

The forbidden book: William Tyndale and a Bible for the people



Bro S Whitehouse (UK)



William Tyndale
(c. 1494 - 1536)

**Tyndale's words "account
for 84 percent of the
[King James Version]
New Testament and 76
percent of the Old
Testament books that he
translated."**

*Brian Moynahan, in God's Bestseller:
William Tyndale, Thomas More, and the
Writing of the English Bible—A Story of
Martyrdom and Betrayal (New York: St.
Martin's Press, 2002, pg. 1)*

Memorable phrases

- And God said, Let there be light, and there was light (Genesis 1)
- And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes (Revelation 7)
- Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you (Matthew 7)

- **With God all things are possible (Matthew 19)**
- **Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold of eternal life (1 Timothy 6)**
- **Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12)**
- **Behold, I stand at the door and knock (Revelation 3)**
- **The signs of the times (Matthew 16)**
- **The patience of Job (James 5)**



**John Wycliffe and his followers called
“Lollards” had spread written
manuscripts of English translations
from the Latin in the late 1300s**



In 1401 Parliament passed the *law de Haeretico Comburendo* - "on the burning of heretics" - to make heresy punishable by burning people alive at the stake ⁶

**"It is a dangerous thing, as
witnesseth blessed St.
Jerome to translate the text
of the Holy Scripture out of
one tongue into another, for
in the translation the same
sense is not always easily
kept. . . . We therefore
decree and ordain, that no
man, hereafter, by his own
authority translate any text
of the Scripture into English
or any other tongue . . . and
that no man can read any
such book . . . in part or in
whole."**



*The Archbishop of
Canterbury, Thomas
Arundell, created the
Constitutions of
Oxford in 1408* 7

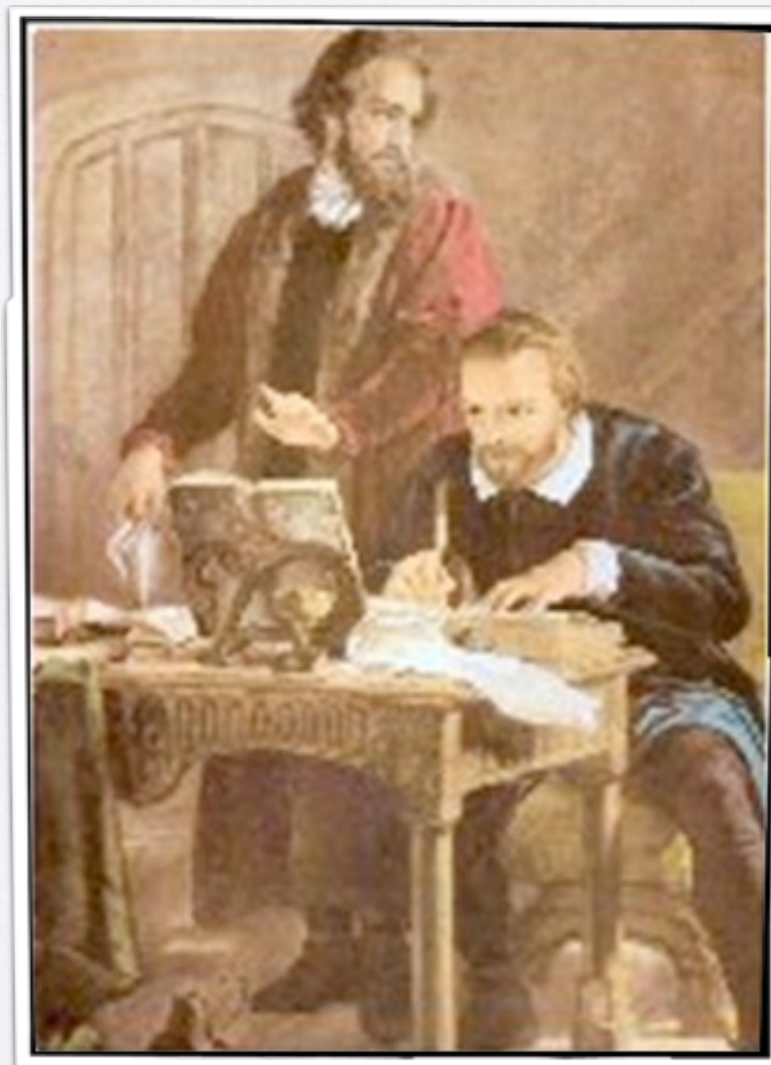


*Sir Thomas More
(1478-1535)
opposed
Tyndale's
translation*

1. Translated *presbuteros* as 'elder' instead of 'priest'
2. Translated *ekklesia* as 'congregation' instead of 'church'
3. Translated *metanoeo* as 'repent' instead of 'do penance'
4. Translated *exomologeo* as 'acknowledge or admit' instead of 'confess'
5. Translated *agape* as 'love' rather than 'charity'

Tyndale was born around 1490, possibly in one of the villages near Dursley, Gloucestershire. The Tyndales were also known as Hychyns, and it was as William Hychyns that Tyndale was educated at Magdalen College School, Oxford.

Tyndale was admitted to the Degree of Bachelor of Arts at Oxford University in 1512. He was made Master of Arts in July 1515, three months after he had been ordained into the priesthood. He was a gifted linguist and subsequently went to study at Cambridge.



While having become skilled in Greek and Latin at Oxford and, through Desiderius Erasmus's *Novum Instrumentum*, he gained access to the Greek New Testament. Erasmus' was the first Latin translation of the Greek New Testament in over a thousand years.



Desiderius Erasmus
(1466/1469 - 1536)

A Catholic scholar at dinner with Tyndale:

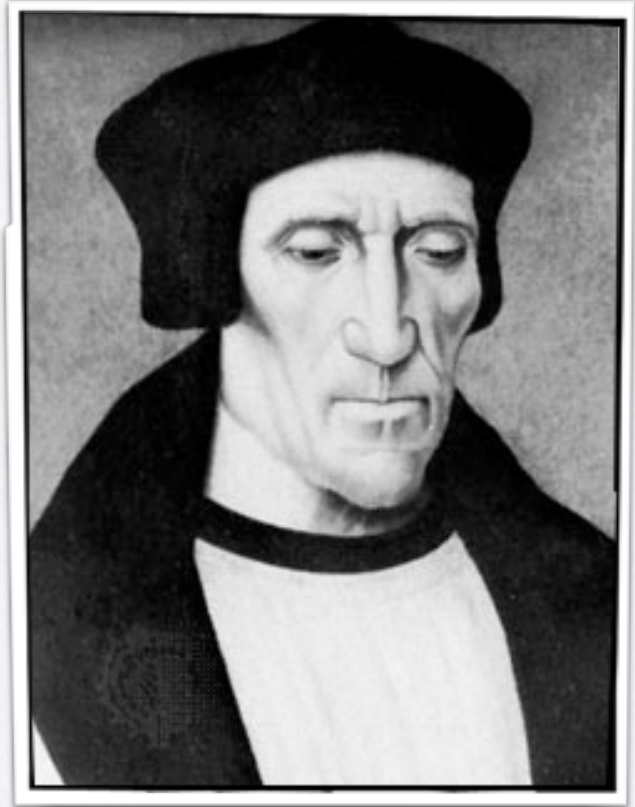
**“We would be better without God’s law
than the pope’s.”**

In response, Tyndale spoke his famous words:

**“I defy the Pope and all his laws. . . . If God
spare my life ere many years, I will cause a
boy that driveth the plow, shall know more
of the Scripture than thou dost.”**

*[David Daniell, William Tyndale – a Biography,
1994, Yale University, New Haven & London]*

**In the summer of 1523
Tyndale approached the
Bishop of London,
Cuthbert Tunstall. Armed
with his translation of a
speech by *Isocrates* -
Tyndale presented proof
of his readiness to
translate the Greek New
Testament into English.**



*Cuthbert Tunstall
(1474 - 1559)*

By 1526 Tyndale finished the English translation of the Greek New Testament in Worms, Germany (after narrowly avoiding capture in Cologne) and began to smuggle it into England in bales of cloth.



By October 1526 the book had been banned by Bishop Tunstall in London, but the print run was at least two thousand. Over the next eight years, five pirated editions were printed as well.

Shortly after Tyndale started translating the Old Testament into English, he headed for Hamburg to print the book of Deuteronomy, but was shipwrecked. He lost everything. He published his Pentateuch in early 1530.



*Miles Coverdale
(c.1488 - 1569)*

Tyndale published a revision of his New Testament translation, in 1534, having learnt Hebrew.

In the prologue he acknowledged the delay in production: “I have looked over [it] again . . . with all diligence, and compared it unto the Greek, and have weeded out of it many faults, which lack of help at the beginning, and oversight, did sow therein.”



WILLIAM TINDALL

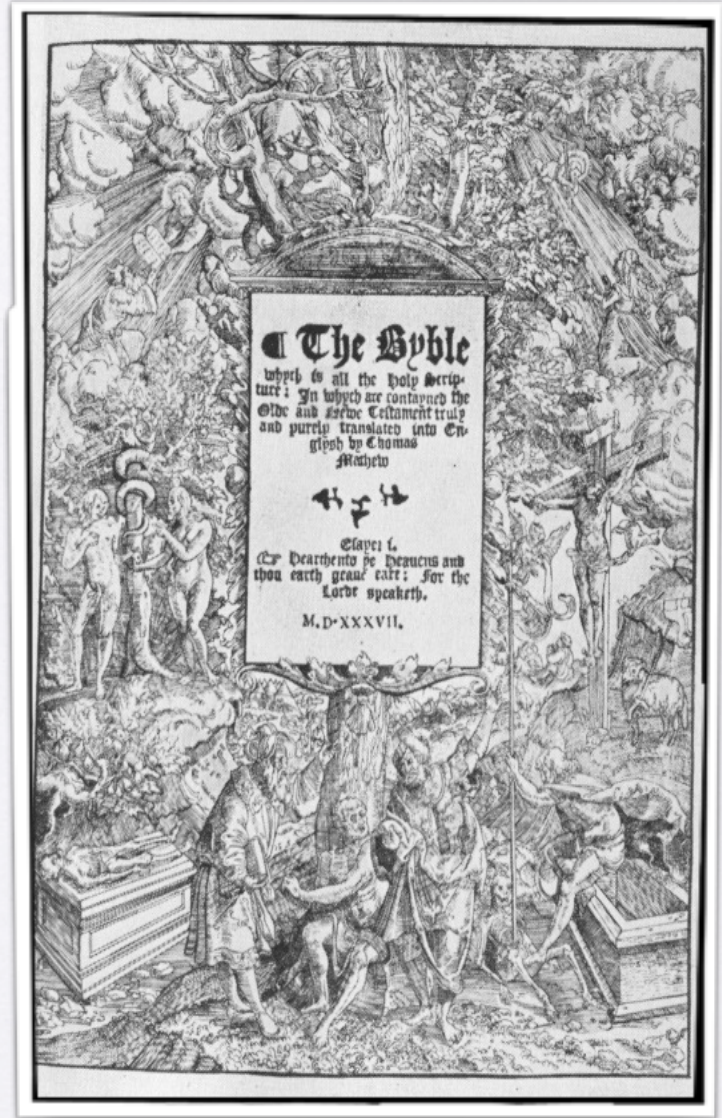
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A. M. D. & xxxiii.
in the moneth of
November.

**Before he was martyred in 1536
Tyndale had translated into clear,
common English not only the
New Testament but also the
Pentateuch, Joshua to 2
Chronicles, and Jonah.**



Tyndale was betrayed to the authorities in Brussels and imprisoned for 18 months. On or about October 6, 1536, he was strangled to death at the stake and his body burned. Before he died, Tyndale cried out:
"Lord! open the King of England's eyes."

**King Henry VIII
licensed the first official
English Bible. Published
in 1537 and included
Tyndale's final revision
of his 1534 New
Testament, the 1534
Pentateuch and his Old
Testament work up to
the book of Chronicles.**



Tyndale fled his homeland in 1524 and was killed in 1536. He gives us some glimpse of those twelve years as a fugitive in 1531:

“... my pains ... my poverty ... my exile out of mine natural country, and bitter absence from my friends ... my hunger, my thirst, my cold, the great danger wherewith I am everywhere encompassed, and finally . . . innumerable other hard and sharp fightings which I endure.”

[Daniell, William Tyndale, p. 213]

“I believe, right worshipful, that you are not unaware of what may have been determined concerning me. Wherefore I beg your lordship, and that by the Lord Jesus, that if I am to remain here through the winter, you will request the commissary to have the kindness to send me, from the goods of mine which he has, a warmer cap; for I suffer greatly from cold in the head, and am afflicted by a perpetual catarrh, which is much increased in this cell; a warmer coat also, for this which I have is very thin; a piece of cloth too to patch my leggings.

My overcoat is worn out, my shirts are also worn out. He has a woollen shirt, if he will be good enough to send it. I have also with him leggings of thicker cloth to put on above; he has also warmer night caps. And I ask to be allowed to have a lamp in the evening; it is indeed wearisome sitting alone in the dark. But most of all I beg and beseech clemency to be urgent with the commissary, that he will kindly permit me to have the Hebrew bible, Hebrew grammar, and Hebrew dictionary, that I may pass the time in that study.

In return may you obtain what you most desire, provided that it be consistent with the salvation of your soul. But if any other decision has been taken concerning me, to be carried out before winter, I will be patient, abiding the will of God, to the glory of the grace of my Lord Jesus Christ, whose Spirit (I pray) may ever direct your hearts. Amen. **W. Tindalus."**

“Concerning the resurrection, I protest before God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, and before the universal congregation that believe in him, that I believe according to the open and manifest Scriptures ... that we shall all both good and bad rise both flesh and body and appear together before the judgement seat of Christ, to receive every man according to his deeds. And that the bodies of all who believe and continue in the true faith of Christ shall be endowed with immortality and glory as is the body of Christ.

And I protest before God and our Saviour Christ, and all who believe in him, that I hold of the souls that are departed in the faith of Christ and the love of God to be in no worse case than the soul of Christ was from the time that he delivered his spirit into the hands of the Father until the resurrection of his body in glory and immortality. I confess openly that I am not persuaded that they be already in the full glory that Christ is in, or that the elect angels of God are in. Neither is it any article of my faith: for if it were so, I see not but then the preaching of the resurrection of the flesh were a thing in vain."

An American historian has this comment about Tyndale's beliefs:

“Tyndale believed the first resurrection to be literal, and looked for God's Kingdom to be established by Christ's second coming for which he longed.”

A. Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers*, V. II, Washington 1948. 29

**Jesus firmly believed in the
resurrection**

**See John 11:
The resurrection of Lazarus**

**Martha told Jesus that she too
strongly believed in the
resurrection in “the last day”**

**The Apostle Paul also
strongly believed in the
resurrection**

See 1 Corinthians 15

**The Apostle Paul devotes a
whole chapter to asserting that
the dead will rise because Jesus
rose from the dead.**

THE TRUTH OF THE
RESURRECTION
CHANGES
EVERYTHING!

THANK YOU!