

The Journal
of
The Church of England
(Continuing)



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CONSTITUTION

1. **Doctrine:** The doctrine of the Continuing Church shall be that of the 39 Articles of Religion understood in their original, natural and intended sense.
2. **Worship:** The worship of the Continuing Church shall be generally according to the Book of Common Prayer (1662).

The Authorised Version of the Bible shall be the only version used in the lectern and the pulpit and in public readings and expositions at all meetings of the Continuing Church.

3. **Ministry:** The consecration and ordination of ministers shall be according to the Ordinal of the Book of Common Prayer (1662). The Continuing Church believes in the ministry of women according to Scripture which does not permit them to teach or exercise authority, particularly as bishops, priests, and deacons.
4. **Discipline:** The church shall be episcopally governed. A general assembly shall be held not less than once a year consisting of the bishop and the ministers of the church and representatives of the local congregations to transact the business of the denomination and for mutual encouragement and edification.
5. **Membership:** New churches may apply for membership of the Continuing Church on the basis of their agreement with the doctrine, worship and discipline of that body.

Membership of the local church shall be on the basis of baptism and confirmation and approval by the local presbyter.

Any matters incapable of resolution shall be referred to the Ordinary.

The Continuing Church publishes a prayer letter, "Intercessions." It is available free of charge to those who would like to receive news and to pray for the various needs.

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Dear Friends,

“Unto the elect lady and her children” (2 John 1)

Most commentators on God’s Word through the ages have been satisfied that the aged Apostle John meant a church, not a lady. It shows that it was no longer possible to call a spade a spade, such was the paranoia over Christ amongst the rulers of the Roman Empire. It needs no comment.

Our delight and work from the Lord is to prepare ourselves and the flock of God. An evil day is coming. We honour those who make a stand against the incoming tide of laws against Christ and His Word. We pray with them earnestly that these statutes will never be enacted. But mark my words, in the end there will be no evading. Evil is on the march. The issue of the day will be decided by individual Christians. Each will have to say ‘yes’ or ‘no’. This battle will be decided by numerous single-handed contests, by champions, as was the Reformation.

You see how the Apostle teaches us to fight. He strengthens the little churches of believers. Show me a petition the Apostles organised to the Emperor. Quote me a march, a protest, a rally the Apostles joined in! No, John loved the elect lady and her children. He fought in prayer, teaching by pen and mouth. His aim was that at the pinch she and her children would die rather than compromise. The New Testament contains not one letter to the authorities. It has many exhorting us to stand firm.

Take no notice of those who seek, however honourably, to deflect us. Did we start this Church of England (Continuing) without the Lord? We were the slowest of all the multitude of Continuing Churches to launch. My father fought, so did I through most of my life, within the Established Church. Have we kept the Prayer Book and Articles and made our stand for the purity of God’s Word as hindering baggage? No, to honour Christ!

Yes, we need to grow. We would love more members, more workers, more clergy. But remember what Dr. Dale of Birmingham said, “the favourite word is ‘broad’, the general result is thin.” The growth we aim for is attractive, evangelising Christians. At the time of the Reformation many went back when faced with the consequences

of believing. Let us not make Peter's error, "though all men forsake thee, yet will not I." Pray that ye enter not into temptation, but take no evasive measures. Ask grace.

OTHER MATTERS

Day Conferences

Would you be interested in an annual Saturday regional conference? In London, in the North, in the West? We are open to suggestions. We have thought of having one in the Spring and one in the Autumn. They would not replace Benson. That will, DV, take place on July 7th 2007. These regional conferences would be addressed by our own speakers and cater for our own members, though of course others are very welcome. Please let a minister know if you would like such a gathering.

A Residential Conference

Is there interest in a possible residential conference in the summer of 2008? The Rev. John Shearer has found a place on the unspoiled Welsh Borders. The Committee offers a guaranteed price of £99 per person. You can choose a self catering chalet, or bring a tent or caravan, or occupy normal conference accommodation. If you are interested, please contact Mr. Shearer. Again, we can only do this if there is a demand.

Membership

Some one has asked how they could join us, not being near enough to one of our few churches to worship with us? It is necessary to state again that we have 'scattered members', who have filled in a form countersigned by a minister of the Church of England (Continuing), saying they are baptised, confirmed, and accept our Constitution, which is inside the front cover of every Journal. We welcome those who by reason of age, infirmity or distance are unable to attend, or attend regularly. Such can join though attending another church, if in complete agreement with our stance.

Your friend and bishop



Edward Malcolm

THE RESETTLEMENT OF THE JEWS IN BRITAIN

The Four Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of 1656

Bishop Edward Malcolm

THE EXPULSION OF THE JEWS FROM ENGLAND

The Jews before the Norman Conquest

There are few traces, but the Jews seem to have lived amongst the Saxons in peace and security, up to about the middle of the eighth century, even though King Alfred and others had laws punishing with death anyone who denied the deity of Christ. It appears these laws were never used against the Jews.

Egbricht or Egbert, first Archbishop of York, died about AD 766. This learned man was a pupil of the Venerable Bede, a patron of learning and a teacher of theology. He fervently taught the popular papal doctrine that it was well-pleasing to the Lord Jesus to revenge His death upon his murderers. He regarded Jews as contaminating and of evil influence, and forbade all Christians in York Province to go to their festivals or show them any friendship.

The fiercest intolerance of the Jews was spread by the Northumbrian clergy, even though these people had not been accused of any crime except being a Jew. Egbricht's decree made the hatred popular, as it was published in the countryside where most people had perhaps never seen a Jew.

By this time the Church in Britain was firmly under Rome. On the Continent Rome had long taught hatred of the Jews, so it is conjecture, but likely, that the same continued here. The Saxon kings were less for Jew-baiting than the Church, so to shield them Edward the Confessor declared their property and persons Crown property.

William the Conqueror

One of the grievances of the English against William the Conqueror was that he brought Jews from Rouen and protected them. His aim was to use them to suck up English wealth, then be able to tax them for his own coffers.

The Conqueror's successor, William Rufus, was a pleasure-lover and against the clergy, so arranged a debate between them and the Jews. He said if the Jews won, he would turn Jew. The Jews, so protected, became insolent and the people in fury chased them out of London into the country. In Dunstable two hundred are said to have 'converted' to Christianity in one day. All pilgrims, and the Holy Cross Order, were bound by oath to spare none of the enemies of Christ, and killed Jews at will.

Horrible reports were put out that at Passover the Jews tortured a stolen Christian child with barbarity and crucified him like their fathers had crucified Christ. These reports persisted for some two centuries, and two Jews in 1230 claimed to have discovered eighteen such children stolen from their parents. Other Jews made similar 'confessions' before their executions. Men will confess almost anything under torture.

Tumults, massacres and usury

There was a popular hatred and dread of these foreigners, and Jewish blood flowed like water. The most absurd crimes were alleged, showing the Hebrews were regarded as diabolical, malicious and wicked. They were said to poison wells, and lay trains of wildfire to burn London. They were hunted like wild animals, their houses torn down, pillaged and raped and murdered, without mercy. This happened time after time.

This much was true, that they used extortion and demanded heavy usury from their Gentile neighbours, grinding them down and thus becoming wealthy. Even the clergy pawned church plate with them. Laws were passed outlawing excessive interest charges, but the Jews got round these. They made the borrower sign for a greater sum than he actually received, and so pay the extra interest. Kings liked the tax revenue so produced.

Jews had enjoyed some royal protection, and so were coming to his coronation, but popular hatred was such that they were forbidden to appear. Some foolishly did and were discovered in Westminster Abbey. A vast popular persecution resulted, burning down their houses and finding much treasure in them. Then terror, superstition and thirst for blood led to wholesale massacre.

The clerical historian of the day said the Lord had delivered the infidels into the hands of His faithful people, and massacres took place in many places. By the end of the winter of 1189-1190, it reached the point of being described by the monkish historian as a 'holocausta'. That is the first use of the word 'holocaust' known to us. It took place at York. It is a national disgrace to this day.

A Jew in London had 'converted' to save his life, but appealed to the King and was permitted to recant, being at the point of death from the ill-treatment he had received.

This news infuriated the inhabitants of York. The Jews, seeing there would be no mercy, fled to the castle, shutting out the governor and his soldiers, whom they had reason to mistrust. There they were besieged with terrible ferocity. One canon from the cathedral stood in all his robes urging on the assault, continually crying out, "Destroy the enemies of Christ!" He was hit by a rock hurled from the castle and died.

The siege went on many days, but the Jews, seeing they could not hold out much

longer, made a suicide pact under an old Rabbi, who killed himself last of all. The few who had refused suicide were left in the blazing castle the Jews had set alight. They appeared on the battlements and cried for mercy. Though this was granted, every survivor was put to the sword. Between five hundred and fifteen hundred Jews perished in all.

Confiscations and extortions by kings were commonplace. Even a burial place for a Jew had to be purchased by a vast sum. King John excelled in all this, seizing all property of Jews. A wealthy Jew in Bristol was tortured daily until he revealed where his treasure was. The success of this wickedness emboldened John.

The catalogue of oppression goes on and on. The Jew went in fear of his life, continually robbed, pillaged, raped, tortured and murdered. His life hung by a thread, in misery.

The old cry of kidnap and murder of Christian children was revived with a vengeance in the ballad 'Sweet Sir Hugh of Lincoln', and can be seen in Chaucer's Prioress's Tale. Facts were not important. The monks claimed the Jews had held a general assembly and tortured a child and crucified him at Passover, burying the body. The earth cast it out by a miracle and the monks found the child's body in a well. They said the little one had been a singer of hymns to Mary in the choir. Crowds of pilgrims came, filling Lincoln's coffers. Great numbers of Jews were accused of this crime and put to death.

If a Jew made wine, or grew corn, or ran any business, he was 'poisoning' Christians or contaminating them. Under Edward I the Jews were even forbidden the only trade left open to them, lending on interest. Soon the Jews were caught clipping the coin of the realm. It was that or starvation. Convictions and executions followed with frightful rapidity. In London alone two hundred and eighty Jews were put to death for this crime in one year.

Expelled from the Kingdom

Public clamour against the abhorred race reached such a pitch that the king could no longer resist. In 1290 they were banished, and at the lowest computation fifteen thousand peaceful and industrious citizens were turned out of England in a penniless condition. It was amongst the worst blows to befall the Jews since the dispersion.

They had no friendly country to go to. Everywhere they were regarded with detestation, disgust and contempt. Every mark of public scorn was heaped upon them as they left. One shipmaster behaved typically. He took the passage money of two hundred, and taking them to a sandbank in the ocean, encouraged them to go ashore for a walk. He then sailed off leaving the beseeching Jews to drown, scoffing that their God should open this Red Sea for them to walk to dry land. At least the man was punished for this later.

THE RESETTLEMENT OF THE JEWS IN BRITAIN

The sixteenth century Protestant Reformation

The centuries passed. You might have thought the Reformation would have seen Britain welcome the Jews back. But Martin Luther was not the only one who wished them suppressed or banished. Their return to Britain came about much later through Menasseh Ben Israel, and Oliver Cromwell.

Menasseh's father decided to leave the misery of existence in Portugal for Spain, but stepped out of the frying pan into the fire. The Inquisition arrested him as suspected of Jewish practices and after merciless torture, his property was confiscated, and he was left broken and destitute. He tried several places and ended up in La Rochelle, the Protestant port and stronghold. Menasseh was born in these wanderings. Soon La Rochelle was in famine and siege, and the family went to Amsterdam, where there was Protestant rule and freedom of worship, and consequently a large Jewish community.

Menasseh was a very learned man, and Gentiles came to regard him as the representative figure of the Jews. Even as far away as in England, learned men asked his views on Jewish matters.

The Jews under the horrors of Holy Office (the name by which the Inquisition was dignified), were wandering Europe, even as far as England. Worse, the wild Cossacks in 1648 perpetrated a series of massacres, and destitute Jewish refugees from Poland filled the whole of Central Europe.

The need of a homeland

Menasseh wanted to help them find a homeland and settle, but was beset himself by shortages, and nearly emigrated to Brazil, but was appointed Principal of a Jewish place of learning, in the nick of time. How different the history of England had been if he had gone to Brazil!

He was a prolific author, best remembered for his book, a *Defence of the Jews*. He also wrote *The Hope of Israel*, with a preface addressed to the English Parliament. This aroused interest amongst notable people. It argued the North Americans were the ten lost tribes and so the only place in the world the dispersed Jews were absent from was England.

So he had a great interest in getting Jews into England again. Two Members of Parliament who read his book wanted the Jews back in England, but insisted they must convert first. Menasseh had many learned friends in England. He believed the medieval Jewish literature that described England as "the ends of the earth", and that until the Jews entered England, the dispersion would not be complete, so Messiah was delayed in His coming. He felt that getting Jews into England would thus be the salvation of the world.

His book sold out and were reprinted, and Sir Edward Spenser, an MP, wrote

suggesting that it was time the Jews were allowed back into this country, but his conditions were so severe that no Jew could live under them.

The Civil War

Menasseh saw the Civil War as punishment for the expulsion of the Jews in 1290. His sympathies lay with King Charles, and when the Queen was in Holland, he showed her round the Synagogue. However he saw the Puritans return to the Scriptures with pleasure, some really loving the Jewish race. In Puritan sects there was much comparison with Israel. The Levellers called themselves 'Jews', and their opponents 'Amalekites', and the House of Stewart 'the Egyptian Bondage'. Many other Puritans used biblical language, and it was complained by the Bishop of Exeter as far back as 1600 that there was a great deal of 'Jewism' in his diocese.

In 1621, Sir Henry Finch, a lawyer, wrote a book *The World's Great Restoration or Calling of the Jews*. In it he invited the ancient people of God to reassert their claim on the Promised Land, and Christian monarchs to pay homage to them. He was imprisoned.

Many Christians wanted the Jews to be converted and said the millennium would never come until every Jew converted to Christ.

Religious toleration

The men who fought on the side of the Parliament did so for religious toleration without restriction, for as they were Independents, they comprised different denominations. They wanted liberty of conscience, and though there were many opponents, in 1647 Hugh Peters, a most influential Puritan minister wrote a pamphlet *A Word for the Army and Two Words to the Kingdom*, in which he asked that 'even Jews be admitted to trade and live with us'.

In December 1648 Parliament was purged and only some eighty members left, known as 'the Rump'. They were trying the King, but had begun to discuss a new constitution granting a large measure of both liberty of speech and of thought.

In 1649 two Baptists living in Amsterdam, Joanna Cartwright and her son Ebenezer, came to Parliament asking the Jews be readmitted 'to trade and dwell in the land as they do now in the Netherlands.' This received a favourable hearing, but the matter was laid aside as the MPs were in the midst of the execution of the King, and also fighting the Dutch. It was forgotten.

Then came Edward Nicholas' book, *An Apology for the honourable nation of the Jews and all the sons of Israel*. He argued that only by making amends to the Jews could England hope to ever enjoy Divine blessing again.

However in 1649 Parliament adopted a scheme giving liberty only to Christians.

Frustration

Menasseh Ben Israel saw that there was no hope from the Parliament, but thought Cromwell might be more favourable. So he sent an address to the Council of State over which Cromwell presided. The Council wanted direct discussions with him, but events and Menasseh's sickness delayed everything.

He sent his son and another deputy to the Council to plead the cause of the Jews, but a small committee deputed to hear the matter was unfavourable, and so in 1655 the deputies returned and asked Menasseh to go personally, even though still not completely recovered.

Oliver Cromwell

Cromwell was not for unlimited toleration, drawing the line at anyone who did not accept the Divinity of Christ. However he saw clearly that as he fought Holland and Spain, Holland's growing prosperity was due largely to the Jewish merchants in Leghorn, Hamburg and Amsterdam. If they could be persuaded to settle in London they might do the same for England. They would bring with them their wealth, ability, and world-wide commerce. Cromwell had already noted their importance in the West Indian trade.

Already about two hundred Jews had returned to England, calling themselves Spanish and Portuguese Catholics escaping the inquisition, or Marranos. Whilst outwardly attending Mass, they secretly worshipped at the home of the French, Spanish or Portuguese Ambassador, Antonio de Souza, himself a Marrano.

In September 1655 Menasseh came from Holland and lodged in the Strand. He published a pamphlet in English, *To His Highness the Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland, the Humble Address of Menasseh ben Israel, a Divine and Doctor of Physic on behalf of the Jewish Nation*. In it he pleaded for the readmission of the Jews, for the abolition of ancient laws against them, and permission for the Marranos to practice their religion openly, as they did in Italy, Germany, Poland and other places.

The pamphlet created a great stir. Many Englishmen disliked the Jews. The London merchants feared them as rivals, and the clergy feared in case their teachings influenced the people. Everywhere it was hotly debated.

On 12th November 1655, Menasseh petitioned Cromwell in person. Cromwell brought it to the Council of State in Whitehall for acceptance without delay. The motion was, 'That the Jews deserving it may be admitted into this nation to trade and traffic and dwell among us.' It was resolved by the Council of State to canvass wider opinion.

In London rumours circulated as pamphlets poured off the press. Some said the Jews had offered half a million pounds to buy St. Paul's as a synagogue, but that Parliament was standing out for eight hundred thousand. Another said a Jew sent to

buy the Cambridge University library had stopped in Huntingdon, Cromwell's birthplace, to enquire into his genealogy and to confirm that he was the promised Messiah. One pamphlet against was by William Prynne, now earless for his virulence against the Queen twenty years before. It was called *A Short Demurrer to the Jews' Long discontinued Remitter into England*. This was about the most able statement of the case against readmission.

A National Conference

On 4th December 1655 in Whitehall a national conference sat with Cromwell in the chair to decide two matters:

One, was it lawful to admit the Jews into England?

Two, if it were, then on what conditions should they be allowed to come?

The best brains in the land were present and Menasseh's pamphlet was submitted by the Chief Justice, and the Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and they declared no law forbade the Jews returning and settling in England. Their reasoning was that as the expulsion of 1290 was the King's own order, not an Act of Parliament, it did not apply. This settled the first point in favour of the Jews.

The second point was much more difficult, and took four meetings, the last one being on 18th December. Only a small minority supported the plea for unconditional readmission. One suggestion by a friend of Menasseh's was that Jews be readmitted into neglected ports and towns, on payment of double taxes.

Cromwell was bitterly disappointed and at the last meeting intervened and spoke. Someone present, Sir Paul Rycout, said later, "I never heard a man speak so well". Cromwell told his hearers that he could expect no help from them, and that he and the Council would have to take their own decisions. He asked that they would do nothing rashly and asked only that those present would help him with their prayers. He then stepped down abruptly and closed the conference.

The committee now reported back, saying Menasseh's grounds of readmission were very sinful, and outlined what they saw as the dangers of Jewish influence and presence. Having said all that, they then recommended that the Jews be readmitted, but with conditions, including not having their own government, not disturbing Christians, or converting them, as well as not discouraging Christians from converting Jews. The Council rejected the report. They agreed the Marranos could stay, but there would be no official readmission of Jews.

The Jews settle in Britain

War breaking out with Spain in March 1656, the confiscation of the Marranos' property was ordered as they were officially Spanish citizens. They petitioned Cromwell, and were successful. They were officially recognized as Jews and allowed to practice Judaism. The petition is in the national archives, and includes Menasseh's

signature amongst others.

And so God brought it about that though unofficial, the Jewish settlement was a fact, an open secret for all to see. Menasseh was disappointed, Cromwell powerless to help him, but as a mark of esteem gave him a grant and an annual pension. Menasseh returned to Holland on the death of his son, and must have died a disappointed man. Unknown to him, he had succeeded. One incidental result was that the Jews settled in Bayswater as it was near Cromwell's residence in Bloomsbury, so as to be under his personal protection.

One last attempt was made to expel the Jews as soon as Cromwell had died. Richard Cromwell who succeeded his father received a petition from a Richard Baker asking for the expulsion of the Jews. He rejected it.

On the return of the King, it was expected he would expel the Jews simply because they had been admitted by Cromwell. But as Cromwell had never actually admitted them, there was no need to expel them.

God's ways are perfect, so let us take courage

God moves in the smallest details and apparent coincidences and frustrations. As in Esther's Persia long ago, one can see the hand of God only in retrospect, allowing the Adversary and all his minions to do his worst, but controlling it for His ends and those of His people. The Jews have been a great blessing to this land. As we live in days when anti-Semitism is increasing we do well to know these facts. Praise God, as we see the Muslims today demanding and getting all their own way, He is still in control, not man.

(The main sources used in this article are Stanley's History of the Jews, and Menasseh Ben Israel, His Life and Times, by Judah J. Slotki)

PRAYER, GOD'S MEANS OF BLESSING

Brian Garrard

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit... Pray without ceasing. Ephesians 6:18 and 1Thessalonians 5:17.

THE Puritan preacher Thomas Brooks once wrote, 'Prayer...is the means, it is the silver channel, it is the golden pipe, through which the Lord is pleased to convey to his people all temporal, spiritual, and eternal favours'.¹ Without prayer very little blessing comes to us and it is often the case that we have not, because we ask not. When we do get round to asking, we receive not because we ask amiss (see James 4:2 & 3). Prayer, then, is vital whether it be in private or with other believers.

PRAYER IN THE LIFE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL

A recently published book makes the telling point that the Apostle Paul was pre-eminently a man of prayer and that this marked him out all through his life.² The same writer lists nearly thirty passages from the Apostle's letters that give details of his prayers. They range from prayer and praise (Romans 1:8-12) and prayers concerning tribulation (2 Corinthians 1:3-5) to prayers for faith and knowledge (Ephesians 1:15-17) and love to God (2 Thessalonians 3:5). Why did Paul pray so much? As we have already stated above, in order to obtain blessing from God and to provide him with all necessary grace, strength and wisdom, so that he could fulfil the ministry given him by the Lord. In addition, he prayed a great deal for others and always for the deepening of their Christian lives. The first thing said of the Apostle after his conversion was, 'Behold, he prayeth' (Acts 9:11). We do not know for certain, but it could well be the very last thing that this choice servant of the Lord did before he died.

All this poses us with a question: do we pray? Poets can talk about prayer being the 'Christian's vital breath' and 'while I breath I pray,' but in all truth and candour, *do we pray?* Do we pray privately, which was the burden of Thomas Brooks' little book, and do we pray corporately? The thing that marked out the early believers was the way they resorted to prayer. See for example, Acts 1:13, 14; 2:1-6; 4:23-31 & 12:5-17. We are very good at having our committee and council meetings and holding conferences and gathering to protest at this national sin or abuse of God's Word, but what priority does prayer have? No doubt our various gatherings

1. See his 'The Privy Key to Heaven,' Works, vol 2, page 236.

2. A W Pink's *Gleanings from Paul, The Prayers of the Apostle*, published by The Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburg.

mentioned above are needed, but so often they are substitutes for prayer. Even the preaching and study of Scripture can unwittingly curtail prayer if we are not careful. None should misunderstand. The ordinance of preaching is vital, but so also is prayer. Without it there is no blessing upon the Word proclaimed. Besides, perhaps if we prayed more, we might see more spiritual fruit for the labours of ministers and preachers.

OBJECTIONS TO PRAYER

- ‘I am not very good at it.’ Prayer is not an art form or some kind of public oratory. It is calling upon God, however faltering the words may be. Seek the help of God by his Spirit and prayer will be forthcoming. Besides, it matters not if our prayers lack ‘polish’ and eloquence. We are speaking to God, not man, and it is what he sees and hears that counts.
- ‘I am not able to pray for long.’ The recorded prayers of the Apostle Paul, and indeed others in the Bible, are remarkably short. There is no virtue in long prayers. Indeed, lengthy prayers could be a spiritual hindrance, especially in the pulpit. True, some people have the special gift of prayer, but no one should feel inadequate because they can only pray short prayers. Far better to spend the time in offering up a series of short prayers than not praying at all.
- ‘I am a practical type and a doer. Too much time is spent in devotions and not enough in action.’ This may be true if prayer is used as an excuse for not serving the Lord. The Apostle Paul and the other servants of God were constantly active, but none prayed as much as they, with the exception of the Lord. Look at him! He was always going about doing good, preaching, healing, etc., yet no man prayed as much as the Lord did. If he saw the need to pray, night and day, how much more should we.
- ‘I am too busy.’ At least that is being honest and reveals a heart that may have lost its closeness to the Lord. Yet it is a sad state of affairs and needs to be remedied, for a lifestyle that can find no time to pray is one that is far too busy. Indeed, if we are going to be very busy then it is imperative that we pray first, for what we attempt to do will not prosper unless we seek God. Besides, what is more important in life and eternity than to seek God before all else? Imagine our answer to the Lord Jesus Christ when we have to render up an account on the Last Day and we claim we were over-burdened with much business and could not pray! He will only need to give us one reproachful look and we shall be unable to speak further. Shame on us when we offer this as an excuse.
- ‘I have no place to be able to pray.’ This objection applies more to private prayer than the corporate kind. Surely this is an excuse, for most people can find places to be on their own. Even so, it may prove almost impossible for some. Examples could be soldiers in a barracks, Christian prisoners, even mothers with young

children, etc. Yet with these situations and others like them, it ought not to be impossible to engage in prayer. If unconverted people can plot and scheme and find ways to sin, then surely we can find ways to pray and do what is right!

- ‘We do not need to pray because God already knows our needs and longings.’ This forgets one important truth already stated above, that God will not bless us unless we ask first. Prayer is the means and the channel by which we receive our blessings from him. In addition, prayer is part of our duty to God and should we neglect to do what is pleasing and acceptable to him? If we truly believed prayer to be a holy obligation then we would be always engaged in it. Whether privately, with others or when we were about our daily tasks. It would make little difference to us. Always at prayer, praise and thanksgiving.
- ‘Prayer is so difficult and a terrible struggle.’ Of course it is! We are engaged in heaven’s business while upon the earth and this is enemy territory. Satan would, and does, hinder us. The world does all it can to prevent us from calling upon God and our own hearts are not inclined to this heavenly exercise either, so it is no surprise that we have to exert great effort when we pray. Do we give up because the way is hard and the battle intense? Of course not, for God has promised to be with us at all times and he will help us to pray. Indeed, we have the Holy Spirit who leads and helps us when we pray (Romans 8:26 & 27). Prayer is not easy, like many other things in the Christian life, but we do not give up doing what is right because the way is hard. In fact, we strengthen our resolve, ask for God’s grace and persevere in our walk to heaven.

PRAYING ALWAYS AND WITHOUT CEASING

In our main texts above, the Apostle said we were to ‘pray always’ and ‘pray without ceasing.’ What did he mean by these statements?

Ephesians 6:18 ‘Pray always.’ Pray in every season and always be ready for prayer. See Luke 21:36, ‘Watch ye therefore, and pray always.’

1 Thessalonians 5:17 ‘Pray without ceasing.’ Pray without lengthy gaps between our prayer times. Always have a spirit of prayer and foster and cherish it. Let prayer be our chief business while on earth. This does not mean that we are to do nothing else but it is to have a priority in our hearts and lives.

HOW CAN ALL THIS BE DONE? We are, after all, busy people and have many legitimate responsibilities and demands upon our time.

- Realise and accept that we are to be a praying people and that God has appointed us for this sacred duty. Neglect of prayer is a denial of our Christian profession, for our spiritual lives began in prayer and they cannot continue without it. Let us settle the matter in our hearts and minds. If we are to be effective and true Christian believers we *must* pray.

- Prayer is not to be spasmodic and occasional but daily, hourly, even moment by moment as we cry to the Lord for grace and help. Prayer is to be our very way of life. While the heart beats and the lungs fill with air, so we are to pour out our earnest cries to God in heaven.
- We must always cultivate the spirit of prayer in the heart. Whether praying on our own or with others or as we go about our daily business in the world. How can that be done? Maintaining a close walk with the Lord, reading his Word and meditating upon it, examining our hearts, confessing and repenting of sin and ensuring that we remain under the control of the Holy Spirit. All this is easier to speak about than to do, but God gives grace.
- Only God can do the work of God and the same applies to praying. If we are to pray and thus please the Lord, then we must seek his help so that we pray properly and effectively. Although this duty is not an easy one there is no great mystery about it. Some also think that only the very holy and virtuous are meant to pray, that we are to join some special class of people and hide away from the world and devote ourselves entirely to prayer. Nothing could be further from the truth. When God saves and redeems his people, they become a kingdom of spiritual priests and one of the functions of a spiritual priest is to offer up the sacrifice of praise and prayer. Turning our hearts heavenward, the Holy Spirit in us helps us to speak to God in prayer and know that we are heard. Whether in the more formal times of private or public prayer or in the moments when we need urgent help and words must be few. Perhaps in the busy office or factory floor, a problem arises and we need wisdom. ‘Lord help!’ may be all that we can say, but God hears and sends his assistance. All this is prayer and we require the presence and grace of God to call upon him in the right way.

DO YOU PRAY?

Do forgive the continued enquiry but it is a vital question. Indeed, our very lives and spiritual future depend on it. Remember what we said above about the Apostle Paul. ‘Behold he prayeth,’ (Acts 9:11). Newly converted, he was at prayer and devoted himself to this responsibility. Can they say that of you and me? ‘Behold she prayeth.’ ‘Look, he is seeking God again.’ On the contrary, do they observe that we are always before the television or devouring the latest novel? Are we noted as those who are a good committee man or woman and a useful person to have around when practical jobs are needed doing? The latter is very commendable and workers are always needed, especially in these self-centred and self-indulgent days, but there is one need that outshines all. It is the need for Christian men and women, boys and girls to pray and plead with God as we have never done before. The general state of the church and of the world demands that we do. Do not misunderstand. We are not asking that we pray and do no more. Rather, we pray and then serve and then pray

and pray again as we go in obedience to the Lord. So we repeat, do you pray? How much time do we give to God in this respect? If we find that we are too busy, then sacrifice an hour of that hobby or interest a week and devote it to prayer instead. Dare we mention the television once more? Could we not leave it alone for one hour a week and give ourselves to prayer instead? Are all the meetings for business necessary for the life of the church? Could they not be halved and the rest spent in prayer? No doubt we would find our churches running far more smoothly as a result.

A REVIVAL OF PRAYER IS NEEDED

It is needed in our personal lives and in our homes, as well as for our churches and the nations. Why little blessing? Why are things as they are? The answer in part is because we do not pray. Some may say, 'But we know wonderful times of blessing in *our* church!' We thank God that you do, but the sad fact is, there are many churches, homes, societies and nations that do not enjoy the blessing and smile of God. This state of blessedness should not be kept to ourselves and we can begin by heartfelt and urgent prayer to God that he would pour down his blessings upon us again and bring the nations back to himself. I ask again, will you pray and plead with God to come amongst us? Without him, all is in vain.

'Lord, bless and pity us,
shine on us with thy face:
That th'earth thy way, and nations all
may know thy saving grace.'³

3. Scottish Metrical Psalter, Psalm 67:1&2

“GIVE ATTENDANCE TO READING”

Christian Books, Christian Writings and Christian Publishing

James North

OF all the various providential occurrences that happened at the time of the Reformation, there are two that perhaps stand out as amongst the most important. One of these occurred here in England, and the other on the Continent.

Of prime importance was William Tyndale’s encounter with a Romish Prelate. Around 1520 Tyndale became tutor to the family of Sir John Walsh. There, in Sir John’s household, the Romish Prelate taunted Tyndale with the comment, “We are better without God’s laws than the Pope’s”, to which Tyndale replied, “I defy the Pope and all his laws. If God spare my life ere many years, I will cause the boy that drives the plough to know more of the Scriptures than thou dost”. Tyndale’s subsequent history was that of being driven into exile, and to a martyr’s death. But that history was one of being committed to the translation of the Holy Scriptures and its circulation.

The second occurrence was with regard to the invention by Gutenberg of the principle of moveable type in the printing process. Gutenberg was a printer in Germany around the time Martin Luther commenced his work of reformation, and prior to his posting his Ninety-five Theses on the church door at Wittenberg. Before this invention, when books were produced, it was either by their being written by hand, or printed from carved wooden blocks – both very costly and time-consuming. Wyclif’s New Testament in the fourteenth century had had to be hand-written. This had prevented its wide circulation, but in God’s providence, just prior to the Reformation, the ability to produce books relatively cheaply and quickly was invented.

The Reformers were not slow to take advantage of this. Luther’s Ninety-five Theses were quickly copied, printed and circulated around Europe. Tyndale, in exile, translated the New Testament from Greek into English. It was printed and smuggled into England. Tunstall, Bishop of London, bought copies at a high price and subsequently burned them to prevent their circulation, but with the monies raised even more copies were printed, smuggled into England, and circulated.

It was through the printing, distribution and reading of Christian books that the Reformation progressed.

Before we actually look at what Christians ought to be reading, we shall firstly to consider what the Scriptures have to say about books.

The substance of a paper delivered to the Clergy Chapter meeting, abridged for reasons of space

1) *There is a caution and admonition with regard to books.* “Of the making of many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.” Eccl. 12:12. The writer of Ecclesiastes was admonishing his son to take note of the words of the wise, but he adds this caution, that there is no end to the production of books, but the purpose is to take note of that which comes from “one Shepherd”, even our Lord Jesus Christ.

There have never been so many books produced as there are today. I used to read the *Publisher’s Weekly* which lists the books that were being published in that particular week and truly there was no end to the books being published. We must be careful that books Christian or otherwise do not take our attention off The Book – that is, the Scripture of Truth. A library is never complete, there is always another book to obtain, but let them not take our eyes from the Word of God. Dr Gill comments,

A man may lay out his money, and fill his library with books, and be very little the better for them; what one writer affirms, another denies; what one seems to have proved clearly, another rises up and points out his errors and mistakes; and this occasions replies and rejoinders, so that there is no end of these things, and scarce any profit by them; which, without so much trouble, may be found in the writings of wise men, inspired by God, and in which we should rest content.

Some books can be positively harmful. When the magicians were converted they brought their books and burned them, as it tells us in Acts 19:19.

2) *Books, especially Christian books, are important and can be most helpful to the minister and the ordinary Christian believer.* Dr Gill is of the opinion that in Daniel 9:2 the prophet is referring to the Scripture of Truth. He writes;

I Daniel understood by books; the sacred Scriptures, which, though a prophet, he was not above reading; and, though a prime minister of state, yet found time to look into these divine oracles; which he read, studied, thoroughly considered, and well weighed in his mind; whereby he came to have knowledge.

While Daniel is obviously referring to Jeremiah’s prophecy it does not exclude the possibility, indeed the probability, that Daniel referred also to the Rabbinical commentaries that would have been written during the exile. Indeed, Daniel refers to “books” in the plural and not just the one book of Jeremiah.

“The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.” 2Tim 4:13

Of Paul's request, Gill says that

...The apostle was a great reader of books, of various sorts, both Gentile and Jewish, as appears by his citations out of the Heathen poets, and his acquaintance with Jewish records (Acts 17:27, 1Cor 15:33, Titus 1:12, 2Tim 3:13). And though he was now grown old, and near his exit, yet was mindful and careful of his books, and desirous of having them to read; and herein set an example to Timothy and others, enforced the exhortation he gave him (1Tim 4:13).

So books can be especially useful to the Christian to lead him into a greater understanding of the Scriptures. It is an arrogant man who says he has no need of Christian books. He is a proud man expecting the Lord to teach him directly without use of means. The Ethiopian eunuch was reading Isaiah 53 and was asked by Philip, "Understandest thou what thou readeest?" His reply was, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" Acts 8:30f). Christian books, like Philip, are to guide us into understanding the Scriptures and are therefore important.

3) Books are insufficient in themselves to fully tell of the revelation of God in Christ. "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." (John 21:25). There is a Jewish Rabbinical saying which states: "If all the seas were ink, and the bulrushes pens, and the heavens and earth volumes, and all the children of men scribes, they would not be sufficient to write the Law". Likewise, says John, all the books of the world would not be sufficient to tell of the Lord Jesus Christ, but, what is more, the reading of Christian books would be insufficient to impart saving faith, for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God". Books can be good servants, but bad masters.

4) Books are of a transient nature. What is today's best-seller in not only the secular market but also the Christian book market inevitably becomes a dust-trap on the shelf of the next generation of readers. Who today reads the popular books of previous decades?

The Scriptures abound with references to certain books that, in the wisdom of God, have disappeared and not been preserved. Young has an interesting comment in his Analytical Concordance to the Bible under the heading "Books".

Books must have been co-eval with the commencement of writing, and the 'Preacher' complained that, in his day, of the making of many books there was no end. Among those mentioned in Scripture, but which have not been preserved, are: The Wars of the Lord; Jasher or the Upright; Samuel on the Kingdom; Chronicles of David; Acts of Solomon; Solomon's Natural History; History of the Kings; Samuel the Seer; Nathan the Seer, &c.

Books do not last. They are transient in nature. There is only one book that will endure, of course – the Bible. Men may try to destroy it, and indeed they have tried, but they will never succeed. It is perhaps an irony of history that the very house from which Voltaire issues his soul-destroying literature against the Lord and his Word became after his death the depository of the Swiss Bible Society, and from it went forth the Scriptures of Truth. Who reads Voltaire today? His writings have come and gone, they are transient, but the Word of God endures for evermore.

Having considered what the Bible has to say about books, we now turn to consider Christian books.

1. THE PURPOSE OF CHRISTIAN BOOKS

For what purpose are Christian books written? Surely there has to be a motive behind the production of Christian books. Secular books are produced for a variety of reasons, but there has to be a real motive in the writing and production of Christian books. I would like to suggest three reasons why Christian books should be written and published.

1) We need guides to understand the Word of God. Reference has been made already to Philip's conversation with the Ethiopian eunuch. He needed a guide to understand Isaiah 53. As the things of God are spiritually discerned, and as the natural man understands not the things of God, it is needful that we have those who will, under God, guide us unto the truth of the Scripture.

This is why our congregations attend a place of worship on the Lord's Day, not only to join together in the public worship of Almighty God, but also to be guided by ministers of the Gospel into the truth of God. This only occurs on the Lord's Day; the ministry of the Word is to continue throughout the week, and what better way than to be guided by what we read? It is of little use to be guided by the minister into the teaching of the Word one day, and then have the truth whittled away in the following days by the secular and profane. It is good for congregations and people to read not only the Bible but also faithful books that will guide them into its proper understanding. These may be books of daily readings or other devotional material. Christian books are to be regarded as an extension of the ministry.

So the first purpose of Christian books is to guide us into an understanding of the Word of God.

2) Christian books are to testify to the Lord Jesus Christ. One observes over the years that many authors put pen to paper to expound their favourite hobby-horses. The latest Evangelical and Christian fad is set out from all points of view by many authors. Opinions of all shades are discussed, written about and published.

Books pour forth from the presses and the ordinary Christian is confused. Those who are fully persuaded in their own position buy the books with which they agree, and those whom the writer addresses in their polemics do not. Each side remains fully convinced of their own argument!

Is not this missing the point? It is said of Philip that he "...opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:35). Should not this be the purpose of Christian books, to speak of the Lord Jesus? Just as sermons should be full of Christ, so the books we read should be. Whoever reads or writes Christian literature should be guided by the question, "Does this lead me to The Lord Jesus Christ?" If not, there is something wrong with that piece of Christian literature.

3) Christian books should be evangelistic and also establish believers in the faith of God's elect. Christian books are not to entertain, they are to be an extension of the ministry of the Gospel. The aim of preaching is to win souls to Christ and to build up his people in their most holy faith. Preachers do not stand in their pulpits to tell jokes or after-dinner stories, but are about a serious business. So likewise our writing is to be of the same nature. We are to use every endeavour to win those who are outside of Christ by the Gospel. We write short tracts, booklets and books that set him forth as the only saviour of sinners, and to declare the Gospel.

2. THE NATURE OF CHRISTIAN BOOKS

What makes a book specifically Christian?

1) Their content. Again we open up a vast field when we consider the content of Christian books but can we not follow the example of Scripture? When we consider the content of the Bible, should not Christian books reflect this? The Bible consists of sacred history, biography, poetry, sermons, letters and polemics in which the whole area of Christian life, doctrine and teaching is expounded. Christian writing should follow this example.

i. Sacred history. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit we can trace the work of God in calling out a people to himself both in ancient Israel and the Church. When the canon of Scripture closed the work of God in his Church continued and although written histories of the Church are not written under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it is good to read of the work of God down the centuries. It is good to have such histories as a foundation for our present position. Are we still walking where our fathers stood, or have we wandered from the path in which they walked?

ii. Biography. The inspired record tells us of those whom the Lord called to undertake a work for himself in their day and generation. Elijah, we are told, was a

man of like passions as us. King David was a man exalted of God to great heights, but a sinner nonetheless. Abraham was a man after God's own heart. Jacob was a deceiver who became Israel, a prince who prevailed with God and men. All cases of conscience are covered by Scripture characters. From these we receive encouragement and instruction.

iii. Poetry, the breathings out to God in devotion. What sublime things David and others such as Miriam the prophetess uttered by the Spirit of God! Likewise what sublime aspirations have been written by the various poets and hymnwriters down the years – poems and hymns that have become commonplace in our worship today. The Lord has not confined the writing of hymns to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Hymns expressing the truth of the Gospel can and are being written today and used in Christian worship, but they must be sound in the faith and not spiritual nursery-rhymes and doggerel. Neither must hymns be nothing but slushy sentimentality as was common in the nineteenth century.

iv. Sermons. The office of prophet was not that only of foretelling but forthtelling; that is, preaching. Ecclesiastes, or The Preacher, comes readily to mind. There are sermons preached by our Lord Jesus Christ recorded for us in the Gospels, and sermons preached by the Apostles recorded in Acts.

The nineteenth century saw a great rise in the publishing of sermons weekly and monthly. Joseph Irons commenced with the publication of the Grove Chapel Pulpit. Spurgeon took up the idea with the Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit. The Penny Pulpit series of sermons continued weekly for many years. There was the Gospel Pulpit of J C Philpot, and the Thursday Penny Pulpit series. Other ministers' sermons were published. In the Evangelical Library there is a room dedicated to volumes of sermons published by famous and not-so-famous preachers.

We have fallen out of the habit of reading sermons today. There was a time when Christians regarded the reading of a sermon on Saturday a preparation for the Lord's Day.

v. Letters. Paul's Epistles make up the greater part of the New Testament. Letters were addressed in the main to Churches, but there were Epistles addressed to individuals – Timothy, Titus, Philemon, the Elect Lady.

Christian correspondence has down the years been a means of encouragement to individual believers and, when the writer's letters have been collected, they have been profitable to the Church at large. Think of the letters of John Newton, William Huntingdon, Ruth Bryan, Samuel Eyles Pierce and many others which have been useful to the Lord's people over the years, and continue to be, even today. In correspondence the heart of the writer opens to the recipient and is not constrained by the thought of publication. It is often only after many years that these letters see the light of day.

vi. Polemics. What would we do without polemics? Again, the major part of the

New Testament is polemical. There is a need to contend for the faith of the Gospel. However, we must be very mindful of the spirit in which we write. Polemics should be written with a view to the glory of God and the principle of the Gospel. We do ourselves no favours when we trade insults.

2) *Their character.* Christian books should be sober. We live in an age of sensationalism, and the covers of some Christian books copy the world's productions. The books themselves are written in journalese. This method of writing has rubbed off onto Christian writing. The result is that the Christian publisher wants to produce a 'best-seller'. Like the secular publisher he has to make a profit with a quick turnover. He should remember his is a ministry.

3) *Christian books and writings should be particularly addressed.* The author must consider the audience he is seeking to reach. The nineteenth century produced an immense amount of children's books, but when you read those books the language was far above that of the nineteenth century child's intellectual level. If we read them today and have difficulty following them, how did the children of yesterday understand books? Know your audience! Write to their level!

4) *Christian books and writings should not necessarily be reactionary.* By this I mean that we should not always be reacting to a given situation. Different situations come and go. The time spent in producing a Christian book to refute a particular historical context may be better spent in a more positive presentation of the Gospel of Christ.

In short, Christian writing should set the agenda. The ungodly philosopher may write against us; the ungodly film producers may produce their plays and films, but perhaps our answer should be the same as that of Nehemiah to Sanballat, Gesham and Tobiah, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down; why should this work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?" (Neh 6:3). Our prime concern is to build up the saints in their most holy faith, and to win the lost to Christ. The Lord's people, the election of grace, will never be deceived by the ungodly carryings-on of those whose agenda is to seek the destruction of the Church of Jesus Christ. Our Lord said that he would build his church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

3. WHAT ARE THE BEST CHRISTIAN BOOKS TO READ?

1) *The best Christian books to read are those that have what the old divines called a 'dew' or an 'unction' or an 'anointing' upon them.* How do we discern that dew, how do we know it rests on a particular book? The unction or dew is the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit, but the Christian knows when and where it rests. You know that

you have experienced that ‘anointing’ in your soul perhaps when you have been listening to a particular ministry; so in the sovereign purpose and will of God that ‘dew’ rests upon some Christian writings. Look at Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*. There is an unction that rests on that book. From whence comes this? All I can say is that the book proceeded from the pen of one who knew God and walked humbly with him, and from one who was soaked in the Scriptures.

Read some of the old divines – not just the Puritans, but also the divines of the English Churchmen such as Robert Hawker, David Doudney, J J West, James Ormiston, and others whose writings have fallen out of fashion today. There is a difference between their writings and those of the twentieth and twenty-first century Christian writers. Among today’s writers there is little that is of Christian experience, little that is heart-warming. There are plenty of theses being published, but very little that is of a truly devotional and heart-warming character for the ordinary struggling Christian who has to face the corruptions of his own heart and nature, who has to struggle against the world, the flesh and the devil, who has to struggle against the heat and burden of the day. God grant that we may have dew and unction in our pulpit, pastoral and writings ministries, and that we might be led to seek it from his hand.

2) *The best books are those that come from the heart of the ministry of the gospel.* Hardly ever are the best Christian books written down in the first place. They flow out of a pastoral ministry and out of a pastoral concern. The author, having decided to write a book, does not sit down at his desk with pen in hand and a pile of paper and write a title and then start scribbling, and then say many hours later, “I have completed the book that I set out to write”.

Let me illustrate this. Apparently the best-selling books published by the Banner of Truth Trust are those of the late Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones. Did Dr Lloyd-Jones ever sit down to write a book as such? Are not his books the fruit of his pulpit ministry? Look at his series on Romans, or on Ephesians, or his *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*. They are sermons preached in the heyday of his ministry at Westminster Chapel.

Consider Bishop Ryle’s books. I doubt that Bishop Ryle ever sat at his desk to write *Knots Untied* or *Holiness* or any other of the books that came from his pen. They were the fruit of his pulpit ministry and articles that were compiled from other sources.

Again, consider those writings of the Puritans. When they were silenced at the Great Ejection they took the opportunity of committing their pulpit ministrations to paper which then appeared from the presses. The Clarendon Code meant that they had been silenced. They could not preach to their people, so they wrote. They presented their pulpit ministries to the public through the press.

Should not Christian writing today be the same, the fruit of the ministry of the gospel?

3) *The best Christian books should proceed from a burdened heart.* How does the minister decide on texts for his preaching? Is it a mechanical decision or is there the leading of the Holy Spirit? When he comes to prepare for the Lord's Day does he feel within his heart a particular burden? Is a particular word laid on his heart? Now, if Christian books are to be an extension of the preaching ministry then surely there must be a burden upon the writer's heart.

4. THE PLETHORA OF CHRISTIAN BOOKS

There has never been a time, or so it appears, that there has been so much Christian literature available. Christian books pour off the press at a rate of knots. There is so much from which to choose. In one sense, the more the merrier! It is a scriptural principle that "He which soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2Cor 9:6). If the Word of God in publishing Christian books is sown, a harvest will be reaped.

There must be a caution here. I remember as a young Christian that we were encouraged to buy books from one particular publishing house because their titles were always reliable. There are one or two Christian publishing houses, as there are Christian authors, whose publications are accepted without any critical consideration and without any discernment. Books are published, and because they emanate from a certain publisher, they must be sound! One does not question the publisher, just as one does not question the orthodoxy of certain Christian authors. There is an awful lot of 'papal infallibility' about in Protestant Evangelical circles.

Christian publishers can also become victims of their own success. This happens in all areas of Christian service. It happens like this: we commence publishing; we are a success; we have to take on extra staff to cope with the extra sales; we have to add further titles to generate further sales to pay the salaries of the staff we have taken on. More sales are generated, more staff are needed, more titles are needed, and so it continues. Sales becomes the driving force and not the ministry in which we thought we were involved. The publishing becomes the end in itself and the original purpose is forgotten. This is something that Christian publishers should keep under review at all times.

The profit motive should not be the guiding principle, but rather a desire to circulate widely the gospel of the grace of God. Rather than looking to produce massive tomes which will be unread but which will gather dust on the shelves of ministers' libraries, should not Christian publishers be thinking of producing more booklets which we can afford to give away or sell cheaply? This was how the Communists and other assorted Left-wing political organisations worked. The Communists did not just conquer China by force of arms, they went into the villages, held their meetings, and left the people with the writings of Marx, Engels and Mao Tse Tung. They conquered the hearts and minds of the people.

The works of Lenin and Stalin were printed by the million at the People's Press in Moscow in the 1960s and circulated here in the UK, as was Chairman Mao's *Little Red Book*. Back in the 1970s a copy of Marx and Engels's *Manifesto of the Communist Party* produced at the People's Press in Moscow could be bought for fifty pence, when Christian paperbacks were being sold for two pounds or more.

What we have to do is to use all means at our disposal for the propagation of the gospel of Christ. At the beginning of this paper mention was made of how the Reformers were not slow to take up the use of the printing press. Moveable type had been invented and books could be produced relatively cheaply. The Reformers wrote, they committed their sermons and expositions to the press, and these were circulated around Europe in vast quantities. The people read them, and under the blessing of God nations were changed. Rome's head received a deadly wound from which it is only just recovering, and the world wonders at the beast (Rev 13:3).

Hosea tells us that "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6). Adam Clarke comments,

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. They had no knowledge of God, nor of sacred things, nor of their own interest, nor of the danger to which they were exposed. They walk on blindly, and perish. *Because thou hast rejected knowledge.* So they might have become wise, had they not rejected the means of improvement.

How can we attain to that knowledge? By reading and studying the Scriptures of truth, and by studying those books and other Christian literature which bring the reader into a deeper knowledge of the truth of God. Christian publishers should take every advantage of the modern means of publishing the truth, whether it is by conventional methods of publishing – preaching, writing, publishing – or whether it is by the more modern methods of publishing – uploading sermons onto the internet, CDs, iPods, digital book production, and so on.

The Apostle Paul was motivated to win the lost for Christ. He wrote,

For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you. (1Cor 9:19-23)

God grant that in all our dealings, this may be our motive and chief motivation, that we do it "for the gospel's sake".

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THE NEW CAMBRIDGE PARAGRAPH BIBLE

*A Review*¹

Brian G Felce

ON the back of its dust jacket, the *New Cambridge Paragraph Bible* describes its purpose: “The New Cambridge Paragraph Bible gives the reader as closely as possible the exact text that the King James translators themselves decided on”. This text therefore does not have all the improvements made in the translation since 1611. In fact, David Norton, the editor of this Bible says that there are 1550 significant variations from today’s King James Bible. These variations are in wording or the spelling of names – about one per chapter of the Bible.

David Norton tells us on page 131 of the companion volume, *A Textual History of the King James Bible*, that he has two main principles in his revision of the KJB (hereinafter to be called the Authorised Version) AV, as is common practice although the KJB was never officially authorized). “The first principle is that the text should be that of the translators, not that of subsequent revisers”. “The second principle is that the text should be modernized” by which he means its spelling and punctuation. However “thou” is not to be changed to “you”. There are no italics, to the great loss of accuracy, because the English reader can no longer discover so much about the words used in the original Greek and Hebrew.

What was it then that later editors were trying to do? Usually, says Norton, they were “making the AV a still more literal representation of the originals: the editors test the text against the original languages and make changes where they judge that the translators were loose in their treatment of the originals” (p.86). This is surely exactly what believers want. We want to know exactly what God has said. A rough approximation of God’s holy Word will not satisfy us. This is where modern translations fail – they are not accurate enough. They also fail to copy the AV in giving us, not the English of 1611, which the AV never was, but English influenced by the original Hebrew and Greek languages. For proof of this note how English was used in 1611 as seen in The Epistle Dedicatory found in the front of most editions of the AV.

There is some value in discovering what the translators of 1611 decided was the correct translation. But since 1611 editors of the AV have made what they believe are corrections and improvements. These changes have been made under the providence of Almighty God. The church and modern believers do not want or need

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to go back to the 1611 translation. What we have today in the AV is the best available translation of the original Hebrew and Greek of the Holy Bible. None of the modern translations of the Bible is as accurate as the AV. Nor is this new edition of the AV as accurate as the ordinary version of the AV which you can buy in the shops today or from The Trinitarian Bible Society.

The advertising on the dust jacket of *A Textual History* claims that this two volume set 'will be indispensable to scholars of the English Bible'. That is exactly what this new edition of the AV is: it is a Bible for scholars only. It is not for the general Christian public.

The AV is not perfect. But a succession of editors have done their best to translate as exactly as possible the original Hebrew and Greek of the Old and New Testaments to give us the most accurate Bible available today. There is no point, except perhaps to aid scholars, in going back to the 1611 AV, which is less perfect than the AV which we already have. In God's good providence, we have the AV as the best and most accurate Bible for the church and the individual Christian.

Following are ten examples of places where the AV of today is more accurate than the AV of 1611:

- 1 Deut. 26:1 Heb. and modern AV – “The LORD thy God”. Norton AV – “The LORD”
 - 2 Chron. 6:27 Heb. and modern AV – “Send rain upon thy land”. Norton AV – “Send rain upon the land”.
 - 3 Ezek. 48:8 Heb. and modern AV – “Ye shall offer”. Norton AV – “They shall offer”.
 - 4 Hosea 4:4 Heb. and modern AV “Thy people”. Norton AV – “This people”
 - 5 Hosea 6:5 Heb. and modern AV – “Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets”. Norton AV – “Therefore have I shown them by the prophets”.
 - 6 Mark 5:6 Gk and modern AV – “He ran”. Norton AV – “He came”.
 - 7 John 11: 3 Gk and modern AV – “His sisters”. Norton AV – “His sister”.
 - 8 1 Cor. 4:9 Gk and modern AV – “Appointed to death”. Norton AV – “Approved to death”.
 - 9 1 Cor. 12:28 Gk and modern AV – “Helps, governments”. Norton AV – “Helps in governments”.
- Norton admits that this is a mistranslation of the Greek (p.34). We do not want a mistranslation of 1611 restored to the modern AV.*
- 10 1 Peter 2:1. Gk and modern AV – “All evil speakings”. Norton AV – “Evil speakings”.

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**MATERIAL FOR MARCH ISSUE OF *THE JOURNAL*
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