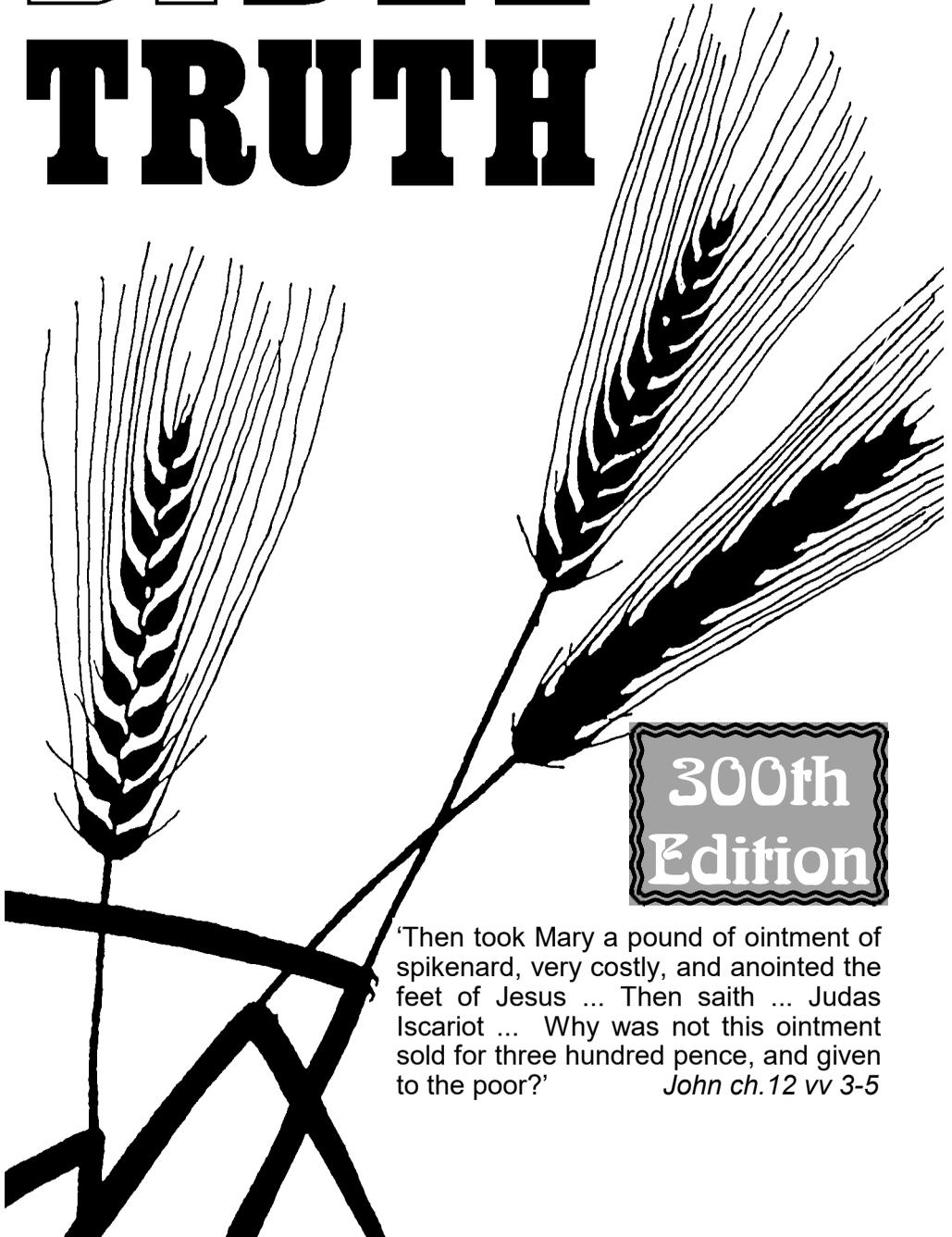


BIBLE TRUTH

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'Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus ... Then saith ... Judas Iscariot ... Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?'
John ch.12 vv 3-5

Dr Michael Bennett OBE was brought up to know about the Israel peoples and with this knowledge founded Action by Christian Teaching and Studies (ACTS) whilst at Aberystwyth University. This group of students wrote several booklets that are now part of our book sales. Michael graduated to become one of the world's leading plant breeding biologists and as such became Keeper of the Jodrell Laboratory at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. He is noted for his research and many publications on interpreting Bible Prophecy. He is a founder member and President of the BIBTF.



The Importance of the Bible

by Dr Michael D. Bennett OBE

The single most important formative event during the last millennium of British history, was undoubtedly the giving to the British people of the Bible in their native tongue. Long before the Reformation the desire to translate the Scriptures into the native British tongue was felt by King Alfred. This godly and scholarly English king began to translate parts of the Bible into Anglo-Saxon during the ninth century AD. Alfred was prevented from giving the scriptures to his people in their native tongue by the limited technology of his day, when books had to be laboriously copied by hand, and by the short time available to him for making his translation. Nevertheless, his pioneering work was not in vain. God's word does not return to Him void, but it accomplishes whatever God pleases. So it was that the desire to give the Bible to the British people in their own language remained alive until the time when, by God's grace, it should see glorious fulfilment. The gift of the Bible in English to the British people, was made possible by a fervid urge to make an English translation of the Scriptures. This urge moved not one, but several capable and diligent men during the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, including Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale and Cranmer. The first complete translation of the Bible into English was completed by Wycliffe and his colleagues in 1382-8. This was only the bud. The full beauty of the flower was not apparent until 1611 when the Authorised Version appeared.

It was at the same time as Englishmen were being impelled to translate the Bible into English that another Englishman, William Caxton (born circa 1422, died circa 1491), invented the printing press. Thus to England was revealed the technical knowledge which was to allow copies of the Bible to be produced more rapidly and more cheaply than ever before. It is not a coincidence that the first complete printed book was the Bible (in Latin). From 1537 onwards, the complete Bible was available printed in English. Later, in 1604, God put it into the mind of the British king, James the First of England (the Sixth of that name in Scotland) to support the production of a more excellent and more exact English translation of the Bible, which we know as the Authorised Version. This version was stamped with a triune hallmark of approval in that **first**, it was the concerted work of numerous scholars; **second**, and more important, it was the work of scholars with a living Christian faith in the truth and inspiration of the Scriptures; and **third**, it was an unhurried and unpersecuted work undertaken at the behest of, and under the protection of, a king ruling upon the throne of David.

The truth of the Bible, once delivered to the nation, found a ready acceptance in the hearts of the British people. Once the Bible became the people's book it was only a matter of time before they became 'the people of the book'. For many generations everyday life in Britain owed its essential character to a deep respect for Bible law, truth and revelation. The Bible was taught and read in churches, schools and homes alike. Its view was common knowledge, and its teaching common sense. Everything was seen through God's eyes, the individual, the family, the nation, the world, and the world to come. High and low alike knew what the Bible taught regarding God's character and ways. Ploughboys and statesmen alike read and understood God's interest in, and conduct of, the affairs of nations. Thus, this common view and common faith formed the basis of a meaningful equality and a strong force for national unity. The people knew and believed God's love and His justice. The battle of Armageddon, the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and His kingdom on earth, the judgement, heaven and hell, all had total reality for the people. Many saw that God had chosen some individuals and nations for a special purpose, while rejecting others. To these people it was clear that the British people had been called and chosen to serve God in the earth. They saw in the British not just 'the people of the book', but God's servant people, and **THE** people of the book'.

Such a faith engendered a readiness to emulate the examples of unselfishness found in the Bible and promoted a willingness to engage

in self-sacrifice for the common good. It led many to conduct not only their private affairs but also those of the nation in full accordance with Divine revelation. All these things produced a healthy state of national affairs and gave a sense of national purpose which led to even further elevation of the nation's standing in the world.

'Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.'

Proverbs ch.14 v.34

Today there are still those who will not believe that coincidence governs earthly events, especially those national affairs which are of far reaching consequence. We believe that the desire to translate the Bible into English; the obedience unto death in responding to this call; the invention of the printing press in England; the inspiration of the British king James and the willingness of the British people to embrace God's truth; all these things were the product of God's sovereign will deciding where, when, and how, His truth should be made widely available, understood, and accepted. We believe that it was as the direct result of possessing and embracing the Bible that Britain became a great, free nation.

'Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.'

John ch.8 vv 31-32

Great Britain was Bible based, biased, and blessed of God. One result of this national blessing was its overflow to affect other nations. The British fervour for translating the Scriptures was directed to making translations of the Bible in the languages of many other nations scattered all over the earth. Societies sprang up in Britain dedicated to translating, printing and distributing the Bible to men of all tribes and nations; and from Britain there streamed out an army of missionaries taking God's word to the ends of the earth.

A national awareness of Bible truth is not self perpetuating without positive action to maintain its existence. As some people die and new people are born, society can and will lose its Bible consciousness unless the word of God is taught and retaught continually. It is still necessary to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Once the Bible is no longer taught and read, its laws and truth must soon cease to be believed and acted upon. That is why it was a law in Israel that the entire law of God should be read aloud to a national assembly once every seven years.

‘And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, When all Israel is come to appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: And that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as ye live in the land’

Deuteronomy ch.31 vv 10-13

For a nation to recognise God’s authority in its national affairs, its rulers must know God’s law. In order to facilitate this knowledge, God decreed that each new Israelite king must write his own copy of God’s entire law.

‘... one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. ... And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them:’

Deuteronomy ch.17 vv 15 & 18-19

Today in Britain the Bible is not being read as widely as it was hitherto, neither is it being taught in our national schools as it used to be. The vast majority of our children do not attend Sunday schools, where they might hear God’s word; and, most of their parents rarely, if ever, darken a church doorway. Besides, many churches are far removed from proclaiming faith in the inspiration and authority of the Bible, instead they proclaim doctrines of men, and extol humanism. Whereas our people once saw the world through the eyes of the prophets and Apostles of Our Lord, they nowadays see it through their own godless eyes. They know so much, but understand so little. They see facts without reasons, and reason without purpose. They look but do not see, godless eyes cannot see straight. Atheists cannot think straight because they are intellectually and spiritually blind, and bent. Crooked men walk crooked roads! The present decline in moral standards in individual and national life was caused by neglect of the Bible. The world at large, and this nation with it, is slipping back fast into a darker age of violence, ignorance, and superstition, for the want of hearing of the Word of the Lord.

The present dark age of disbelief was clearly foretold by the 'more sure word of prophecy' and is, therefore, unavoidable.

'Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it.'

Amos ch.8 vv 11-12

'... the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, ... '

2 Thessalonians ch.2 vv 2-3

'This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be ... lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: ... Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth ... , so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. ... But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.'

2 Timothy ch.3 vv 1-2, 4-5, 7-8 & 13

Let no one be deceived, if the present trends of neglecting or rejecting God's word continue unchecked, then their inevitable consequence will be the total collapse of our society and nation. Moreover, only a new move by God's Spirit in promoting the proclamation of Bible truths and their acceptance by the common people can stem and reverse the downward trend. The question is 'Does the Bible give us cause to expect God to intervene in this way?' God's answer to this question is an emphatic 'Yes'.

The same word of prophecy which foretold the present rise of ungodliness in the world also affirms that God Himself will counter its advance among His people by a mighty infusion of His Word and Spirit. If Israel's blindness and Ephraim's drunkenness is unprecedented, so is God's antidote!

(a) 'Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, ... We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: ... Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment. ... When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit

of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him. And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; 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.'

Isaiah ch.59 vv 1-2, 10, 15 & 19-21

- (b) 'For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. ... Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. ... Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.'

Malachi ch.3 vv 6-7, 16-17 & ch.4 vv 4-6

- (c) 'Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.'

Jeremiah ch. 31 vv 31-34

(d) 'For thus saith the LORD, Thy bruise is incurable, and thy wound is grievous. There is none to plead thy cause, that thou mayest be bound up: thou hast no healing medicines. ... for I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity; because thy sins were increased. Why criest thou for thine affliction? thy sorrow is incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity: because thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee. ... For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD; because they called thee an Outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after. ... Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them. ... And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. ... in the latter days ye shall consider it. ... At the same time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.'

Jeremiah ch.30 vv 12-15, 17, 20, 22, 24 & ch.31 v.1

It is in believing anticipation of all these momentous events that we publish this. Our God will not disappoint us.

Our national legislators have robbed us of God's laws, and our teachers have robbed our children of God's truth, so that our land is fast becoming a wilderness. But, if our land is becoming a wilderness, let there be no lack of a voice to cry in it, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God'. We need to seek to restate and reaffirm, those Bible truths which were delivered to us originally by God Himself, and elevated and enriched the lives of our fathers. This is written in the hope that, by God's grace, it may be useful in restoring to some of our people a knowledge of the beauty and breadth of the Bible's teaching, revelation, and law. It is dedicated to the Lord with a prayer.

'O Lord, be gracious to us, and prosper Thy work in our hands. We confess our weakness, but proclaim Thy great strength. We ask humbly for wisdom, and expect to receive it liberally, as Thou art faithful. We desire nothing besides the anointing with Thy Holy Spirit. Without Thee our labour is vain. Speak Lord, and Thy servants shall hear. Turn Thou us, and we shall be turned; for Thou art the Lord our God'.
