for her though: her only child Jeanne was

taken away by Francis I when she was only two years old to try and raise her as a Roman Catholic French princess. In 1531 Marguerite became the first Protestant woman to publish poetry with a volume of poems titled *The Mirror of the Sinful Soul*.

Lefèvre was very sorrowful one night in 1536 while staying with Marguerite. When the queen asked him what the matter was he replied that he envied those who had a martyr's crown; 'While I—O what a wicked man I have been!—have lived upwards of a hundred years and sought to lengthen my days by a shameful flight'.⁴ He also had never publicly broken away from the Roman Catholic Church. Marguerite and her guests comforted him, showing him God's goodness in granting him sanctuary in his old age, and he retired to bed comforted, where he fell asleep never to wake again.

Marguerite passed away in 1549, saying 'God, I am assured, will carry forward the work He has permitted me to commence, and my place will be more than filled by my daughter, who has



the energy and moral courage, in which, I fear, I have been deficient.⁵

A Growing Movement

Seeing the Reformation movement spreading across Europe, the Waldensians were interested to see and understand what was happening. In 1526 they sent envoys to a meeting held in Laus, Italy to examine the new movement, and with joy found that there were similarities with their own beliefs. After consideration, in 1532 they held the Synod of Chanforan in Piedmont, Italy, meeting with German and Swiss Protestants including William Farel and Anthony Saunier, and officially became part of the Calvinist tradition. This was also the start of a new French Bible translation project, funded by the Waldensian churches which collected 1,500 gold crowns to cover the cost. This French Bible, translated by Calvin's cousin Pierre Olivetan in 1535, was based in part on a New Testament in the Waldensian vernacular.



The Affair of the Placards

Meanwhile the king, Francis I (reigned 1515–1547), was initially tolerant of the new reformed movement, seeing himself as progressive and enlightened. This ended in 1534 when Protestants in the Affair of the Placards denounced the Roman Catholic mass in placards (posters) that appeared across France. The king began to see the reformed movement as a threat to the kingdom, so the culprits were put to death. The persecution of Protestants increased, with many fleeing the country. One of these was John Calvin, probably the most well-known of all the French reformers, who fled to Basel. Calvin was initially a humanist lawyer but broke away from the Roman Catholic Church around 1530. It was while he was at Basel that he wrote the first edition of what is known as *Calvin's Institutes*, which he dedicated to the king of France in the hope that it would convince him to end his persecution.

In 1536 Calvin set off to Strasburg via Geneva, where he intended to stay only one night. However, while he was there William Farel asked him to stay at Geneva and assist him in reforming the church there, which he did. The geographical position of Geneva within Europe meant that it was very central, and the city and its leader came to be recognised as a rallying point for the Reformation, especially after the death of Luther in 1546. The city became a haven of refuge to those escaping persecution across Europe.

The Growth of Persecution

In 1545 Francis I ordered that the Waldensians in the village of Merindol be punished for heresy. This led to the massacre of hundreds, if not thousands,

of inhabitants. Scores of men were forced to become galley slaves—a terrible fate where prisoners were chained to oars in huge boats and forced to row for years, if not for life.

When Francis I died (in 1547, the same year as Henry VIII of England), his son Henry II (1519–1559) took the French throne. He continued his father's harsh policies, issuing the Edict of Châteaubriant in 1551 which placed severe restrictions on Protestants, confiscated property from those who had fled to Geneva, regulated the press, and prohibited the publication or sale of any book not approved by the Faculty of Theology at the University of Paris. It also forbade the right to worship and discussion of religious topics at work, even over meals or in the fields. However, this was insufficient to stem the tide of Protestantism, and by 1562 it is estimated that there were around two million French Calvinists, including more than half the nobility.

The First French Synod in Paris

In 1559 the Protestant church in Paris secretly held its first synod, attended by delegates representing 72 churches. The deputies drew up a confession of faith, which had been drafted by Calvin. This meant that the church in France was Calvinistic rather than Lutheran, though there were some Lutherans in the country.

France Under Catherine de' Medici

Henry II was married to Catherine de' Medici, an Italian niece of the pope. Henry was fatally injured in a jousting match in 1559, leaving four young sons and three daughters. His first successor was his eldest son, fifteen-year-old Francis II (1544–1560),



Catherine de' Medici

who was married to the young Mary, Queen of Scots. Francis died a year later, and his ten-year-old brother Charles IX (1550–1574) became the next king, with his mother, Catherine de' Medici, as regent.

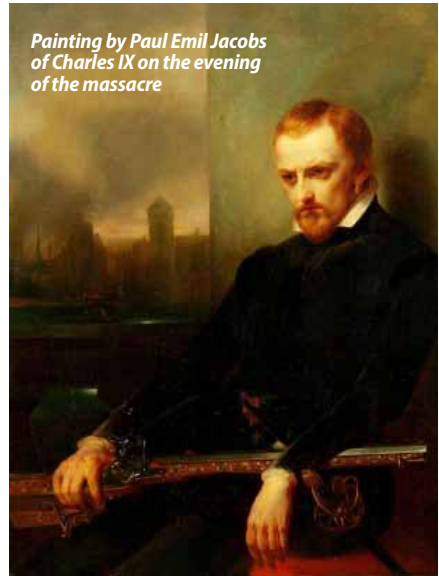
By now France was split into Roman Catholics and Protestants (or Huguenots as the reformed church was often called from around 1560). By the 1570s the Huguenot community in France made up as much as ten percent of the overall population and was a political as well as religious movement. It was not just confined to the general population—many nobles and influential people were counted among the number. Marguerite's daughter Jeanne d'Albret, the Queen of Navarre and her son Henry, along with the princes of Condé, and Gaspard de Coligny, Admiral of France, formed the leaders of the Huguenot faction.

Initially Catherine attempted to keep the balance between the two parties. In January 1562 the Edict of Saint-Germain gave a degree of tolerance to the Huguenots, outlining where and when they could worship, although it was still

very restrictive. However, in March 1562 the Duke of Guise attacked a church in Vassy, massacring around fifty parishioners. This was the spark which led to the French Wars of Religion, a period of civil wars between Roman Catholics and Huguenots which lasted from 1562 to 1598.

The St Bartholomew's Massacre

As tensions between the Roman Catholics and Huguenots grew, the throne of France sat between the powerful Roman Catholic Guise and Montmorency families, and the Huguenot Condés and d'Albrets. In 1572 Catherine came up with a plan to remove as many Huguenots as possible. She arranged the marriage of her daughter, Roman Catholic Princess Margaret, to Huguenot Henry,



Painting by Paul Emil Jacobs of Charles IX on the evening of the massacre

Jeanne's son and king of Navarre. All the notables in the land, Roman Catholic and Huguenot, were invited to the wedding held in Paris on 18 August 1572.

At dawn six days later on St Bartholomew's Day, the bell of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois began to toll and the massacre of the Huguenots in Paris began. One of the first victims was Coligny, who told his companions, 'Friends, flee and save your lives, I for one am ready to die, and I trust myself to God's mercy.'⁶ His head was cut off, embalmed, and sent to the pope, and his body dragged around the city. Huguenots were hunted down house by house and brutally murdered, their homes and shops pillaged. News of the violence spread to the provinces where many more thousands were killed—it is estimated that up to 70,000 people may have been killed. Henry of Navarre, the bridegroom, was spared. The pope was delighted by the massacre, illuminating Rome, ringing church bells, and ordering a special commemorative medal in honour of the event.

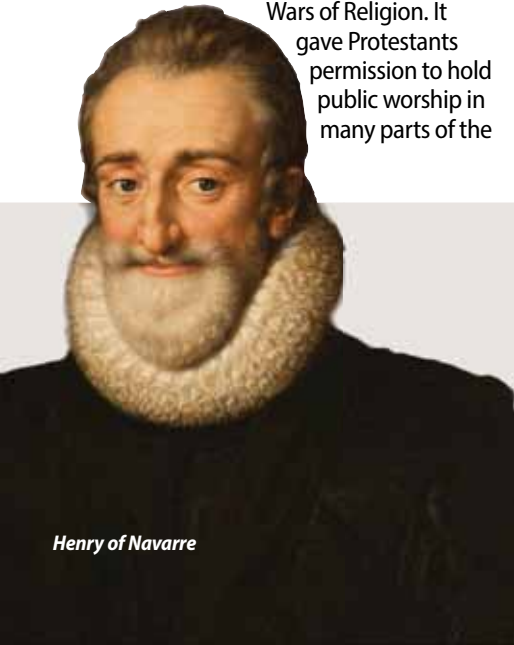


The massacre begins

Henry of Navarre

The next few decades followed a pattern of wars and brief periods of peace. Charles IX passed away in 1574 aged 23. His mental and physical health had always been fragile, and after the St Bartholomew Massacre it got significantly worse, with him saying he could hear the screams of murdered Huguenots in his ears; 'What evil counsel I have followed! O my God, forgive me ... I am lost! I am lost!'⁷ He was followed by his brother Henry III of France, who reigned until he was assassinated in 1589. Henry's successor was his cousin and brother-in-law, Henry of Navarre, son of Jeanne and grandson of Marguerite (sister of Francis I). Henry was Huguenot, the only Protestant French king, but in the face of much opposition from the Roman Catholics who denied he could wear the crown as a Protestant he converted to Roman Catholicism in 1593 to gain control of the kingdom, reportedly saying, 'Paris is well worth a mass'.⁸

In 1598 Henry passed the Edict of Nantes, granting religious liberties to the Protestants and ending the Wars of Religion. It gave Protestants permission to hold public worship in many parts of the



Henry of Navarre

kingdom, although not in Paris, and also gave them access to education. Henry, who was assassinated in 1610, is often referred to as Good King Henry or Henry the Great. He was followed by his son, Louis XIII (1601–1643), who was more intolerant of Protestantism, and slowly the freedoms promised by the Edict of Nantes were eroded away.

The Edict of Fontainebleau: The Church in The Wilderness

In 1643 Louis XIV inherited the throne of France. Known as Louis the Sun King, he dramatically increased the persecution of Huguenots, banning Protestants from working in most trades and pulling down churches. In the early 1680s the dragonnades commenced, where Protestants were terrorised by the billeting of unruly troops in their homes. Blanche Gamond, a young girl at the time, wrote later that, 'Our bishop sent for six companies of soldiers ... and billeted them on the gentlemen of the Reformed Religion. The most cruel amongst the troops were chosen out, and sent first to our pastor, Monsieur Piffard, and afterwards to my father's house. I must say I have never seen worse men. They committed a thousand ravages by day, and kept up a continual revelry by night ... execrable cruelties were practiced, persons actually suspended from the spit before the fire'.⁹

In 1685 Louis XIV issued the Edict of Fontainebleau, which revoked the Edict of Nantes (which had to some extent afforded a level of security to Huguenots). The new edict no longer tolerated the existence of Protestant groups, pastors, or churches in France. Pastors were commanded to leave France within fifteen days or be sent

to the galleys. Huguenots who resisted conversion were to be forcibly baptised into the Roman Catholic Church by violence—dragonnades brutally making people recant. Furthermore, emigration was banned; if people were caught trying to emigrate the men were sent to the galleys and the women to prison. Children were taken away from their parents, a declaration in 1686 stating that all children of Protestant families between the ages of 5 and 16 should be placed in the custody of Roman Catholic parents or any Roman Catholic person appointed by the judge.

Every effort was made to stop people escaping the kingdom, but amazingly many managed it. This terrible persecution led to a mass emigration of Huguenots; approximately 400,000 left the country, many of whom were highly skilled workers. They fled to countries such as England, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, and Prussia.

Protestantism was no longer a religion of the nobles and elite. The majority who followed the true religion were Cévennes peasants—these remaining Huguenots left in France predominantly lived in the Cévennes region in the south of the

country. Pastors who remained in the country lived as nomads in wilderness areas to avoid capture. Services were held at night in secluded spots such as open spaces in the forest, deep ravines, or caves. The penalties for attending these services were death for the preachers, the galleys for the men, and prison for the women.

The Galleys

Around 2,500 men were sent to the galleys with a life sentence. Other galley prisoners were real criminals but were given shorter sentences and could be pardoned for good behaviour. But this was not the case for the Huguenots: once chained to their oar they had to live and die there unless they consented to recant. Galleys were war-vessels; around 250 to 500 men were needed for each ship with six men chained to each oar, bound to the bench by a chain rivetted to one of their legs. And there they sat, beaten by a rope to make them work harder. The galley ships would be used in wars, often resulting in the deaths of the men chained to the oars. The authorities treated the Huguenots with great cruelty unless they consented to recant their belief. Recanting was made very easy; all they had



La Réale ('The Royal') flagship of the French galley fleet under Louis XIV

to do was take off their hats while mass was being said in the ship and it was considered an act of conformity, with very little else required. Despite this, by the grace of God many were given exceptional strength to stand strong in the day of temptation. One elderly man, sentenced in 1687, celebrated his convict's chain in verse:

How blessed is the chain,
That binds me to my God!
There's no sorrow nor pain
But will at the Great Day
To sweet pleasure be changed
O happy destiny
Which fills my desire!¹⁰

Another man, a magistrate and king's counsel who was also condemned to the galleys, wrote in a letter,

I can tell you with sincerity that the prisons and dark cells which I have endured for more than six months, and the chain which I now wear around my neck, far from shaking my resolve which God has put into my heart, have only made it firmer. I have sought God, in this time of my sufferings, in a way very different than I did in my worldly prosperity, and I can say that He has permitted me to find Him ... In the midst of the transitory afflictions which I am undergoing by His good pleasure, He has caused me to taste the true and solid blessings.¹¹

Another prisoner, Jean Marteilhe, was a sixteen-year-old lad sentenced to the galleys for trying to flee France and was arrested at the border. He spent twelve years on the galleys, despite many attempts to make him change his faith.¹²

The women, while spared the galleys, were imprisoned instead. Blanche Gammond was later arrested and imprisoned for not recanting her faith. Of one prison she wrote,

That night they removed us into a cell in the moat. It was full of vermin of all kinds, the walls were running down with wet, the filth cannot be described, we were poisoned with foul smells and had neither food nor clothes. Throughout the night rats of an enormous size fell upon us from the ceiling and ran over us as we lay down.¹³

The French Revolution



The persecution of the Huguenots continued for many decades, until 1787 when King Louis XVI signed the Edict of Versailles, which offered some relief to non-Roman Catholics. It still denied political rights and public worship, but it officially ended religious persecution in France.

In 1789 the French Revolution swept across the country. Widespread distress and unrest led to the storming of the Bastille Prison on 14 July 1789, and with the overthrow of the *Ancien Regime*, the feudal system and hereditary monarchy were abolished. The *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* in 1789 stated that men are born and remain free and equal in rights, and gave civil equality, freedom of conscience, and freedom of worship.

In 1793 Louis XVI was executed, and the Reign of Terror commenced with the formation of the Public Safety Committee. The anti-Christian, secular beliefs of the revolutionaries swept away all religion, replacing it with the cult of the Supreme Being: a deist state religion. The Roman Catholic Church was suspended, lands taken, priests exiled, and hundreds killed. Between twenty and forty thousand people were killed during the Reign of Terror; the largest proportional group was the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church. Approximately thirty thousand priests

were forced to leave France, and the several hundred who did not leave were killed.

It is thought that the Reign of Terror had less of an impact on the Protestant churches: they had only had a measure of freedom for a few short years, so were used to meeting in secret. Public worship was forbidden, so they returned to their clandestine meetings.

Religion under Napoleon

Napoleon took control of France in the early 1800s and realised that the religious divisions needed to be ended in order to unite the country. In 1801 he made an agreement with the pope called the Concordat of 1801, seeking reconciliation between the revolutionaries and the Roman Catholic Church, solidifying it as the majority church of France with most of its civil status restored, though the vast lands and money were not restored. This concordat stated that Roman Catholicism was the religion of the great majority of the French but not the official state religion, thus maintaining religious freedom for the Protestants. In April 1802 Bonaparte formally recognised the Lutheran and reformed churches in France, and provided for their ministers to be paid by the state. It also granted them several previously Roman Catholic churches as compensation for Protestant churches being destroyed during the persecutions. The first reformed church was legally established in Paris in 1802. By 1804 120 reformed ministers were on the state payroll.

Secularism

Beginning in 1879, the French state began a gradual national secularisation program



starting with the removal of priests from the administrative committees of hospitals and boards of charity, and in 1880 with the substitution of lay women for nuns in hospitals. As the century passed there was an increasing move towards secularism, for example the introduction of divorce, legalising work on Sundays, and secularising schools and hospitals.

In 1905 the French law on the separation of church and the state was passed. This law prohibited the government from recognising, paying salaries, or subsidising any religion. However, it guaranteed freedom of public worship so was welcomed by most Protestants.

Twentieth-century Protestants

Today there are around two million French Protestants, representing about two to three per cent of the country's population.¹⁴ Protestantism ranks third after Roman Catholicism and Islam.¹⁵ There are Lutheran, Reformed, Evangelical, and Pentecostal churches. The regions of Alsace (which did not belong to France in the sixteenth century so escaped many of the persecutions and wars) and Languedoc have the highest proportion of Protestants.

The Reformed Church of France was organised in 1938 by merging several reformed churches. The United Protestant Church of France is the largest



Protestant church in France today, formed in 2013 with the unification of the Reformed Church of France and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of France. Very sadly, conformity to social pressures has recently led to this group becoming increasingly liberal.

The National Union of Independent Reformed Evangelical Churches of France (also known as the Evangelical Reformed Churches of France) contains the more conservative Calvinist churches who adhere to the French Confession of Faith of La Rochelle 1559. The Union of Protestant Churches of Alsace and Lorraine remains a separate group.

There has been an increasing number of evangelical French Protestants over the last couple of decades, while other churches have declined in numbers. At the end of 2022 it was reported that there were at least 2,700 evangelical places of worship across the country, with around 745,000 active evangelical Christians.¹⁶

In October 1985, to commemorate the tercentenary of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the French president, François Mitterrand, formally apologised to the descendants of Huguenots around the world for past governmental persecution.

The French Protestant Bible

Due to the persecution and hardships in France it was difficult for one authoritative version of the French Bible to emerge. The first translation into French was by Lefèvre, although from the Latin Vulgate. Five years later the Olivetan Bible was published, the first from the Biblical languages. This Bible was subsequently revised by Calvin (although Calvin used his own translation in his commentaries), Beza, Stephen, and then by Beza again. Various revisions in the

Genevan family then followed, culminating in a major revision in 1588.

After this there was no major revision of the Geneva Bible for more than one hundred years. In 1696 Martin published his first edition of the French New Testament and then undertook an official revision of the whole Bible, following the Blaeu Geneva Bible of 1687, at the request of the Huguenot church in the Netherlands. This resulted in the publication of the 1707 Martin Bible, which moved back towards the French Genevan Bible tradition. The final revision of Martin was published in 1712. It is almost the same as that of 1707, but has slightly improved language. However, the 1712 edition does not put in italics the words which were added to provide the sense.

The language of the original French Bibles is very different to French today. Forced to flee their homeland, the Huguenots carried with them their French Bibles, but soon lost their French-Christian heritage. Thus the French Genevan Bible did not have an impact on the evolution of the French language in the same way that the Authorised (King James) Version had on English, as it was largely banished from French culture. This means that the language of the Geneva now strikes the modern reader as very dated or incomprehensible in places.

In the nineteenth century a team in Switzerland led by Louis Gaussen—the great Swiss defender of plenary verbal inspiration—made a revision of the Bible bringing it closer to the Biblical language texts as the French language had evolved significantly since the original translation. This version is often referred to as the Lausanne Bible of 1872.

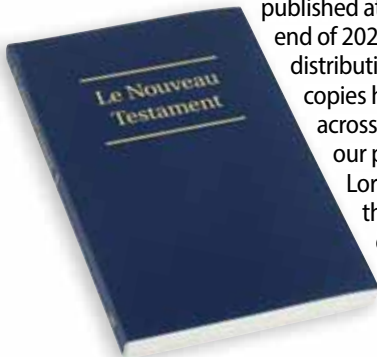
There are many other French Bibles, but sadly these have textual and translation failings.

The TBS French Project: A Genevan Bible for the Twenty-First Century

For many years the Society published the Second version of the French Scriptures (finished in 1880 and revised substantially between 1975 and 1978) but over time became aware of the problems and inaccuracies in this edition. In 2005 the Society ceased publication of the Second and embarked on preparing a new and more faithful edition of the French Bible. After several years of preliminary work, in 2013 a revision of the 1872 Lausanne Bible commenced with reference to the Martin Bible of 1707/1712. Extensive changes have been made to bring French tenses and vocabulary into greater conformity with modern usage, with the aim of providing a version of the French Bible that is intelligible to all parts of the French-speaking world.

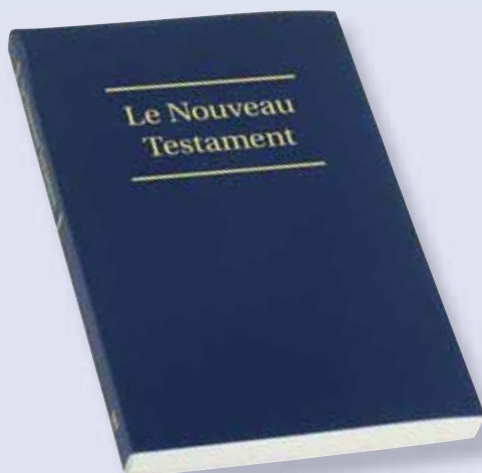
Likewise, in considering the vocabulary used the revisers seek to keep the broader French-speaking populations in mind—approximately 275 million people throughout the world speak French. All five continents have pockets of native French speakers and it is an official language in 29 countries including France, Algeria, Belgium, Canada, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Switzerland.

The TBS French New Testament was published at the very end of 2022, and the distribution of the copies has started across the world. It is our prayer that the Lord would bless the distribution of these New Testaments to hungry souls.



ENDNOTES:

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French New Testament

The TBS French New Testament is now available in paperback and digital format.

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PREMIÈRE ÉPÎTRE DE

Jean,

APÔTRE

1 Ce qui était dès le commencement, ce que nous avons vu de nos yeux, ce que nous avons contemplé et que nos mains ont touché au sujet de la Parole de la vie – et la vie a été manifestée, et nous l'avons vue, et nous en rendons témoignage, et nous vous annonçons la vie éternelle, qui était auprès du Père et qui nous a été manifestée – ² ce que nous avons vu et entendu, nous vous l'annonçons, afin que, vous aussi, vous soyez en communion avec nous. Or notre communion est avec le Père et avec son Fils Jésus-Christ; ³ et nous vous écrivons ces choses, afin que votre joie soit complète.

⁴ Et ceci est la promesse que nous avons rendue de lui et que nous vous annonçons, c'est que Dieu est lumière et qu'il n'y a pas en lui de ténèbres. ⁵ Si nous disons que nous sommes en communion avec lui et que nous marchions dans les ténèbres, nous mentons et nous ne pratiquons pas la vérité; ⁶ mais si nous marchons dans la lumière, comme il est lui-même dans la lumière, nous sommes en communion les uns avec les autres, et le sang de Jésus-Christ son Fils nous purifie de tout péché.

⁷ Si nous disons que nous n'avons pas de péché, nous nous égareons nous-mêmes et la vérité n'est pas en nous. ⁸ Si nous confessons nos péchés, il est fidèle et juste pour nous pardonner nos péchés et nous purifier de toute injustice. ⁹ Si nous disons que nous n'avons pas péché, nous faisons de lui un menteur et sa parole n'est pas en nous.

2 Mes petits enfants, je vous écris ces choses, afin que vous ne péchiez pas; et si quelqu'un a péché, nous avons pour défenseur auprès du Père, Jésus-Christ le juste. ³ Et il est lui-même la propitiation pour nos péchés, et non pour les nôtres seulement, mais aussi pour le monde entier. ⁴ Et par ceci nous savons que nous l'avons connu, si nous gardons ses commandements. ⁵ Celui qui dit: Je l'ai connu, tout en ne gardant pas ses commandements, est un menteur et la vérité n'est pas en lui; ⁶ mais quant à celui qui garde sa parole, l'amour de Dieu est véritablement accompli en lui. Par cela nous connaissons que nous sommes en lui. ⁷ Celui qui dit demeurer en lui, doit aussi marcher lui-même comme il a marché.

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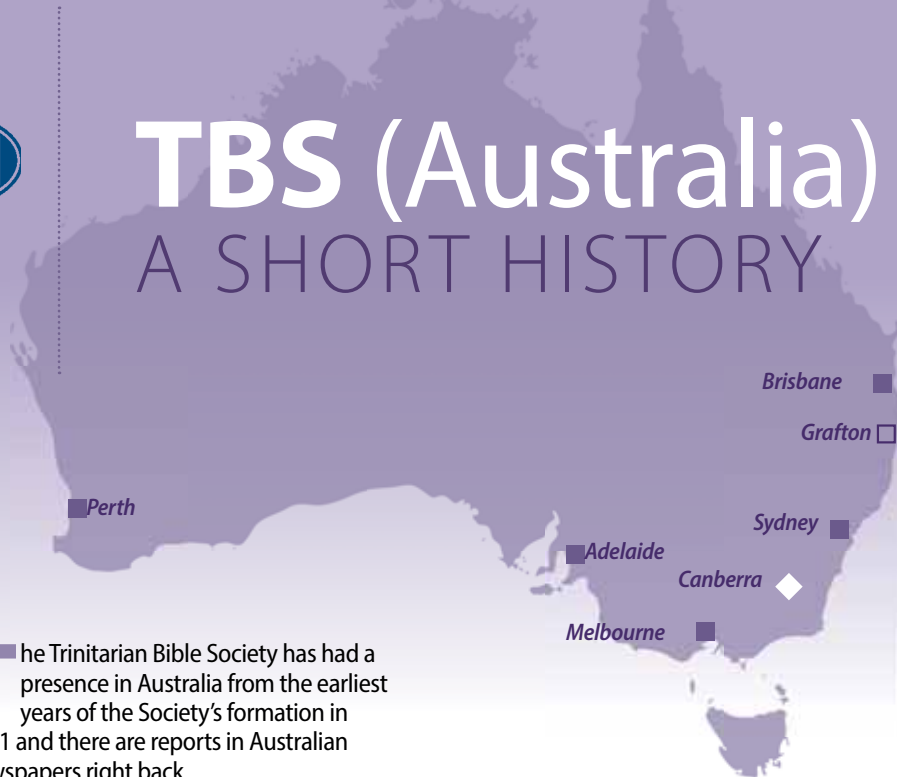
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TBS (Australia)

A SHORT HISTORY



The Trinitarian Bible Society has had a presence in Australia from the earliest years of the Society's formation in 1831 and there are reports in Australian newspapers right back to 1832 regarding annual meetings of TBS held in London. Australian auxiliaries started to be formed from 1887, with the first being in Sydney. The Clarence River Auxiliary (taking in Grafton and surrounds) came into existence in 1903, with collectors travelling around the district and sending the people's contributions to London. This system continued for many years, with more auxiliaries formed around the country. In 1911 the Society's Secretary, the Rev. J. Christopher Smith visited Australia to organise and establish these auxiliaries. This was during the time that the British and Foreign Bible Society began to circulate 'a translation of the Clementine Vulgate in



TBS (Australia) office today

Roman Catholic countries' which caused many people to shift their support to the Trinitarian Bible Society.

The work carried out by the individual auxiliaries continued until the Society appointed an Australian representative to oversee the work in Australia. For many years Mr and Mrs A. Mitchell were the



A photo taken at the formation of TBS (Australia): Rev. John Mackenzie, Mr Hank Optland, Mr Calvin Mackenzie, Mr John Stafford, and Mr Rowland Wheatley



The first TBS (Australia) office

Australian representatives, dealing with sales, membership, and promotion across the continent. By early 1990 they were wanting to retire but were eager to see the work they had been doing carry on, so they approached Mr Calvin Mackenzie, Secretary of the Sydney Auxiliary, about potentially taking on the role as representative.

In the early 1990s Mr Calvin Mackenzie was contacted by Mr Paul Rowland, TBS General Secretary at the time, who raised with him the possibility of establishing a national

secretary's role and a board to oversee the work in Australia. Thus Mr Mackenzie wrote to Mr Rowland in November 1991, agreeing to take on the role of secretary and recommending some reformed men who could be appointed to the first board of TBS (Australia), which was then formed in 1992. In November 1992 Mr Rowland wrote a letter to all TBS members, notifying them of the new arrangements for the Society in Australia and who the new board would consist of, saying, 'These gentlemen, together with Mr Calvin Mackenzie, the recently



90 Victoria Street, Grafton



Inside TBS (Australia) with office, storage, and packing facilities



appointed Secretary of Trinitarian Bible Society (Australia), will be seeking to co-ordinate and promote the work of the Society throughout Australia on behalf of the London Committee.

Mr and Mrs Mitchell handed over the responsibility for memberships, meetings, promotion, and auxiliaries, amongst other duties, to Mr Mackenzie.

One of the first tasks of the new branch was to establish TBS (Australia) legally. Mr John Marshall and Mr Hank Optland devoted much time and effort into establishing the paperwork so that TBS (Australia) could be set up as a 'Company Limited by Guarantee', including obtaining an exemption so that the word 'Limited' did not have to appear in the company's name. Four years later the board registered as such and held its first meeting of



the company on 15 March 1996. At the inaugural meeting Mr Calvin Mackenzie was appointed as the Company Secretary, a position he held until 2003. The board members present at this meeting included Mr D. P. Rowland (TBS General Secretary), the Rev. J. S. Mackenzie, Mr R. Wheatley, Mr J. Marshall, Mr C. Tuck (Vice-Chairman), Mr C. Mackenzie, Mr H. Optland, the Rev. M. Stuart, Mr K. Salomons, and Mr R. Klein. At this meeting Mr C. Tuck was appointed TBS Deputation Speaker to raise TBS's profile throughout Australia.

Within a year of TBS (Australia) becoming a Company Limited by Guarantee, the book sales were moved from Adelaide to

Sydney. Prior to this, the late Rev. John S. and Mrs Christine Mackenzie were the official sellers and distributors of TBS Bibles and literature for many years—during the 1980s and 1990s Rev. Mackenzie utilised his bookshop in Adelaide, the Reformation Book Centre, to supply quite large volumes of TBS Bibles and materials. Mr Calvin Mackenzie, based in Sydney, took on the practical side of the work, combining the memberships, meetings, promotion, and auxiliaries with the sale and distribution of Bibles, and centralised them all in the Sydney office.

In 1998 the sales side of the Australian Society's work was moved to Grafton in northern New South Wales, and in 2002 the Society opened to the public its first office/store in Grafton. There have been two more moves since then, first in 2007 to 90 Victoria Street, and then in 2015 to the current office: 47 Queen Street.

Today the TBS (Australia) office in Grafton is open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday to Friday. There is usually only one person in the office on these days to take phone calls, pack orders, and do all the other necessary jobs. The branch employs two staff, one part-time (sixteen hours per week) and one casual (four hours per week). Whereas other Society branches may have specialist staff for specific jobs, TBS (Australia) has more of a 'jack of all trades' approach: the same person who answers the phone also enters the order, packs it, and dispatches it, orders new stock from the UK, unpacks the stock when it arrives, and deals with administrative duties such as bookkeeping, taxes, wages, and paying the accounts. The office staff are the face and voice of the Society in Australia and keep in touch with the loyal and much-valued customers and friends.

In recent years the sales volume of TBS (Australia) has increased, largely due to

supplying a major bookshop. Additionally, Gospels have been particularly popular, so much so that the branch plan, God willing, to begin printing the four Gospels in Australia for the first time this year. English Words of Life Calendars have been printed in Australia since 2017.

2023 marks 235 years since the first sermon was preached in Australia on 3 February 1788, so a new commemorative Bible is being published for distribution across the continent this year with the words from the first text preached on the continent, 'What shall I render unto the LORD *for* all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD' (Psalm 116.12–13).

We would like to thank all our Australian friends for their loyal support over the years, staff present and past (particularly Denell White for her current labours), and also the board of TBS (Australia) for their work in directing the branch. We would encourage your prayers for TBS (Australia), that the Lord would use it to the furtherance of His kingdom and for the blessing of many souls in that vast land.

New commemorative Bible





By Hannah Woodhams
Sales and Grants Assistant

Dutch Scriptures



In the late nineteenth century around 60% of the population were still Protestant and 35% were Roman Catholic. Today over half the population identify as non-religious. The latest data (from 2020) puts Roman Catholics at around 20% of the population, with Protestants accounting for around 15%.

History of the Dutch Bible

Before the days of the printing press several portions and Bibles in Dutch were produced. In the tenth century the Psalms were translated into Old Dutch. After that came the *Historia Scholastica*, a Bible history in Latin used as a school textbook. In 1271 Jacob van Maerlant produced the *Rijmbijbel* (rhyme Bible), a poetical version of the *Historia* in Dutch, which proved popular with those unlearned in Latin. Two further 'History Bibles' in Dutch followed, both strongly dependent on the *Historia* and the *Rijmbijbel*.

The final portion of the Scriptures that was translated before the invention of the printing press was the New Testament by lay brother Johannes Scutken of the Windesheim monastery. However, as with Wycliffe's English Bible, it was hampered by being translated from the Latin Vulgate. Two important Protestant Bibles were produced in the 1500s: the Liesvelt (1526)

Introduction

The Netherlands, known colloquially as Holland, is a Western European country of 17.7 million inhabitants, of whom approximately 74% are ethnically Dutch. It is one of the three Low Countries of Europe, along with its neighbour Belgium and the smaller Luxembourg. The Netherlands is a flat, low-lying country with 27% of the land being below sea level, much of which has been reclaimed from the sea and lakes through ingenious engineering.

Christianity in the Netherlands

From the tenth to the twentieth centuries, the Dutch were predominantly Christian.

and the Deux-Aes (1562). The Liesvelt was based on the available parts of Luther's German Bible and supplemented by a rendering of the Latin Vulgate where Luther had not yet completed his German translation. The Deux-Aes was to become the standard church and household Bible until the arrival of the Statenvertaling. Its Old Testament was a translation of Luther's German text; the New Testament was translated directly from the Greek Textus Receptus. The New Testament formed much of the Statenvertaling which was to follow.

The Statenvertaling

Surprisingly, given the significant involvement of the Dutch in the Reformation it wasn't until relatively late in that era that a complete vernacular Dutch Bible translated from the Biblical languages was produced. The famous Synod of Dort (1618–1619), known for articulating the Canons of Dort, included eight sessions on Bible translation which resulted in a request for a Dutch Bible to be translated carefully from the Biblical languages. Six men from around the Netherlands discussed the Dutch to be used for the translation, taking into account the various dialects. The Statenvertaling was finally published in 1637. It enjoyed an excellent reception, not only amongst Dutch-speaking people but further afield too—in 1645 Theodore Haak was requested by the Westminster Assembly to translate the whole Dutch Bible with its notes into English.

Today, the Trinitarian Bible Society is pleased to circulate editions of the Statenvertaling published by

Gereformeerde Bijbelstichting (Reformed Bible Society, also known as GBS), our sister society in the Netherlands, founded in 1966 to preserve and promote the use of the Statenvertaling.

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Page size: 156 x 104mm (6.1" x 4.1")

Thickness: 29mm (1.1")

Print size: 8 pts

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Dutch Articles

The following TBS articles are available in Dutch:

- The Wonder of the Book (NLDA009)
- The Lord Gave the Word (NLDA111)
- The Authorised (King James) Version: a Wonderful and Unfinished History (NLDA124)
- Is There a Missing Verse in Psalm 145? (NLDA127)
- A Textual Key to the New Testament (NLDA100)
- What Today's Christian needs to know about the Greek New Testament (NLDA104)

The Statenvertaling Bible and the articles are also available from GBS for those who live in the Netherlands: gbs.nl

Amsterdam skyline



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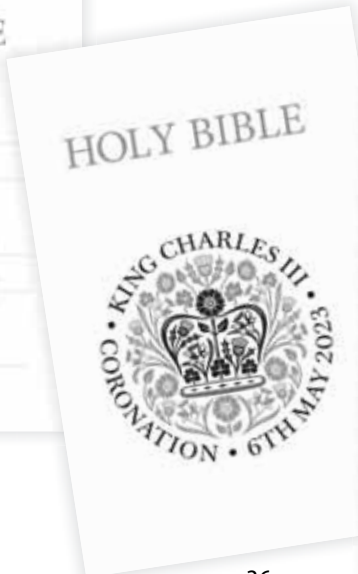
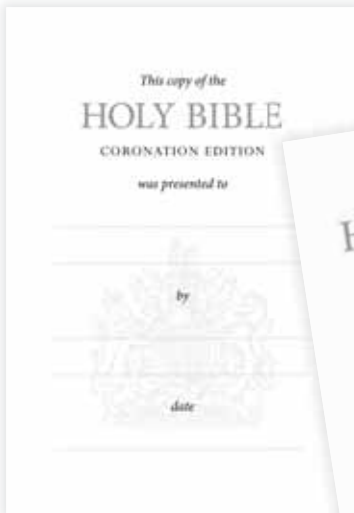
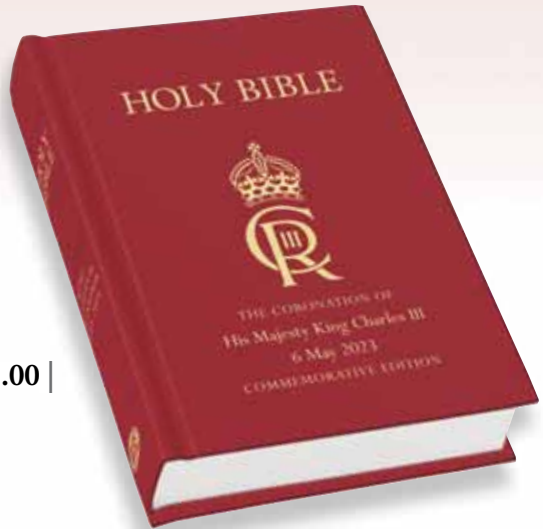
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Amharic New Testament and Psalms

Launch and Distribution

■ Bahir Dar
■ Debre Birhan
■ Addis Ababa
■ Debre Zeit
■ Adama

Last year we reported on the history and publication of the Amharic New Testament and Psalms (QR638 January–March 2022), and we are now delighted to be able to report on the distribution of these Scriptures. Approximately 26 million people speak Amharic in Ethiopia and another 4.5 million around the world. Our Amharic translator, Pastor Haileleul Emiru, has written an update on the work so far.



The full venue at Addis Ababa

*Jonathan Arnold
speaking at
Addis Ababa*



The Amharic New Testament and Psalms was completed, printed, and shipped to Ethiopia, and delivered to our storage facility on 1 October 2022. We were thankful for that delivery, and were planning to have several launches in different cities and towns of Ethiopia.

Several things were done in advance of the distribution to make the launches effective. The first was making known



Amharic translator, Haileleul Emiru

the translation project to church leaders, key evangelical leaders, and different groups. In one instance we held a 'kick-off' meeting for 71 key evangelical leaders at Mado Hotel on 30 July 2022. An hour-long PowerPoint presentation was held, starting by showing slides of the history of Trinitarian Bible Society: how it began and for what it stood for the last 191 years. This was followed by the history of the Amharic Bible translations. The aim was to let evangelical church leaders know what TBS is working on and why the new translation into the Amharic language is needed. In the Lord's goodness this worked and, as a result, we are seeing many leaders give us their right hands and stand with us.

The official launches started on 10 December 2022. These took place in seven different places; each followed the same order of service. We saw such desire that we can say it was like a revival meeting; people were so eager to receive the Scriptures and the news went in many places. People were moved and are still talking about the blessings they received at the time.



First Launch at Addis Ababa

The first launch took place in the capital, Addis Ababa. Over 1,800 people were gathered at a church in the middle of the city. The launch service started at 3.30 p.m. and finished at 5.20 p.m. It started by singing a hymn, followed by a welcome speech by the translator. Pastor Jonathan Arnold, General Secretary of the TBS, was able to visit Ethiopia, and spoke about the history of TBS and its stand. He further mentioned the principles of translation that TBS follows and the general policy of the work. He explained the TBS's work worldwide and willingness to work in Ethiopia



too. Key leaders stood with us at the official opening of the Scripture to the people; the time was amazing, with much joy and thanksgiving to our Lord.

Second Launch at Debre Zeit

On 11 December we went to a city called Debre Zeit. Many gathered there. The meeting took place in the afternoon and followed the same order we had the previous day. The church's building was fully packed; some even had to stand at the entrance. Leaders of local churches stood with us to officially open the Scripture after it was distributed to the participants. We all in one accord read 2 Timothy 3.14–17. People rejoiced in receiving the Scripture translated from Received Text in their own hands.

Third Launch at Debre Birhan

The launch at Debre Birhan was held on 14 December 2022. Debre Birhan is a city 127 kilometres from the capital Addis Ababa. There are two Baptist churches and other evangelical

churches; we had the meeting in one of the evangelical churches. The event took place in the evening starting at 6.00 p.m. as it was a weekday. The place began to be crowded as an unexpected number of people came. We again followed the same order of launch, and the Rev. Craig Dennison, representing the TBS, spoke about the Society and what it is for Ethiopians to have the Word of God from the reliable source of the Greek New Testament. Many attentively followed the launch and witnessed the work of the Lord in their generation, expressing their joy in the work and asking to be members of the Society. Local church leaders stood with us to officially open the Scripture and read together a key text on inspiration of Scripture in 2 Timothy 3.14–17. Then leaders of local churches were asked to read other key verses—Psalm 19, Psalm 119.81–96, 1 John 5.1–8, 1 Timothy 3.14–16, and 1 Peter 3.1–7. Believers who heard these verses read clearly saw why this new translation is really needed, and thanked and praised the Lord our God.

Fourth Launch at Bahir Dar

The fourth launch was at the city of Bahir Dar: the Amhara region official city and a vital place and region for the future distribution of the Amharic New Testament and Psalms. The work of persuasion on the leaders of local churches proved fruitful and an unexpected number of believers gathered in the church in which we had the meeting. This





A packed room listening intently

followed the same order as the previous events, with many rejoicing in the work of the Lord. The ushers distributed the Scriptures, the leaders stood with us, and we officially opened the Scripture for them to use it. Dr Ayele from Sweden spoke about the challenge and blessings of translation, mentioning the

care needed and the battles fought but also the blessing of the end result with the salvation of souls.

Unexpected Invitation to Launch in Two More Places

While in Bahir Dar we received an invitation from a group of forty-eight local church fellowship leaders in the eastern part of Addis Ababa to visit a place commonly known as Kotebe. The leaders pleaded with us to give them time and do a launch service for their full-time ministers and church officers. They called a meeting on 24 December from 5.00 p.m. We accepted the invitation and gave them



Distribution of the New Testament and Psalms



over seven hundred copies of the New Testament and Psalms. Around five hundred church workers were at the place of gathering for the launch at Kotebe, and all received a copy and were happy to have one of this historic translation.

At Kotebe we also met two hundred university students who came from every part of the country and invited us to be at their fellowship meeting. We introduced the work of the TBS and explained why this new translation is needed, gave them each a copy, and encouraged them to read and study the Word of God.

Fifth Launch at Nazareth (Adama)

The last launch was done at Nazareth. This is a business city with many evangelical churches. Although the city is dominated by Muslims the Lord has His own witnesses among them. The local church leaders called believers to the launch. There were many and they received the New Testament and Psalms with joy and thanksgiving to the Lord.

Conclusion

The launch of the new Amharic translation in Ethiopia went very well. People were thankful that they were able to see this in their lifetime and promised to pray and stand with us to see the completion of the Old Testament. There are many other places we need to go in Ethiopia and tell of this work of the Lord. From the 10,000 copies we received we distributed over 8,000 and still need more. Please pray for more New Testaments and Psalms, and that we are able to set up an office of the TBS to help distribute the Word of God throughout the country. There is a great need: many are calling and asking for copies to distribute in prisons, monasteries, schools, and many other places. Thank you for all your prayers and support. May our God bless you and bless the work of His Kingdom among all nations.

We are very grateful to firstBible International for their support in printing these New Testaments and Psalms, and to the Brownlee Trust for assisting the TBS to be registered with the Ethiopian authorities.



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 Hungary

We believe it is important to care for children and youth because they are the keys to our future. One of our visions is that we would like to have local worship groups, leaderships, pastors in every church. To achieve this, we take Bible studies/religious education lessons at local Primary Schools. We have 10 classes. Last summer, we held Children's Days again in Budapest, Tolna and Ozora. At Christmas we held our usual Church Meetings again in every church and we gave 200 packs, some Christian books

and 500 TBS calendars for children and families in need.

We went to Ukraine in summer and autumn. We went out in a car and trailer full of non-perishable food and medicines. These things seemed such a small thing in this war and humanitarian disaster, but I remember the words of Jesus: 'Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me' (Matthew 25.40), so we will continue to go and help as soon as it possible in the future.

Children receiving Words of Life Calendars in Hungary





Africa



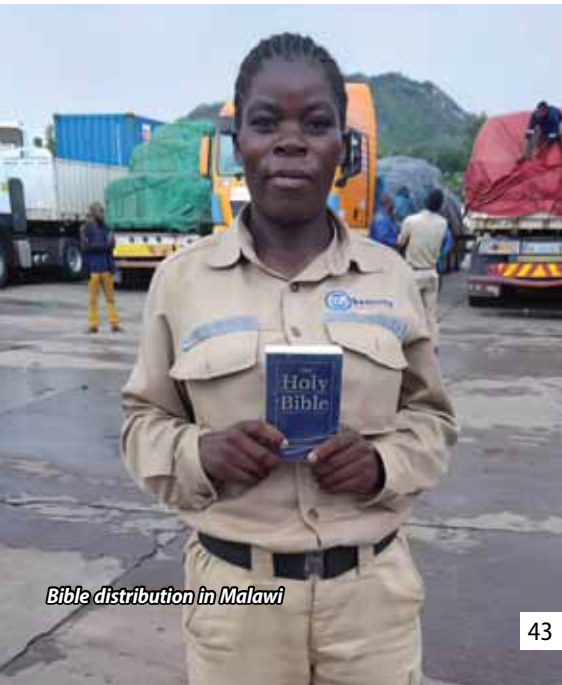
From Ghana

I bring greetings to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are very glad also for the support you gave to us



Bibles for children in Ghana

which has broadened the scope of our ministry and what it stands for. It's great joy here among young and old Christians as they receive their free Holy Bibles to read. These Bibles you sent to our ministry



Bible distribution in Malawi

have impacted many lives by the grace of God as you can see in the photos. Since our evangelism team is in our rural communities the need for Bibles is always a major issue since they can't afford one for themselves. We are having a high demand for Holy Bibles by our new converts and other Christians across the country.



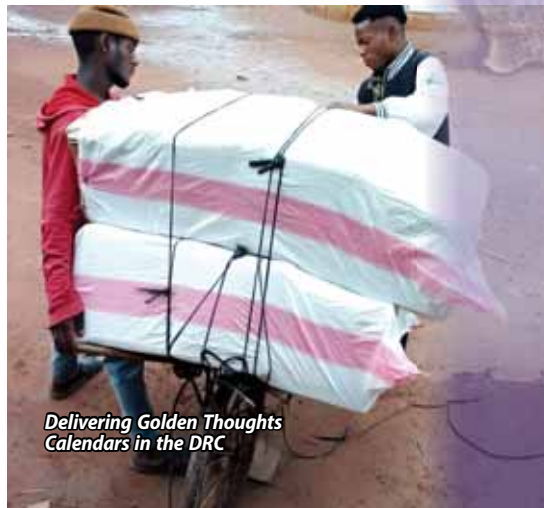
From Malawi

Bibles were gratefully received in Malawi. A photo of this can be seen at the bottom of the page.



From Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Golden Thoughts Calendars continue to be distributed around the world. In these photos, the transportation and distribution



Delivering Golden Thoughts Calendars in the DRC

of the French edition of the calendar are shown in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

From Nigeria

We thank your wonderful donations of your Golden Thoughts Calendar 2023 you send to us. This wonderful calendar revives our families every morning. After morning prayer each family reads your Scripture promises of God. It brings revival to our mission church outreaches.

Now we have 1,000 young people and adults converged together, and need your Bible to read daily and meditate on it. Thank you; join us for bringing the light of Gospel to all rural villages here.

Asia

From India

The Simte Bible continues to be distributed across the state of Manipur, including some very remote villages.



Simte Bible distribution to a rural community

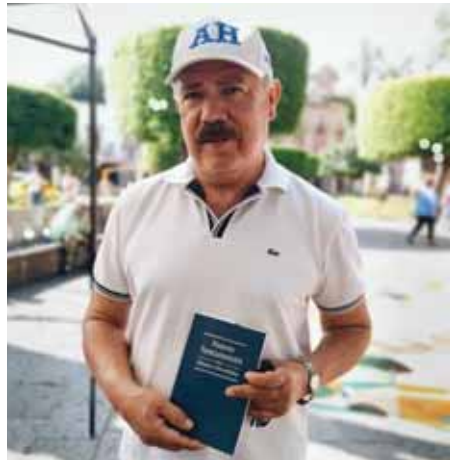


The Americas



From Mexico

We are thankful to see the distribution of copies of the TBS Spanish New Testament with Psalms and Proverbs in Mexico, along with calendars. Please continue to pray that the Scriptures will be blessed to them. We are grateful to GBS for funding the printing of these New Testament with Psalms and Proverbs.



Distribution in Mexico

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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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