

The Bible— A Priceless Treasure

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Four years ago, a friend and colleague invited me to participate in a writing project on the history of the English Bible.¹ I eagerly accepted his invitation. We began, as most research efforts do, by familiarizing ourselves with the literature. However, unlike many projects, we determined not only to understand how the Bible came forth but also to experience this marvelous book in other ways too. We included as part of our study a number of visits to some of the great English Bible repositories in the United States and Great Britain, where we could personally examine and photograph early editions of the Bible. I have a difficult time describing adequately the excitement we felt while holding a Bible of John Wycliffe (c. 1382) or printed Bibles translated by Martin Luther (1522), Desiderius Erasmus (1516), William Tyndale (1530, 1534), Miles Coverdale (1535), John Rogers (1537), John Knox (1560), and the like. With generous funding, we also traveled to numerous sites where the events actually occurred.² Standing at the church in Lutterworth, England, forcefully brought to mind the work of John Wycliffe, who stood firm against long-accepted practices of his day and who worked so energetically to produce the first complete Bible translated into English. We repeated experiences such as these again and again from Wittenberg, Germany, to Geneva, Switzerland.

I need not express verbally the feelings and depth of gratitude I have gained for the Bible and to those individuals who gave their all to bring it forth. Hopefully, some of my enthusiasm and personal discoveries about the Bible will benefit those who read this article.

My intention here is not to provide so much a history of the English Bible per se but rather to share some personal insights gained from my research endeavors. I have divided the article into two sections. The first will emphasize the Bible's importance within Latter-day Saint canon, and the second will introduce just a few of the people and relevant events that are an integral part to the story of the English Bible.

Latter-day Saints and the Bible

I grew up loving the Bible stories taught to me in my youth—Joseph sold into Egypt, Samson slaying the Philistines, David defeating Goliath, Josiah finding the scriptures in the temple, Jesus casting out the money changers in the temple, the stoning of Stephen, and many more. They were exciting and impressed upon my young mind God's dealings with His children. My understanding of the Bible, however, remained limited until I made a personal goal while on my mission to read it from beginning to end. Admittedly, I started studying the Bible with an intended purpose to establish “talking points” so I could better respond to or testify of the truths of the Restoration.

In my discussions with others about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I frequently included passages from the Old and New Testaments. As my understanding of the Bible increased, so did my ability to bear testimony to investigators about the connection between it and the Book of Mormon. For example, Ezekiel's witness, “Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, . . . then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: and join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand” (Ezekiel 37:16–17), helped others see the need for an expanded canon.

Jesus's teaching in the Gospel of John, “Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold” (John 10:16), when added to the Savior's statement in 3 Nephi 15:21, “Ye are they of whom I said: Other sheep I have which are not of this fold,” powerfully testified that the Lord extended His guiding hand to all the house of Israel.

Just as important as my lesson regarding how the Bible testifies of Joseph Smith and the Restoration was my discovery about the power of the Bible itself. It, like all our standard works, bears a profound and powerful witness that “the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the world” (1 Nephi 13:40).

How do Latter-day Saints feel about the Bible? The answer varies widely. Studying all of the standard works demands time and personal commitment. A number of years after returning home from my

mission, I started teaching seminary. The more I taught the Old and New Testaments, the more I noticed a tendency by some students and their parents to downplay tacitly the importance of the Bible. I often heard people express gratitude for the Book of Mormon, but seldom did they say anything of a similar nature about our other standard works. That outcome was understandable. Joseph Smith himself said that the Book of Mormon is “the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.”³ On other occasions, I heard people justify their lack of effort in reading the Bible by referring to its seemingly unmanageable length or its archaic language or simply the difficulty they had relating to it. I have even heard people quote the eighth article of faith in an attempt to excuse themselves from reading the Bible.⁴ Although we might identify some basis for such excuses, they do not lessen our obligations as faithful Latter-day Saints to *know* and *love* the Bible.⁵

Speaking to religious educators at BYU, Robert Millet observes, “While we do not subscribe to a doctrine of scriptural inerrancy, we do believe that the hand of God has been over the preservation of the biblical materials such that what we have now is what the Almighty would have us possess.”⁶ President George Q. Cannon of the First Presidency reminds the members of the Church, “Our duty is to create faith in the word of God in the mind of the young student. . . . We are not called to teach the errors of translators but the truth of God’s word. It is our mission to develop faith in the revelations of God in the hearts of the children.”⁷ To these thoughts we could add the words of the Book of Mormon prophet Abinadi, “For behold, did not Moses prophesy unto them concerning the coming of the Messiah, and that God should redeem his people? *Yea, and even all the prophets who have prophesied ever since the world began—have they not spoken more or less concerning these things?*” (Mosiah 13:33–35; emphasis added).

The prophets and apostles have continually emphasized the importance of the Bible. In response to questions asked of him—“Do you believe the Bible?” and “Do you receive the Bible as the word of the Lord?”—Brigham Young says: “In all my teachings, I have taught the Gospel from the Old and New Testaments. I found therein every doctrine, and the proof of every doctrine, the Latter-day Saints believe in, as far as I know. . . . There may be some doctrines about which little is said in the Bible, but they are all couched therein, and I believe the doctrines because they are true, and I have taught them because they are calculated to save the children of men.”⁸

Loving the Bible extends far beyond a simple recognition of its long-standing place within Latter-day Saint canon. President George Q. Cannon believed that “a knowledge of the Bible obtained in childhood has its effect on the whole after-life. Unconsciously its grand truths are impressed upon the minds of children, and they are influenced by them. Children trained in the reading of the Bible, all other things being equal, are more likely to be truthful, virtuous and honest men and women than if they had been brought up without the knowledge of it.”⁹ In other writings, President Cannon reminds members of the Church:

Now, as Latter-day Saints we do not set forth the idea that the Bible is a perfect book. . . . But, with all its faults, it still stands as a grand monument of God’s dealings with the human family and of man’s industry and zeal in preserving it. Our present civilization and the advancement which the world has made in the right direction are due more to the Bible than to any other book in existence. . . . This book is of priceless worth; its value cannot be estimated by anything that is known among men upon which value is fixed. . . . To the Latter-day Saints it should always be a precious treasure. Beyond any people now upon the face of the earth, they should value it, for the reason that from its pages, from the doctrines set forth by its writers, the epitome of the plan of salvation which is there given unto us, we derive the highest consolation, we obtain the greatest strength. It is, as it were, a constant fountain sending forth streams of living life to satisfy the souls of all who peruse its pages.¹⁰

Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught, “We cannot avoid the conclusion that a divine providence is directing all things as they should be. This means that the Bible, as it now is, contains that portion of the Lord’s word that the present world is entitled and able to receive.”¹¹ On another occasion, Elder McConkie taught Church leaders that the Bible contains the fulness of the gospel: “Before we can write the gospel in our own book of life we must learn the gospel as it is written in the books of scripture. The Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Doctrine and Covenants [and the Pearl of Great Price]—each of them individually and all of them collectively—contain the fulness of the everlasting gospel.”¹² In 1831, the Lord gave to Joseph Smith in Kirtland, Ohio, the revelation known as “the law of the Church.” Joseph instructed priesthood holders, “And again, the elders, priests and teachers of this church shall teach the principles of my gospel, which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, *in the which is the fulness of the gospel*” (D&C 42:12; emphasis added).

President Ezra Taft Benson told the Saints: “I love the Bible, both the Old and the New Testaments. It is a source of great truth. It teaches us about the life and ministry of the Master. From its pages we learn of the hand of God in directing the affairs of His people from the very

beginning of the earth's history. It would be difficult to underestimate the impact the Bible has had on the history of the world. Its pages have blessed the lives of generations."¹³ President Spencer W. Kimball shared a powerful personal experience to encourage the Saints to read the Bible. In a conference talk in 1985, he said:

I found that this Bible that I was reading had in it 66 books, and then I was nearly dissuaded when I found that it had in it 1,189 chapters, and then I also found that it had 1,519 pages. It was formidable, but I knew if others did it that I could do it.

I found that there were certain parts that were hard for a 14-year-old boy to understand. There were some pages that were not especially interesting to me, but when I had read the 66 books and 1,189 chapters and 1,519 pages, I had a glowing satisfaction that I had made a goal and that I had achieved it.

Now I am not telling you this story to boast; I am merely using this as an example to say that if I could do it by coal-oil light, you can do it by electric light. I have always been glad I read the Bible from cover to cover.¹⁴

Presiding authorities of the Church continue to endorse Bible study. Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin taught: "We believe the Bible to be the word of God. . . . We read and study the Bible, we teach and preach from it, and we strive to live according to the eternal truths it contains. We love this collection of holy writ. . . . God brought forth the Book of Mormon as a second witness that corroborates and strengthens the Bible's testimony of the Savior. The Book of Mormon does not supplant the Bible. It expands, extends, clarifies, and amplifies our knowledge of the Savior."¹⁵

The more I learn about the history of the Bible, the more I stand in awe. The same holds true of all our standard works. I love the Book of Mormon, in part, because I know what it took for Nephi, Alma, Mormon, Moroni, and Joseph Smith to bring it forth. They gave their all. The story of the Bible is just as dramatic. It too deserves our attention. To know the events and people of the Bible is to see the hand of God at work among His children. In the following stories about Caedmon, Johann Gutenberg, Thomas Bilney, William Allen, Gregory Martin, Edmund Campion, and King James, I provide a few poignant examples of those who contributed significantly to the coming forth of the English Bible.

Caedmon: Singing the Bible

"The Lord never intended that [His children] should be kept in ignorance."¹⁶ The Lord told Joseph Smith, "And the Spirit giveth light to every man that cometh into the world; and the Spirit enlighteneth

every man through the world, that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit” (D&C 84:46). President Harold B. Lee, commenting on this verse, says: “That means that every soul who walks the earth, wherever he lives, in whatever nation he may have been born, no matter whether he be in riches or in poverty, had at birth an endowment of that first light which is called the Light of Christ, the Spirit of Truth, or the Spirit of God—that universal light of intelligence with which every soul is blessed.”¹⁷

Even during the Middle Ages, glimmers of light broke through the shadows to offer hope to those in need. Cultural and political forces kept much of the light at bay until the likes of John Wycliffe, Martin Luther, and John Calvin opened the door through which the gospel would be restored. But even before these men came on the scene of world history, the Lord in His goodness reached out to listening ears to safeguard and perpetuate his word. Men such as Caedmon, Bede, and King Alfred recognized a need for scriptures to be translated into English. They believed, much like Paul’s counsel to Timothy, that the “holy scriptures” were “able to make [us] wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:15).

One of the earliest glimpses we have of Bible stories being told in English comes from the writings of an eighth-century author known as the Venerable Bede.¹⁸ In his well-known book, *The History of the English Church and Nation*,¹⁹ Bede tells of a remarkable person known as Caedmon. No one knows the date of Caedmon’s birth, but from Bede’s account, we ascertain that Caedmon died sometime between 670 and 680. Caedmon worked as a laborer at the Whitby monastery in Northumbria (founded in 657).²⁰ During feast days, the people gathered together to entertain themselves by taking turns singing to each other. Aware of his inability to sing, Caedmon always found reason to leave the festivities before it was his turn to perform.

On one such occasion, he left the gathering. As he slept that night, an angel came to him in a dream and called him by name:

“Caedmon,” he said, “sing me something.” Caedmon answered, “I cannot sing; that is why I left the feast and came here because I could not sing.” Once again the speaker said, “Nevertheless you must sing to me . . . about the beginning of created things.” Thereupon Caedmon began to sing verses which he had never heard before in praise of God the Creator, of which this is the general sense: “Now we must praise the Maker of the heavenly kingdom, the power of the Creator and his counsel, the deeds of the Father of glory and how He, since he is the eternal God, was the Author of all marvels and first created the heavens as a roof for the children of men and then, the almighty Guardian of the human race, created the earth.”²¹

After awaking, Caedmon remembered what he had sung in his dream and added additional verses in praise of God. Clearly, the Lord had granted Caedmon heavenly grace. From that point on, Caedmon memorized scripture and created “melodious verse: and it sounded so sweet as he recited it that his teachers became in turn his audience.”²² His ability must have been exceptional, for Bede writes of him: “He used to compose godly and religious songs; thus, whatever he learned from the holy Scriptures by means of interpreters, he quickly turned into extremely delightful and moving poetry, in English, which was his own tongue.”²³

Johann Gutenberg: Printing the Word of God

One of the most impressive lessons we can learn from studying the history of the English Bible has to do with movable-type printing. Writing is the life breath of any civilization, ensuring both cultural stability and covenantal continuity. Once discovered, this monumental, even singular, development swept across Europe like a windblown prairie fire that spread mass communication, with the Bible leading the way. President Joseph Fielding Smith reminds us, “There has never been a step taken from that day [the time of Columbus] to this, in discovery or invention, where the Spirit of the Lord . . . was not the prevailing force, resting upon the individual, which caused him to make the discovery or the invention.”²⁴ The work of restoration needed the printing press. It was so important that Elder John A. Widtsoe considered that our modern civilization began with its invention and was “part of the divine program to prepare the world for the restoration of the gospel.”²⁵

From the outset of its discovery, people recognized the revolutionary power of printing. Martin Luther stated that printing was “God’s highest and extremest act of grace, whereby the business of the Gospel is driven forward.”²⁶ John Foxe, the well-known Reformation author, wrote: “In this very time so dangerous and desperate, . . . the Lord began to work for his church; not with sword and target to subdue his exalted adversary, but with printing, writing, and reading: to convince darkness by light, error by truth, ignorance by learning.”²⁷

Scholars almost unanimously identify Johann Gutenberg as the person responsible for the invention of movable-type printing. Knowing something about fifteenth-century Europe may, in part, help explain Gutenberg’s passion for inventing the printing press. Europeans desperately needed to produce greater quantities of written material. An educational revolution was underway as universities extended themselves beyond class distinctions and opened their doors to any who could afford an education. By the fifteenth century, university enrollments grew at



Veteran typesetter Louis Crandall operates a replica of the Gutenberg press at the Crandall Historical Printing Museum, Provo, Utah.

an unprecedented rate. As the demand for textbooks and other written material mushroomed, so did the industry for reproduction—so much so that bookselling became a lucrative business.²⁸ Writing centers, called scriptoria, and the number of professional copyists associated with them multiplied throughout Europe.

Even with an expanding market for written material, copyists constantly faced two major challenges: speed and accuracy. A good scribe produced approximately “two high-quality, densely packed pages *a week*.”²⁹ In many instances, a single, well-scripted, quality book—like the Bible—would take years to complete. Copyists fought a losing battle to keep up with the heavy demands. Gutenberg’s hometown of Mainz had upward of 350 monasteries and convents alone. Each required its own Bibles, missals (books used for mass), as well as other religious documents.³⁰ In addition to religious institutions, schools needed books for both students and faculty. Gutenberg most certainly realized the potential need.³¹ But figuring how to replicate large quantities of materials at an affordable price was no easy matter. Getting the printed word on paper would take inspiration, persistence, genius, and venture capital—a lot of each of them. President Joseph Fielding Smith says, “If you will take time to reflect, you will find that in the matter of discovery and invention things have come about in a logical way, step by step, as the people were prepared to receive them, and each step has been in the direction of establishing the truth of the everlasting gospel

upon the earth.”³² God’s eternal ends defy simple explanation. Requisite blessings from heaven mixed with the right learning opportunities afforded Johann Gutenberg the physical and intellectual capability to transform society.

Gutenberg’s triumph in mass producing writing came when he adapted several known technologies and used them in conjunction with some profound personal innovations. One of the first completed books off the press was a Latin Bible—better known today as the Gutenberg Bible. This masterpiece employed approximately twenty craftsmen who operated six presses to produce an estimated 180 copies of the first printed Bible (135 on paper and 35 on vellum). Skilled illuminators rubricated and decorated by hand its many pages to add even greater beauty to the bold black text.³³ A surviving letter written in March 1455 reveals the excitement surrounding the printed Bible: “All that has been written to me about that marvelous man seen at Frankfurt is true. I have not seen complete Bibles but only a number of quires of various books of the Bible. The script was very neat and legible, not at all difficult to follow—your grace would be able to read it without effort, and indeed without glasses. . . . I shall try and see if I can have a copy for sale brought here which I can purchase on your behalf. But I fear that won’t be possible, both because of the length of the journey and because buyers were said to be lined up even before the books were finished.”³⁴ The door of religious reformation opened ever wider as the Bible and other printed materials made their way into the hands of the general populace.

Initially, almost all printers were of German stock. S. H. Steinberg, a prominent historian, wrote, “It is no exaggeration to describe Gutenberg’s invention as Germany’s most important single contribution to civilization.”³⁵ Within decades, however, citizens from Italy, France, Spain, and Portugal all had their own master printers. These, in turn, spread ideas in the common vernacular throughout Europe. Elder McConkie notes, “Few tools were more effective than printing in paving the way for the great revival of learning, for the religious reformation, and for the breaking away of peoples and nations from religious domination.”³⁶

Thomas Bilney: Early English Reformation

The Reformers helped prepare the way for the Restoration of the gospel.³⁷ President Joseph F. Smith states: “Calvin, Luther, Melanchthon, and all the reformers, were inspired in thoughts, words, and actions, to accomplish what they did for the amelioration, liberty, and advancement

of the human race. They paved the way for the more perfect gospel of truth to come. Their inspiration, as with that of the ancients, came from the Father, his Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, the one true living God.”³⁸ As Latter-day Saints, we express our gratitude for the strength and courage that the Reformers displayed as they broke from religious orthodoxy.

One such Reformer was Thomas Bilney.³⁹ He lived in England at the same time that Martin Luther and his followers established religious independence from the Catholic Church on continental Europe. He was not alone. Jan Hus, John Wycliffe, William Tyndale, John Calvin, Ulrich Zwingli, and a host of others endured tremendous suffering and hardships. The pattern conveys familiarity—standing firm in one’s beliefs leads to persecution, betrayal, expulsion, and, for some, martyrdom. The scriptures affirm such consequences: “For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake” (Philippians 1:29).⁴⁰

Thomas Bilney’s life mission, as he saw it, was to bring the word of God to the people. He, and others like him, opened the door to the English reformation. His story is a representative reminder to us all of the many who lost their lives holding fast to what they believed and, in so doing, moved us closer to a time when a young boy could earnestly implore God in a sacred grove, receive a witness of the truth that exceeded all expectations, and restore the gospel in its fulness.

Bilney’s story begins in Cambridge, England, when he was introduced to a Bible published in 1516 by Desiderius Erasmus (1466?–1536), a Dutch scholar, theologian, and humanist. Erasmus’s Bible instigated what was to become a lasting challenge to Roman orthodoxy. In 1509, Erasmus moved to Cambridge, England, where he systematically prepared a parallel-column manuscript for a Greek/Latin New Testament (*Novum instrumentum*). This Bible also contained nearly four hundred marginal notes that identified and supported changes from Jerome’s Latin Vulgate. The Roman Church took a strong stance against Erasmus’s Bible.⁴¹ Yet, with the printing press and its ability to mass produce books, the Bible quickly made its way into the universities of England and Europe. In England, as elsewhere, it was received with great enthusiasm—“Everywhere it was sought after and read” by the Greek scholars and those learned in Latin.⁴²

Thomas Bilney has been recognized as the first at Cambridge to come to “the knowledge of Christ.”⁴³ John Foxe described Bilney as little in “stature and very slender of body, and of a strait and temperate diet, given to good letters and very fervent and studious in the

Scriptures.”⁴⁴ As Bilney struggled to know his standing and personal relationship before God, he turned to fasting, prolonged prayer, and acts of penance through confession of his sins before a priest.⁴⁵ The sources do not indicate how long he endured this inner struggle for peace, but relief did not come until he discovered the scriptures. A change of heart began when one day he overheard some friends talking about Erasmus’s New Testament.⁴⁶ Torn between personal curiosity and duty, he finally purchased a copy. “At last he took courage. Urged, said he, by the hand of God, he walked out of the college, slipped into the house where the volume was sold in secret, bought it with fear and trembling, and then hastened back and shut himself up in his room.”⁴⁷ In a letter to Cuthbert Tonsal, bishop of London, Bilney wrote:

But at last I heard speak of Jesus, even then when the New Testament was first set forth by Erasmus. . . . I bought it even by the providence of God, as I do now well understand and perceive: and at the first reading (as I well remember) I chanced upon this sentence of St. Paul (O most sweet and comfortable sentence to my soul!) in 1 Tim. i.,⁴⁸ “It is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be embraced, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am the chief and principal.” This one sentence, through God’s instruction and inward working, which I did not then perceive, did so exhilarate my heart, being before wounded with the guilt of my sins, and being almost in despair, that immediately I felt a marvellous comfort and quietness, insomuch “that my bruised bones leaped for joy.”⁴⁹

From this point on, Bilney immersed himself in the scriptures.⁵⁰ They were, he says, “more pleasant unto me than the honey or the honey-comb.”⁵¹ As his pursuit of truth continued, Bilney stated, “At last I desired nothing more, than that I, being so comforted by him, might be strengthened by his Holy Spirit and grace from above, that I might teach the wicked his ways, which are mercy and truth; and that the wicked might be converted unto him by me.”⁵² Others soon joined Thomas Bilney in Cambridge, where a private group was formed to discuss the scriptures.

On July 23, 1525, Bilney received a license to preach in public outside of Cambridge.⁵³ At about this same time, Thomas Wolsey (cardinal in the Catholic Church and lord chancellor to Henry VIII) determined he must forcefully confront those who promoted heretical ideas—for the spreading of heresy was “worse than multiple murderers, because their victims lived on to harm others in turn.”⁵⁴ Bilney’s preaching did not escape Wolsey’s attention. He summoned Bilney sometime during the year 1526 and demanded that he not teach Martin Luther’s

doctrines. Bilney agreed. In his mind, he did not teach the doctrines of Luther; rather, he taught the gospel as contained in the scriptures. The following year, Bilney and an associate preached a series of sermons at a number of parishes throughout England. Their lectures led to their arrest and imprisonment.⁵⁵

Throughout the trial, Bilney never countermanded the authority of the church or openly rejected the authority of the pope.⁵⁶ In his view, “he would not be a slander to the gospel, trusting that he was not separate from the church.”⁵⁷ The trial lasted eleven days. In the end, Bilney gave in to the pressures placed upon him and recanted.⁵⁸ Afterward, he was required to walk before the procession at St. Paul’s Church bareheaded, carrying a bundle of sticks used as fuel on his shoulder, where he stood before the preacher at Paul’s cross and was publicly exhorted to repent. He then spent the next year as a prisoner in the Tower of London.⁵⁹

Returning to Cambridge brought no relief to Bilney. John Foxe writes that “he was in such an anguish and agony, that nothing did him good, neither eating nor drinking, nor even any other communication of God’s word.”⁶⁰ More than two years passed before Bilney determined that he must be true to his convictions. He once again began preaching what he knew to be true. Shortly thereafter, Thomas Bilney was arrested for a second time. And once again, he was imprisoned at the Tower of London. This time, however, his trial venue was moved to Norwich so that the Roman Church could show those in that area what happens to heretics.

As a relapsed heretic, Bilney had no chance of defense. The night before his execution, several of his friends from Cambridge visited him in prison. The records indicate that Bilney greeted them with a “cheerful heart and quiet mind.”⁶¹ The horrors of martyrdom seem almost unfathomable in our day, yet for Bilney and others, it demonstrated “conformity to an ancient course of action, grounded in scripture and epitomized in the crucifixion of Christ himself.”⁶² Bilney was taken by the guards to the place of execution (called Lollard’s Pit) located just outside the city gate about a mile from the prison. As he left the prison and walked to the place of martyrdom, his friends came to him and prayed he take his death patiently. Bilney responded: “Ye see when the mariner is entered his ship to sail on the troublous sea, how he for a while is tossed in the billows of the same, but yet, in hope that he shall once come to the quiet haven, he beareth in better comfort the perils which he feeleth: so am I now toward this sailing; and whatsoever storms I shall feel, yet shortly after shall my ship be in the haven, as I doubt not

thereof, by the grace of God, desiring you to help me with your prayers to the same effect.”⁶³ After arriving at Lollard’s Pit, he offered a prayer, where, in part, he quoted from Psalm 143:1–2, “Hear my prayer, O Lord! Consider my desire. And enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.” When he finished his prayer, the officers chained him to a stake, placed reeds and faggots about him, and lighted the fire that ended the life of Thomas Bilney.

Many received the fate of martyrdom for their beliefs—including Hugh Latimer, William Tyndale, and, in centuries to come, Joseph and Hyrum Smith. Yet for these early martyrs, their lives and deaths combined to ignite a fire not to be extinguished. Within just a few short years of Bilney’s death, English Parliament stopped all contributions to Rome and give Henry VIII supreme control over the Church of England. Although England’s move toward independence is seen as more of a political maneuver, it nonetheless opened the door for even greater religious diversity. It also brought the availability and accessibility of the scriptures to the common person one step closer to reality. By 1539, efforts were under way to place the first authorized English Bible in every church throughout England. In time, Bible reading would be not only legal but also mandatory.⁶⁴

Gregory Martin: The Catholics Fight Back

I grew up believing that the Protestant movement was the impetus for the Restoration. In many ways, I suppose that such was the case. However, the story of the English Bible reveals much more than two sides vying for truth. It exposes pervasive prejudice and tyrannical intolerance. The miracle of the Restoration takes on added meaning when we view it through the lens of history. From the time of Constantine, political forces commonly worked hand in hand with Christian hegemony to extinguish perceived and real threats to their supremacy. When men such as Hus, Wycliffe, Luther, and Tyndale wrested the key of scriptural interpretation from the religious elite, they unlocked the door to an ever-widening power struggle that engulfed continental Europe and England.

Typical of the day, each side implemented heavy-handed measures against opposing views. Whether Catholic or Protestant, “true” believers demonstrated a readiness to die for their beliefs. The scriptures clearly advocated such measures. The Savior taught: “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. . . . Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you”

(Matthew 5:10, 12). The truly dedicated submitted to God's will—no matter the cost, no matter the side. The story of the Douay-Rheims Bible tells of devoted men and women who wholeheartedly believed in the Catholic cause. This Bible helps set the stage for the King James translators as they produced what was destined to become one of the most important English Bible translations of all time.

Turmoil seized England after the death of Mary Tudor. Her reign had sought to reestablish Catholicism following the Protestant reforms of her half brother, Edward VI, and her father, Henry the VIII. Queen Mary (1553–58) labored to remove what she perceived as the deadly disease of Protestant heresy from her kingdom. In less than four years, she and her chief advisers sent 277 people to the martyr's fiery flames at places such as Smithfield.⁶⁵ When Elizabeth, daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, ascended the throne in 1558, she well understood the religious quagmire left behind by her half sister. Unwilling to reveal her own religious views too quickly, Elizabeth strategically distanced herself from the political fray by taking what appeared to be a middle-of-the-road approach to the situation at hand. For the first six weeks of her rule, she demonstrated acute political skill as she carefully appointed advisers who publicly adhered to Roman Catholic ritual but privately held Protestant beliefs. Within a year, however, she had cleared her court of most who embraced Catholicism.⁶⁶

With her religious biases exposed, Elizabeth then established support for her anti-Catholic position. Rome reacted quickly to Elizabeth's rejection of the ancient church. After nearly a decade of continually deteriorating relations, an exasperated Pope Pius V issued a papal bull against Elizabeth. This official edict declared Elizabeth as the "pretended queen of England" who had "seized on the Kingdom, and monstrously usurp[ed] the place of Supreme Head of the Church in all England." The edict also threatened all Roman Catholics who submitted to the queen's rule. Rather than bring about Elizabeth's demise, the pope's harsh words garnered her support. An overwhelming majority of people throughout England expressed outrage with the pope for presuming he had the authority to release them from allegiance to their queen.⁶⁷ One scholar noted: "No event in history, not even the Gunpowder Plot, produced so deep and enduring an effect on England's attitude to the Catholic Church as the bull of Pius V."⁶⁸

Elizabeth and her chief adviser responded in kind to the papal decree. As such, the regime interpreted nonconformity to the Church of England as disloyalty to the crown. Increasingly explicit laws were passed, affirming that all Catholic priests in England were *ipso facto*

guilty of treason.⁶⁹ English Catholic laity caught in the government's tactical strategy to block Rome's assault on their state religion often faced harsh realities as they lived among their Protestant neighbors. Elizabeth's measured steps against the Roman Church took their toll. Fines became the primary method used by the government to control religious deviancy. But much stronger punishments stood ready for those who actively sought to hide priests or spread Catholic dogma. Hundreds were imprisoned and executed during Elizabeth's forty-five-year reign.⁷⁰

With each death also came a renewed resolve. In spite of the increased persecutions, the Catholic Church remained firmly committed to its presence in Elizabethan England. With personal resources and voluntary contributions, William Allen, an exiled Oxford theologian, opened an English school in northern France.⁷¹ He initially formulated a plan whereby an army of priests could be trained, readied, and waiting to return to the shores of England upon the exile or death of Queen Elizabeth. This missionary force, when called upon to do so, would provide immediate help to England's waning Catholic membership.⁷² The school quickly grew to become the religious center of English Catholicism. Its influence would be felt for the next two hundred years.⁷³ Allen's initial plans took a decided turn about five years after the Douay school opened when he realized the possibilities and benefits of sending missionaries to England while Elizabeth still reigned.⁷⁴ These specially trained priests learned the art of defending against and counteracting Protestant theology so that they could return to their homeland and stop their people from halting "between two opinions" (1 Kings 18:21).

The first Catholic missionaries departed for England in 1574. Edmund Campion holds the distinction as the first English Jesuit missionary and martyr in England. Born in London, he excelled in school and eventually earned a scholarship to Oxford University, where he gained considerable notoriety for his intellect, scholarly capacity, wit, and personal charm.⁷⁵ For nearly a year, his zeal, gentle disposition, and likable personality helped him achieve great success in converting and recommitting people to the Roman Church after arriving in England. However, his very success also attracted attention from those who opposed Catholicism. A real sense of Campion's missionary endeavors can be seen in a letter he wrote after his first five months in England to William Allen:

I ride about some piece of country every day. The harvest is wonderful great. On horseback I meditate my sermon; when I come to the house, I polish it. Then I talk with such as come to speak with me, or hear their confessions. In the morning, after mass, I preach. They hear

with exceeding greediness, and very often receive the sacrament, for the ministration whereof we are ever well assisted by priests, whom we find in every place. . . . The Priests of our country themselves being excellent for virtue and learning, yet have raised so great an opinion of our society, that I dare scarcely touch the exceeding reverence all Catholics do unto us. I cannot long escape the hands of the Heretics; the enemies have so many eyes, so many tongues, so many scouts and crafts. I am in apparel to myself very ridiculous; I often change it and my name also. I read letters sometimes myself that in the first front tell news, *That Campion is taken*, which, noised in every place where I come, so filleth my ears with the sound thereof, that fear itself hath taken away all fear. *My soul is in my own hands ever*. . . . Threatening edicts come forth against us daily. . . . I find many neglecting their own security, to have only care of my safety.⁷⁶

In July 1581, the civil authorities caught, arrested, and incarcerated Campion. For over four months, he endured miserable living conditions while imprisoned at the infamous Tower of London, including torture that so often accompanied such arrests. The final outcome of Edmund Campion was determined by his captors long before his arrest. Judge and jury found him guilty and sentenced him to be hanged, drawn, and quartered at Tyburn.⁷⁷ In death, as in life, Campion stayed true to his faith. Not surprisingly, he also demonstrated deference for his divided loyalties. Someone in the crowd taunted him about the 1570 bull issued by Pius V that excommunicated Elizabeth. While standing on the scaffold at Tyburn, he responded with a prayer that included the simple phrase, “Yea, for Elizabeth, your queen and mine.”⁷⁸

A fundamental premise of the Reformation included every person’s right to read scripture in the vernacular. The work of Wycliffe, Luther, Bilney, Tyndale, and many others greatly complicated the Catholic Church’s efforts to resist this sweeping tide of scriptural accessibility. As the movement gained momentum, people—including many Catholics, clamored for scriptures *they* could read. With trepidation and reluctance, William Allen and other Catholic English scholars succumbed to the need for having their own English translation of the Bible.⁷⁹ Far too often, the marginal notes, commentaries, and controversial textual bias in the popular Geneva Bible (and others like it) misrepresented Catholic dogma.⁸⁰ Priests and laity alike needed a means to better defend themselves. The opening page of the Rheims New Testament sets the tone for their translation: “All things that are read in Holy Scripture, we must hear with great attention to our instruction and salvation, but those things especially must be commended to memory which make most against heretics, whose deceits cease not to circumvent and beguile the weaker sort and the more negligent persons.”⁸¹

William Allen asked Gregory Martin to take the lead in translating what today is commonly referred to as the Douay-Rheims Bible. Martin's personal background and education prepared him well for the task at hand. For the next three and a half years, Martin invested heart and soul into translating both the Old and New Testaments into English. By the project's end, Martin's disregard for personal health left him exhausted and ill. He died in 1582, almost the same time the New Testament was published at Rheims. He was only forty-two years old.⁸² Financial considerations kept the Old Testament from publication for twenty-seven years until it was finally published in 1609–10.⁸³

Martin openly disclosed his aims in translation on the title page: "The New Testament of Jesus Christ, translated faithfully into English, out of the authentic Latin, according to the best corrected copies of the same, diligently conferred with the Greek and other editions in divers languages; with arguments of books and chapters, annotations, and other necessary helps, for the better understanding of the text, and especially for the discovery of the corruptions of divers late translations, and for clearing the controversies in religion, of these days."⁸⁴ He then reminded his readers that before the invention of printing, the scriptures were kept in libraries, monasteries, colleges, and churches for bishops and priests and were, therefore, never intended as "table talk" by the profane.⁸⁵ Martin reminded the faithful followers of the pope that said students were never intended to teach their doctor, nor were sheep intended to control the shepherd.

Martin also decided that many of the original Latin terms should be retained when a suitable English equivalent was unavailable. For example, "So also Christ was offered once to *exhaust* the sins of many" (Hebrews 9:28).⁸⁶ This practice made for rather awkward reading, but the end product retained a certain academic precision that the translators desired, enabling the "discrete" readers to "deeply weigh" and "consider" so they would not "miss the true sense" of what "the Holy Ghost" was teaching them.⁸⁷ Martin's "Latinisms" definitely lack the rhythmic harmony of the King James Bible but, in accuracy and scholarship, established a credible resource from which the King James translators would draw,⁸⁸ including such phrases as "Bethlehem of Judea," "despitefully use you," "where to lay his head," "pieces of silver," "an evil eye," "from the uttermost part of the earth," "to take away my reproach," "which the builders rejected," and "the only begotten of the Father."⁸⁹

When King James I issued his instructions for his new translation, he mandated that the Bishops' Bible be followed as the primary text

but that *all* other English Bibles should also be consulted.⁹⁰ Although not specifically mentioned by name, evidence clearly shows that the King James translators relied on the Rheims New Testament for several passages they included in their translation.⁹¹ The work of Gregory Martin and his colleagues added one more dimension to an emerging Bible that would galvanize both the world and the Restoration.

Historical evidence clearly demonstrates that the Reformers and Counterreformers did all in their power to remove heterodoxy. Most of those who sought reform fought passionately against pluralism. For them, “executions were not only legitimate, but obligatory.”⁹² Such restrictive thinking necessitated a new understanding. From the Reformation to the Restoration, literally thousands died as religious martyrs.⁹³ Yet, through it all, they wanted something that society was not yet willing to give them—the ability to live in a society that allowed freedom of conscience. Elder James E. Talmage taught that throughout the Apostasy, the world “had not been left wholly to itself. The Spirit of God was operative so far as the unbelief of men permitted.”⁹⁴ Good men and good women did all in their power to follow the dictates of their conscience. But true freedom demanded political reform. Each Bible translation (whether Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, Geneva, or the Rheims New Testament) brought political and spiritual reform one step closer to reality.

King James I: A Lasting Impact

The message of the Restoration needed constitutional protection. In his inaugural address, George Washington said: “No people can be found to acknowledge and adore the Invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of men more than the people of the United States. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished by some token of Providential agency.”⁹⁵ King James became a pivotal figure during the religious melee Great Britain experienced in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. His role deserves special attention. Not only did he instigate a new translation of the Bible but also he, like his predecessor Queen Elizabeth, forced radical religious groups out of England. These “reformers,” or “separatists” as they were called, were led by determined men like Captain John Smith, William Brewster, Richard Clifton, William Bradford, and the Reverend John Lothrop. They and others like them eventually came to America, where their descendants realized a need to establish a government that not only tolerated religious freedom but also constitutionally protected it. King James I, the

Hampton Court Conference, and the translation of one of the most influential English Bibles ever published were important precursors to this religious freedom.

James had kept a hopeful eye on the English crown throughout much of his reign in Scotland. As Elizabeth drew her last breath, Sir Robert Carey, an English gentleman seeking the good graces of the new king, sprang into action. He rode night and day from Whitehall Palace in London to Holyroodhouse Palace in Edinburgh so he could personally report the queen's death. Having fallen from his horse along the way, he arrived at the king's residence on the evening of March 26 somewhat bloodied and bruised.⁹⁶ The thirty-six-year-old James was elated when he heard the news. His relative obscurity had ended.

James left Edinburgh in a royal coach on April 5, 1603. His journey to London lasted a month as he stopped along the way to celebrate. Thousands came to witness the pomp and pageantry of his ascendancy to the throne of England.⁹⁷ En route to London, the Puritans presented James with a petition supposedly signed by "a thousand ministers."⁹⁸ The Millenary Petition (named after the number of signatures) detailed specific practices the Puritans wanted changed in the Church of England. Their plan worked only to the extent that James agreed to hold a conference where their concerns would be discussed.⁹⁹

Puritan and anti-Puritan propaganda flooded England during the spring and summer of 1603.¹⁰⁰ The Puritans had a daunting task before them. They needed to convince James to change a religious system thoroughly integrated with monarchical powers and, at the same time, not come across as conspirators against him and his government.¹⁰¹ Success would require thoughtful planning and great tact. While on the throne in Scotland, James had proved that he was open to new ideas and would tolerate controversy regarding the Church of England. But what they did not know, yet, was that James would not tolerate the idea of separating church and state.¹⁰² The Puritan cause seemed doomed from the beginning.

The conference, originally scheduled for the first of November, did not take place until January 12, 1604.¹⁰³ The warm fires inside Hampton Court and the frigid temperatures outside set an appropriate tone for the three-day conference about to unfold.¹⁰⁴ Those who attended were men of great learning and influence who were moderate, highly reputable, with sound judgment, and "king-friendly."¹⁰⁵ Each had been carefully selected and summoned to the king's estate. Those in attendance included eight bishops, seven deans, two doctors (theologians), and four Puritans.¹⁰⁶ The contrast and divisions between the

two sides could not be more real. On a personal level, they were already acquainted and friendly enough toward each other, but theologically they were deeply at odds.¹⁰⁷

James took control of the conference from the start. His three decades of experience as king in Scotland taught him how to handle a bitterly divided nation.¹⁰⁸ He skillfully set the agenda of the conference to ensure rational discourse rather than verbal mayhem. On the second day of the conference, the Puritans were brought before the king, followed by the bishops, deans, and doctors.¹⁰⁹ As he had done the day before, James began with a short speech outlining his concerns and purposes in gathering the group together. Now ready to hear the complaints, James brought the four Puritans forward where they kneeled before him. John Reynolds, the spokesman for the Puritans, congratulated “his Majesty” on being king and then summarized the Puritans’ main grievances.

James addressed each concern during the three-day conference. William Barlow, an attendee at the conference, recounts the exchange between John Reynolds and the king during the second day’s proceedings: “After that, he [Reynolds] moved his Majesty, that there might be a new translation of the Bible, because, those which were allowed in the reigns of Henry the eight, and Edward the sixth, were corrupt and not answerable to the truth of the original.”¹¹⁰

When no one objected to Dr. Reynolds’s recommendation, James instructed “that some special pains should be taken in that behalf for one uniform translation (professing that he could never, yet, see a Bible well translated in English; but the worst of all, his Majesty thought the Geneva to be) and this to be done by the best learned in both the Universities, after them to be reviewed by the Bishops, and the chief learned of the Church; from them to be presented to the Privy-Counsel; and lastly to be ratified by his Royal authority.”¹¹¹

Furthermore, the king ordered: “No marginal notes should be added, having found in them which are annexed to the Geneva translation . . . some notes very partial, untrue, seditious, and favoring too much, of dangerous, and traitorous conceits. As for example, Exodus 1:19, where the marginal note allows disobedience to kings.”¹¹²

King James then provided two guidelines: “First, that errors in matters of faith might be rectified and amended; [and] secondly, that matters indifferent might rather be interrupted, and a gloss added.”¹¹³

The Hampton Court Conference left a lasting impact by first confirming the king’s commitment to the Church of England. This outcome left the most ardent Puritans little choice but to flee England in search for

a place where they could worship in their own manner. The second long-term outcome that resulted from the conference was the pronouncement to make a new translation of the Bible. In time, both decisions would impact a young, fourteen-year-old boy in upstate New York.

The translators began the actual work on the project sometime in the fall of 1604. They took three years to complete the preliminary phases of translation before circulating their work for review by other companies.¹¹⁴ It would take approximately two more years (1608–9) before the general committee would be selected, made up of one representative from each of the six companies. Those who participated in the translation of the new Bible were sufficiently prepared to bring about the far-reaching work. The seemingly simple decision made at Hampton Court to make a new translation of the Bible prepared by the most learned, reviewed by the bishops, presented to the Privy-Counsel, and ratified by the king himself would impact not only those who lived during the reign of King James but also people for centuries to come. Nephi saw in vision that the “record of the Jews” would be “of great worth unto the Gentiles” (1 Nephi 13:23). In time, the King James Version of the Bible would take hold as the preferred Bible of nineteenth-century New England settlers. It would one day become the family Bible of Joseph and Lucy Smith, from which their son Joseph read and carefully contemplated the words of James in the spring of 1820: “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him” (James 1:5).

A marvelous ending to the story of the King James Version of the Bible can be had by looking at the preface. The translators certainly realized the power of scripture and the need to reach out to others in their native tongue. Miles Smith, in writing his eleven-page preface to the newly published Bible (1611), eloquently reminded his readers about the need for the word of God: “So hard a thing it is to please all, even when we please God best, and do seek to approve ourselves to every one’s conscience.”¹¹⁵ Furthermore, he wrote: “If we be ignorant, they will instruct us; if out of the way, they will bring us home; if out of order, they will reform us; if in heaviness, comfort us; if dull, quicken us; if cold, inflame us. . . . Love the Scriptures, and wisdom will love thee.”¹¹⁶ Eventually, the book took hold to become the most popular English Bible of all time.

Conclusion

In 1938, President J. Reuben Clark Jr. told the seminary and institute teachers at Aspen Grove, “The youth of the Church are hungry for

things of the spirit; they are eager to learn the Gospel, and they want it straight, undiluted. They want to know about the fundamentals I have just set out—about our beliefs; they want to gain testimonies of their truth; they are not now doubters but inquirers, seekers after truth.”¹¹⁷

Twenty-nine years of my own teaching experience bear witness of the truthfulness of President Clark’s statement. Students regularly express their appreciation to me for what they learned while studying the scriptures. Our youth want to learn the gospel, including those precious truths taught in the Bible. Far too often, students tell me of their surprise at finding so many of the doctrines of the Restoration in both the Old and New Testament. In addition, they express their profound gratitude for the power, poetry, and beauty in which these teachings have been preserved. President Hinckley affirmed that “we are a biblical church. . . . This wonderful testament of the old world, this great and good Holy Bible is one of our standard works. We teach from it. We bear testimony of it. We read from it. It strengthens our testimony. And we add to that this great second witness, the Book of Mormon, the testament of the new world, for as the Bible says, ‘In the mouths of two or three witnesses shall all things be established’” (Matthew 18:16).¹¹⁸

Two final quotes express my own appreciation for the Bible and its influence in my life. The first is from Brigham Young: “I believe the words of the Bible are just what they are. . . . I believe the doctrines concerning salvation contained in that book are true, and that their observance will elevate any people, nation or family that dwells on the face of the earth. The doctrines contained in the Bible will lift to a superior condition all who observe them. . . . Follow out the doctrines of the Bible, and men will make splendid husbands, women excellent wives, and children will be obedient; they will make families happy and the nations wealthy and happy and lifted up above the things of this life.”¹¹⁹

The second quote is taken from Miles Coverdale, who helped publish the first complete Bible printed in English. In his 1535 dedicatory letter for this Bible, he reminded his readers of the efficacy and power of this most holy book: “Go to now, most dear reader, and sit thee down at the Lord’s feet and read his words, and . . . take them into thine heart, and let thy talking and communication be of them when thou sittest in thy house, or goest by the way, when thou liest down and when thou risest up . . . in whom [God] if thou put thy trust, and be an unfeigned reader or hearer of his word with thy heart, thou shalt find sweetness therein and spy wondrous things to thy understanding.”¹²⁰ **RE**

Notes

1. *Faith of Our Fathers: The Making of Our English Bible* (in publication). The book is coauthored by Ray L. Huntington, W. Jeffrey Marsh, Andrew C. Skinner, and David M. Whitchurch.
2. Heartfelt gratitude is given to the Religious Studies Center, the Department of Ancient Scripture, the David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies, and Brigham Young University Honors Department.
3. Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1977), 194.
4. “We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly.”
5. Elder Neal A. Maxwell addressed such an attitude: “Occasionally, a few in the Church let the justified caveat about the Bible—‘as far as it is translated correctly’ (A of F 1:8)—diminish their exultation over the New Testament. Inaccuracy of some translating must not, however, diminish our appreciation for the powerful *testimony* and ample *historicity* of the New Testament” (“The New Testament—A Matchless Portrait of the Savior,” *Ensign*, December 1986, 20).
6. Robert L. Millet, “Joseph Smith and ‘The Only True and Living Church’: Reactions, Reflections, and Implications” (unpublished paper delivered to Brigham Young University Religious Education faculty, September 24, 2004).
7. George Q. Cannon, *Gospel Truth: Discourses and Writings of George Q. Cannon*, ed. Jerreld L. Newquist (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987), 472.
8. *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1854–86), 16:72–74.
9. Cannon, *Gospel Truth*, 471.
10. Cannon, *Gospel Truth*, 471–72.
11. Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrines of the Restoration: Sermons and Writings of Bruce R. McConkie*, ed. Mark L. McConkie (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1989), 280.
12. McConkie, *Doctrines of the Restoration*, 237.
13. Ezra Taft Benson, “The Gift of Modern Revelation,” *Ensign*, November 1986, 78.
14. Spencer W. Kimball, “Set Some Personal Goals,” *Ensign*, May 1985, 46.
15. Joseph B. Wirthlin, “Christians in Belief and Action,” *Ensign*, November 1996, 71.
16. Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Progress of Man* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1964), 197.
17. Harold B. Lee, *The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, ed. Clyde J. Williams (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996), 99.
18. Bede, *Bede’s Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), xviii.
19. Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, xvii.
20. Whitby is located about a hundred miles north of modern Manchester, England.
21. Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, 417.
22. Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, 419.
23. Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, 415.
24. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols. (Salt Lake City:

Bookcraft, 1954), 1:178.

25. John A. Widstoe, *One Hundred Ninth Annual Conference Report* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April 1939), 20.

26. John Man, *Gutenberg: How One Man Remade the World with Words* (New York: Wiley and Sons), 288.

27. John Fox, *The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe*, ed. Stephen Reed Cattley (London: R. B. Seeley and W. Burnside, 1837), 3:719.

28. S. H. Steinberg, *Five Hundred Years of Printing* (London: Oak Knoll Press, 1996), 7.

29. Man, *Gutenberg*, 89; emphasis added.

30. Man, *Gutenberg*, 91–92.

31. Gutenberg's prospects for financial gain may also help explain much of the secrecy, and hence some of the mystery, associated with him and his discovery.

32. Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:177.

33. *The Gutenberg Museum Mainz: A Guide to the Museum of Type and Printing*, ed. Eva Hanebutt-Benz and Stefanie Mittenzwei (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 2001), 14.

34. Quoted in Martin Davies, *The Gutenberg Bible* (London: The British Library, 1996), 20.

35. Steinberg, *Five Hundred Years of Printing*, 17.

36. Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 716.

37. For additional statements from Latter-day Saint leaders about the Reformers, see the following: Edward L. Kimball, *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982), 426; Gordon B. Hinckley, in Conference Report, October 2002, 85; Bruce R. McConkie, *BYU Speeches of the Year* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1984), 45.

38. Joseph F. Smith, "Fountain of Truth," Improvement Era, June 1907, 629.

39. A few years ago, while visiting Norwich, England, I happened upon a public tour of the very prison where Thomas Bilney was held before his martyrdom in 1531. Standing in the cold and dimly lighted dungeon forcefully reminded me of the sacrifices that he and hundreds of others like him made to stay true to his conscience.

40. See also Matthew 5:10; 24:9, 13; and Acts 5:41.

41. J. H. Merle d'Aubigne, *The Reformation in England*, ed. S. M. Houghton (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1962), 1:154.

42. J. A. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism* (London: Cassell Petter & Galpin, n.d.), 3:358.

43. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, 4:651.

44. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, 4:620.

45. Merle d'Aubigne, *The Reformation in England*, 1:154.

46. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism*, 3:359.

47. Merle d'Aubigne, *The Reformation in England*, 1:154–55.

48. See 1 Timothy 1:15.

49. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, 4:635.

50. A Bible with numerous marginal notes that once belonged to Bilney now resides in the Corpus College Library at Cambridge (see *Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee [London: Oxford University Press, 1959–60], 2:502).

51. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, 4:635.
52. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, 4:635–36.
53. *Dictionary of National Biography*, 2:503.
54. Brad S. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 86.
55. *Dictionary of National Biography*, 2:503–4.
56. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, 4:625–26.
57. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, 4:631.
58. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, 4:632.
59. *Dictionary of National Biography*, 2:504.
60. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, 4:641.
61. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, 4:653.
62. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 119.
63. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, 4:654. Bilney’s response while going to Lolard’s Pit is somewhat reminiscent of Joseph Smith as he traveled to Carthage in the summer of AD 1844. The Prophet said, “I am going like a lamb to the slaughter; but I am calm as a summer’s morning; I have a conscience void of offense towards God, and towards all men” (Doctrine and Covenants 135:4).
64. John Stevens Kerr, *Ancient Texts Alive Today: The Story of the English Bible*, ed. Charles Houser (New York: American Bible Society, 1999), 72.
65. *The Catholic Encyclopedia for School and Home* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1965), 6:690.
66. Arnold Oskar Meyer, *England and the Catholic Church Under Queen Elizabeth*, trans. J. R. McKee (Oxford: Alden Press, 1967), 18.
67. Meyer, *England and the Catholic Church*, 84.
68. Meyer, *England and the Catholic Church*, 85.
69. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 251.
70. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 5; see also *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, ed. Charles G. Herbermann, Edward A. Pace, and others (New York: Robert Appleton, 1907), 1:322.
71. Other sources of funding would come later.
72. Meyer, *England and the Catholic Church*, 94.
73. Meyer, *England and the Catholic Church*, 94.
74. Meyer, *England and the Catholic Church*, 131–32.
75. Erin Bealmeear, Jim Craddock, and others, eds., *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed. (New York: Gale, 2003), 2:921–22.
76. William Allen, *A Briefe Historie of the Glorious Martyrdom of XII Reverend Priests*, 1582. Original Located at British Library; see “Early English Books Online”: <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>, images 37–40. Some spelling and punctuation modernized.
77. *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 5:293–95. Parts of Campion’s body were placed on display at the four gates of the city of London to warn other Catholics against similar practices.
78. Meyer, *England and the Catholic Church*, 194.
79. Decherd Turner, *The Rhemes New Testament* (Austin: W. Thomas Taylor, 1990), 1.
80. The New Testament of Jesus Christ (Printed at Rhemes by John Fogny, 1582), preface.
81. New Testament of Jesus Christ, title page; spelling and punctuation modernized.

82. *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed. (Washington DC: The Catholic University, 2003), 9:213.

83. *Bibliographical Dictionary of the English Catholics*, ed. Joseph Gillow (New York: Bur Franklin, 1968), 4:484–85.

84. New Testament of Jesus Christ, title page; spelling and punctuation modernized.

85. New Testament of Jesus Christ, preface; spelling and punctuation modernized.

86. New Testament of Jesus Christ, preface; spelling modernized.

87. New Testament of Jesus Christ, preface; spelling modernized.

88. Turner, *Rhemes New Testament*, 23.

89. Turner, *Rhemes New Testament*, 22–23.

90. Turner, *Rhemes New Testament*, 19.

91. Turner, *Rhemes New Testament*, 19; see also David Daniell, *The Bible in English* (London: Yale University Press, 2003), 362.

92. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 79.

93. Scholars estimate that from 1523 to 1680, about five thousand Protestants, Anabaptists, and Catholics were killed as religious martyrs (see Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 6).

94. James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 753.

95. Quoted by Jeffrey R. Holland in *Just and Holy Principles: Latter-day Saint Readings on America and the Constitution*, ed. Ralph C. Hancock (Boston: Simon & Schuster, 1998), 185–86; speech delivered at the Freedom Festival, Provo, Utah, June 30, 1996.

96. Adam Nicolson, *Power and Glory* (London: Harper Collins, 2003), 4.

97. In contrast to the jubilant reception King James received en route, a plague simultaneously swept through the poorer sections of London. By the end of 1603, an estimated thirty thousand people died from the dreaded disease. While James and his entourage enjoyed the extravagances and luxuries afforded to kings, thousands of others suffered the intolerable conditions of a city ravaged by death. James avoided the deplorable conditions by staying at a number of royal places just outside of London, like Hampton Court (see Nicolson, *Power and Glory*, 22–23).

98. Nicolson, *Power and Glory*, 34.

99. Nicolson, *Power and Glory*, 34.

100. Nicolson, *Power and Glory*, 39.

101. Nicolson, *Power and Glory*, 40.

102. Nicolson, *Power and Glory*, 38.

103. Nicolson, *Power and Glory*, 40–41.

104. Nicolson, *Power and Glory*, 42.

105. Nicolson, *Power and Glory*, 47.

106. William Barlow, *The Summe and Substance of the Conference which it pleased his Excellent Majestie to have with the Lords, Bishops, and other of his Clergie . . . at Hampton Court, January 14, 1603 (1604)* (Gainesville: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1965), 1–2; spelling and punctuation modernized in some citations.

107. Nicolson, *Power and Glory*, 46–47.

108. Nicolson, *Power and Glory*, 48.

109. Barlow, *Summe and Substance of the Conference*, 21.

110. Barlow, *Summe and Substance of the Conference*, 45.

111. Barlow, *Summe and Substance of the Conference*, 46.

112. Barlow, *Summe and Substance of the Conference*, 46–47.

113. Barlow, *Summe and Substance of the Conference*, 47.

114. Ward Allen, *Translating the New Testament Epistles, 1604–1511: A Manuscript from King James's Westminster Company* (Ann Harbor: Vanderbilt University Press, 1977), xii.

115. Erroll F. Rhodes and Liana Lupas, eds., *The Translators to the Reader: The Original Preface of the King James Version of 1611 Revisited* (New York: American Bible Society, 1997), 27.

116. Rhodes and Lupas, *Translators*, 30.

117. J. Reuben Clark Jr., “The Charted Course of the Church in Education,” *Improvement Era*, September 1938, 521.

118. Gordon B. Hinckley, “‘We Are a Biblical Church,’ Atlanta Members Told,” *Church News*, May 23, 1998.

119. *Journal of Discourses*, 13:175.

120. Quoted in Daniell, *Bible in English*, 188–89.