

b. His Bible

It is not possible for us, in a survey course of this nature, to look as carefully as we might like at Tyndale's translation. It is not even possible to follow the complete log of that work. But the following constitute some brief notes in the accomplishment and we can comment on them in a quick way:

--By 1525 he had completed the translation of the New Testament and was trying to get it in print. F.F. Bruce notes that he was a better Greek scholar than Luther...having a more careful rendering of the Greek and yet keeping the nature of the translation meaningful to the readers...not just an academic production. He was frustrated in getting the work out at Cologne and so moved to Worms. He worked with two editions (determined by size) and by 1526 they were being "smuggled" into England and sold widely.

--The activity was regarded as treason in England and Henry VIII was particularly incensed..perhaps with the help of the criticisms of Sir Thomas More and others. The charge was that Tyndale's translation offered too many of the ideas of Luther...already condemned by Rome and in England. Tyndale also supplied explanatory notes that were offensive to the Roman concepts--not attacks on Rome...but explanatory notes that tended to take the mysterious or misunderstood items from the Bible.

--The burning of the Tyndale Bible became a public scene in England and we are told that the bishop of London bought as many as he could so as to have them burned. When Tyndale lamented of this, his bookseller gave him the money from the purchase of the Bibles which enabled the printing of many more..a strange way that God has to frustrate the works of men set against him.

--Some printers, having the European freedom, printed a few editions of Tyndale's work without his consent (at least three by 1528).. it was a money maker. These were not all "honest"..some of the printers adding notes of their own and it merely illustrated what a problem it was finding reputable people in a disreputable age.

--By 1530 Tyndale was concentrating on the Old Testament and in staying out of the reach of his foes. Some portions of the Old Testament came out in 1534 and a complete revision of the New Testament as well. The edition of 1535 came with a number of helpful headings, etc., but without the notes of interpretation...which Tyndale apparently concluded were not needed by a good reader. Tyndale did not finish the Old Testament but did complete the Pentateuch, the historical books...and parts I am not sure of. He revised some portions of this as well. As a scholar Tyndale could not be satisfied with the completion of any mere copy of translation. His revisions showed continued study and improvement in the form in which the work was presented.

--His Bible became the background from which others and eventually the KJV would come. It was the first in the modern period of English study to be taken from the Greek and Hebrew...a bona-fide original language translation. Its appeal was enormous. Tyndale did it for the Lord and His people...his own earthly reward was deprivation and martyrdom..we are sure the Lord had something much better for him in eternity. And at this point I will probably read some fragmentary notes from his works.

--As Tyndale was being martyred there was a great change coming in the English church. The Bible was being propagated and new translations