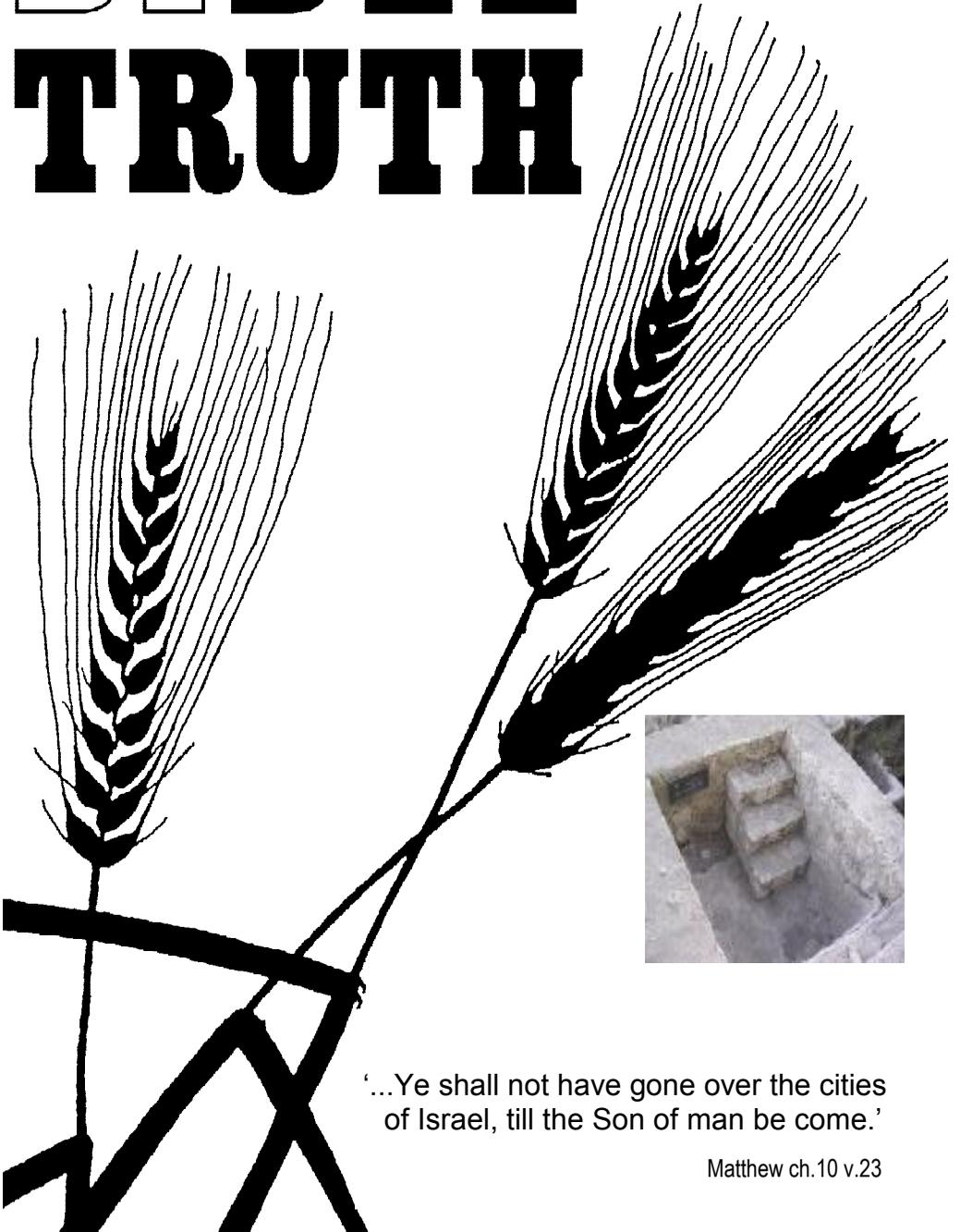


# BIBLE TRUTH

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'...Ye shall not have gone over the cities  
of Israel, till the Son of man be come.'

Matthew ch.10 v.23

# **The Great Carta - 800th anniversary**

*Some Salient Points by Paul Boyd-Lee*

27 July 2014 marked when King John disastrously failed in the Battle of Bouvines, in Western France, when he had hoped to recover lands he lost to the French king ten years earlier. He returned to England to find his finances in ruins and his authority in tatters, all making up the ingredients for civil war.

By January 1215 the furious Barons of England met at the Temple (Church) amongst the Inns of Court in the City of London. Here they tried to invoke the Winchester Oath, which a couple of years earlier, King John had agreed to, in addition to the Coronation Charter of rights granted by Henry I. The negotiations collapsed in spite of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Stephen Langton trying to secure agreement between barons and king.

Langton had recently returned from exile in Paris where he had taught theology and whilst there had developed a Constitution with these five principles for a nation governed justly under God.

- 'For protection against wicked kings in Israel, God had ordered the written codification of laws. Modern law should be similar.
- In honour of God, the people have the right to resist a wicked king if he commands a mortal sin.
- The people have right to resist a king rendering a decision without the judgment of his court.
- The Church is the congregation of all the faithful, including the clergy and laity who elect the king.
- The Archbishop, because of his particular dignity, has the duty to act in the name of all the faithful, both clergy and laity.



Magna Carta with its 63 clauses & 76 lines written in Latin on a single vellum skin (calfskin).

On 15 June 1215 Langton's initiative and persistence at Runnymede (*Anglo-Saxon - regular meeting, meadow*), beside the River Thames helped to persuade King John to put his seal to the Great Charta presented by the barons gathered there. The Charter's clauses were comprehensive, covering rights of the Church, tenants, tradesmen, power of royal officials, forestry, foreign mercenaries and so on. The one city to be mentioned was London and from the Charta stemmed the Royal Charter of the same year directing that its Lord Mayor should henceforth be elected by London's people.

One may speculate whether those gathered at Runnymede had any idea how long and how extensively the principles embedded therein would extend. It was drafted to restrict the sovereign's power and protect rights of the monarch's subjects but in effect it became an icon for freedom and democracy throughout the world to our own day.

'No freeman shall be imprisoned except by the lawful judgment of his equals, and, no one shall be denied or delayed justice' were the core principles behind it which found their way into many national constitutions the world over. This is amazing since they originated from, what was then, the insignificant Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples. It is a mute point though that governments of these same people today appear only to pay lip service to those freedoms once dearly held.