

**The Authorised Version –
the Treasure of the Church and Nation**

Holy Bible book divine precious treasure thou art mine. For well over a thousand years this nation has been privileged to possess this treasure and to have access to an ever increasing part of it in its own tongue and language. It was the possession of those half forgotten saints of the first millennium who treasured it and knew it and lived it, preached it and planted it deep into our national psyche.

Time fails to tell all we could say of its first translators such as Caedman the cowherd poet (672-735), Bede the scholar monk of Jarrow one of the fathers of English history (673-735) translating the Gospel of John even on his death bed. Alfred the Truth Teller that great Christian king (reigned 849-99) who rightly believed that Christianity alone can make and preserve a nation and made the Ten Commandments the foundation of English Law, and Aelfric the Abbot of Eynsham near Oxford (955-1020) who was referred to at the time of the Reformation to prove that the English church in his day did not hold to the doctrine of Transubstantiation and of King Athelstan (reigned 924-939) of whom (William Tyndale recollected in 1528:

Except my memory fails me and that I have forgotten what I read when I was a child thou shalt find in the English Chronicle how that King Athelstan (924-939) caused the Holy Scripture to be translated into the tongue that then was in England and how the prelates exhorted him thereto.)

We may note also how in those early centuries it inspired our song, our literature, our laws, our fighting spirit (it was said a part of the reason why Aelfric translated the historical books of Joshua and Judges, was in order to remind and impress upon Englishman their duty to defend the realm against the incursions of the Danes).

In the same way time fails us tell of how the Scriptures nourished and directed the minds of some of our greatest thinkers even in the period of the Dark Ages and Middle Ages, for example Alciun, (d.804 educated at the great cathedral school of York, later to become one of the most important and influential scholars at the court of Charlemagne, who led a group of scholars in the revision of the Latin Vulgate). John Scott Eringa (philosopher at the court of King Alfred and later at the court of Charles the Bald (823-877), Holy Roman Emperor, later Charles I King of France). Anselm of Canterbury (1093, author of the famous *Cur Deus Homo*, Why did God become Man?). Robert Grosseteste 1175 Bishop of Lincoln, insisting on the authority of Scripture over the authority of the Pope). William of Occam (1300 – 1349, remembered for Occam's razor). Who taught that man must accept the existence of God by faith, since revelation, not reason, is the basis of Christian theology.

It influenced men of literature such as William Langland author of *Piers Ploughman* which in turn it is said influenced John Bunyan in his writing of *The Pilgrims Progress*. The ethic of Piers Ploughman, with its emphasis on godliness and honest toil, lived on in the Nonconformist conscience of the 19th and early 20th Centuries. Of the massive influence of John Wickliffe and William Tyndale and others we will speak later but here we must at least mention Cranmer, Ridley and Latimer great figures in the English Reformation and founders of our National Church of England, and of John Knox and his role in establishing the Church of Scotland. Sufficient to say for the time being that our history stands as evidence of the fact that whenever the Bible is read revered, studied, believed and acted upon it has extraordinary, indeed divine power and potency, to spiritually and morally enrich, to enlighten and enable to do good in every way.

Of the extraordinary potency and power of this book which we call the Bible we can be in no doubt. Its wide ranging influence for good in the realm of mankind's spiritual welfare, moral development both personal and national, in the area of legal and political thought and organisation, in its influence on linguistics and the development of language, of its influence on science and of course its widespread influence on literature, art and music, is impossible to calculate or overstate.

Of course the Bible has had a world wide influence, speaking as we are of the Authorized Version we might mention Benson Bobrick's comment that.. *Its impact on thought and culture eventually spread the world over, "as wide as the waters be."* (*Wide as the Waters, the Story of the English Bible*. Quoted by Leland Ryken. *The Legacy of the King James Bible* p.87.) David Daniels in *The Bible in English* says. *The King James Bible is still the bestselling book in the world. Geographically the spread has been global for hundreds of years: wherever in the world there are English readers, there are copies.* (quoted *ibid* p.87)

The English classical scholar Benjamin Jowett did not exaggerate when he stated that: *The moral feelings of men have been deepened and strengthened, and also softened, and almost created by the Jewish prophets.*

The Bible and Civilisation p.3

The impact of the Bible on the culture of the world would occupy the study of a lifetime. Focusing only on its impact on Western civilisation we can observe that for 2000 years the Old and New Testaments of Scripture have influenced all levels of Western Society. They have formed the bedrock of Western civilisation and exerted an influence far greater in extent than even the valuable inheritance of ancient Greece and Rome.

(Footnote Just to begin to open up something of this wide and extensive influence we can notice that Biblical scholars identify in the opening chapters of Genesis at least 10 disciplines, we could call them aspects of God or Christian perspectives which lie at the root of Western civilisation.

For example, Genesis 1:1 -- *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"* -- is value laden with theological and philosophical ramifications.

Genesis 2:9 -- *"knowledge of good and evil"* -- contains ethical ramifications;

Genesis 1:21 -- *"after their kind"* -- contains biological ramifications.

Genesis 2:7 -- *"a living soul"* -- psychological ramifications.

Genesis 1:28 -- *"be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth"* -- sociological and ecological ramifications.

Genesis 3:11 -- *" Wherefore I commanded thee"* -- legal ramifications.

Genesis 9:6 -- *"whoso sheddeth man's blood."* -- political and legal ramifications.

Genesis 1:29 -- *"it shall be for food."* -- economic ramifications.

Genesis 3: 15 -- "enmity between thee and the woman." -- historical ramifications

All 10 disciplines are addressed in just the first few chapters of the Bible because they manifest and accent certain aspects of the created order.

Further, God manifests Himself in the form of Christ in such a way as to underline the significance of each discipline. In theology, for example, Jesus Christ is "the fullness of the Godhead" (Colossians 2:9);

In philosophy, Christ is the Logos of God. (John 1 :1)

In ethics, Christ is the " the true light" (John 1:9; 3: 19 -- 20)

In biology, Christ is "the life" (John 1:4; 11:25)

In psychology Christ is the "Saviour" (Luke 1:46 -- 47; Titus 2:13)

In sociology Christ is " Son" 9 Luke 1:30 -- 31, Isaiah 9:6)

In law, Christ is lawgiver (Genesis 49:10; Isaiah 9:7)

In politics, Christ is "Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords" (Revelation 19:16; one Timothy 6:15; Isaiah 9: 6; Luke 1:33)

In economics, Christ is Owner of all things (Psalm 24:1; 50: 10 -- 12; I Corinthians 10:26)

In history, Christ is the "fullness of time" (Galatians 4:5).

The integration of these various categories into society has come to be known as Western Civilisation.

Understanding the Times David A Noebel p.30)

As someone has said: If by some hideous accident at the divine computer keyboard, the "delete" key were pressed for the Bible, much of the content of Western culture would disappear and it would shrivel like a deflated balloon.

With these introductory thoughts in mind let us come to our subject. *The Authorised Version the Treasure of the Church and Nation.* We might reflect briefly on the fact that long before the masterpiece of the Authorised Version was produced the Bible was having a profound effect on our country as we have touched upon in the introduction and that the Authorized Version was the culmination and high point of this long tradition.

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THERE HAS BEEN A VERY LONG TRADITION OF BIBLE READING AND BIBLE INFLUENCE IN THESE ISLANDS.

At the time of the Reformation it was rightly argued that those who opposed the translation and publication of the Bible in English were opposing something that from the earliest times had been the heritage of the British people.

The famous martyrologist John Foxe took up this point in 1571 commenting on the fact that the Four Evangelists were translated out of Latin into Anglo-Saxon at the time of the Venerable Bede the monk of Jarrow in the eighth century. Fox was arguing for the antiquity of Bible translations in the English tongue.

Archbishop Parker notes in his preface to the *Bishop's Bible*. (1568)

"Our forefathers, that have ruled in this realm, who in their times and in divers ages did their diligence to translate the whole books of the Scriptures to the understanding of the laity, as yet at this day there are to be seen divers books translated into the vulgar tongue, some by kings of the realm, some by bishops, some by abbots, some by other devout godly fathers; so desirous they were of old time to have the lay sort edified in godliness by reading in their vulgar tongue, that very many books be yet extant, though for the age of the speech, and strangeness of the character of many of them almost worn out of knowledge. In which books may be seen evidently how it was used to be among the Saxons, to have in their churches read the Four Gospels so distributed and picked out in the body of the Evangelist, books that every Sunday and festival day in the year there were sorted out to the common ministers of the church in their common prayers to be read to their people."

Our English Bible John Stoughton p.20

Cranmer in his preface to the Great Bible of 1540 wrote:

" For it is not much more than one hundred years ago, since Scripture hath not been accustomed to be read in the vulgar tongue within this realm, and many hundred years before that, it was translated and read in the Saxon tongue, which at that time was our mother tongue, whereof there remaineth yet divers copies found lately in old abbeys of such antique manner of writing and speaking that few men now are able to read and understand them."

The English Bible John Eadie vol. 1 Introductory Quotation

Some have argued that Bede translated the whole Bible into the Anglo-Saxon tongue though no copy has ever been found.

Certainly even before the coming of the Saxons the Celtic missionaries of Ireland, Iona and Lindisfarne were familiar with the Scriptures. It was said of St Patrick:

He had no acquaintance with any book, so far as we can ascertain, except the Latin (pre- Vulgate) Bible. But that book he knew well and used constantly, even when Biblical quotations were not called for.

An Introduction to Celtic Christianity John Mackay

Long before St Patrick, Gildas the English Jeremiah (516-570) recorded in his *History* that copies of the Holy Scriptures were being burned on the streets of British towns during the persecution of

Diocletian.(295-305 A. D.)

The famous 8th Century *Lindisfarne Gospels* were rescued from the sea after falling into it while being moved to safety from the marauding Danes. Their staining with the ocean brine seems to be a further intertwining of the Scriptures with this great sea faring nation.

We might say that the growth of our English/ British character, the growth of our constitution, national identity and laws have grown up alongside and been profoundly influenced by and intertwined with the formation of the English- Bible; The Bible being clearly the great formative influence in the development of our nation.

Only in England was the Bible in any sense “ a national possession,” in that it seemed to exist apart in English as an original work of art. Indeed not even Luther’s version (despite its impact on the development of the German language) may be compared to the English Bible in this way. Englishmen carried their Bibles with them- as the rock and foundation of their lives- overseas, even as it came to live in their own language with more abiding force “ than the greater works to which their authors were giving birth.” In some indefinable way, it managed to incorporate into their own history “ a living memory of the central part of the world.” So that, over time, “ the deeds and thoughts of men who had lived thousands of years before in the eastern Mediterranean came to colour the everyday thought and speech of Britons to the same degree, “wrote the great historian G. M. Trevelyan, “as they are coloured in our own day by the commonplaces of the newspaper press.” Beyond the shores of Albion, it fortified the spirit of the pioneers of New England, helped to shape the American psyche, and through its impact on thought and culture eventually spread the world over, “ as wide as the waters be.”

The Making of the English Bible Benson. Bobrick p.2

THE BIBLE’S INFLUENCE ON BRITISH LAW.

When Christianity appeared and began to be established in Europe, the Greco Roman world view was, philosophically, in a state of collapse. Society was desperately in need of a new foundation for social order. As a result, Christian philosophers such as Justin Martyr (c.100-c.165) and Tatian (c.160) turned to Christianity to try and resolve the crisis of meaning and order.

Other Christian apologists such as Tertullian, who was a lawyer by profession, saw that the very foundations of Roman law were in imminent danger of collapse. Roman law was a man made product. It was ostensibly based on Roman religion, but that in turn was also man- made. The Roman state effectively made the Roman gods. Tertullian pointed this out. He said:

To say a word about the origin of the laws of the kind to which we now refer, there was an old decree that no god should be consecrated by the Emperor till first approved by the Senate.

R.J. Rushdoony quoted by Edward J. Murphy In Your Justice p.ii

The implication was that the laws were based on Roman religion, but as the state made the gods, the real god was the state.

Thus as Rushdoony comments:

Rome's humanistic laws had become an expression, not of justice, but of popular (and changing) mores.

Ibid.

In many cases the law was but an expression of a corrupt and corrupting society. Justice Edward J. Murphy comments:

*Tertullian and other Christian lawyers attacked the "religious" foundations of Roman law. Their attacks were often too involved in the specific absurdities of Roman law, but they did see the point, as did the early church. The issue was **lordship**, or to use the more modern term sovereignty: Who is the Lord, Christ or Caesar, God or the state?*

..... Whenever we talk about political sovereignty, we are talking about the actual godhead of that system.

Law, the codified norms and requirements of the social order, emanates from the god of that order. The source of law in any system is the god of that system. The standard norm maker is the sovereign. Law-making is an attribute of sovereignty. Hence, the hostility of the modern state to Biblical law, and to Christ's Church.

In Your Justice Edward J. Murphy Ross. House Books p.ii

What Tertullian and others achieved when Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire was to make Christian principle the basis of Roman law. It was these very principles which were later to be absorbed into the legal codes of Western Europe.

In his book, *Under God and Under the Law*, Richard O'Sullivan, K. C. points out

That there were three great systems of law which have moulded Western civilization as a whole: Roman Canon Law, Roman Civil Law and English Common Law.

He is speaking as a lawyer, and not as a theologian, when he says: "like the three languages of Latin, Greek and Hebrew which Pilate used in the words of the inscription placed over the head of the Lord Jesus on the cross, all three of these systems of law, in turn, paid homage to the Lord Jesus Christ."

O'Sullivan then goes on to show how Roman Canon law developed and what effect it began to have: "*the expansion of the living Church and the growth of Canon Law led in due course to the abolition of the heathen laws of barbarian people and to the remodelling of their savage customs on more humane lines.*"

Quoted by D. E. Gardner *The Trumpet Sounds for Britain* vol II p.23

This Christianizing of Roman law reached its highest peak during the time of the Emperor Justinian (A.D. 527-565) who drew up the great body of civil law called the *Corpus juris civilis*. Almost

everything in the body of civil law which was new was the consequence of Christian moral principles.

There are a few rulers in Europe whose work is still so widely remembered as Justinian's, and this final systematisation of Roman law exercised an immediate and continuous influence throughout the then Roman Empire and later throughout the western world as a whole.¹

Ibid p. 25

Gabriel Silvan comments:

The Eastern Emperor Justinian's Corpus juris civilis (Body of Civil Law, sixth century), which transmitted Roman law as a universal code, included references to the Mosaic legislation in the glosses to its Codex and Digests. Both the ecclesiastical and the civil law codes of the Middle Ages followed this lead, and the study of secular law - revived in Italian universities of the 12th century - was mainly based on Justinian's Byzantine regulations. Thus transformed, Roman Law gave rise to the concept of universal justice, a development that was to have lasting significance.

It was these principles that were enshrined in the late 9th Century into the Anglo-Saxon Code of Alfred the Great. Though mainly intended as a learned gloss or as an exhortation to adopt the "good life," Alfred's use of biblical passages (the 10 Commandments and the Book of the Covenant in Exodus) was extensive and illuminating; as well as the Pentateuch, the Books of Kings, Psalms, Proverbs, and Job are all cited, as also Apocryphal and New Testament sources.

The practice whereby a witness takes the oath on the Bible indicates the Bible's penetration into the legal procedure, as well as concepts of law.

The Bible and Civilization p.139.

The King is under the Law

One particular aspect of English law needs to be emphasized and pointed out. In the course of their history, the English accepted it monarchs kings of French, Scottish, Welsh, Dutch and German origin and even monarchs like George I who spoke no English. They accepted them largely because they viewed their monarchs **as subject to, and not creators, of the law**. Each sovereign represented himself as entitled by law to his dominion, but more importantly, as subject to the law and bound to uphold it.

Henry de Bracton

¹ *Ceasar I was and am Justinian,
Who, by the will of the Prime Love I feel,
Cleared the encumbered laws from vain excess.*

Dante Paradiso, quoted in Under God and Under the Law p. viii

The point was made by the 13th century judge Henry de Bracton, in his *De Legibus et Consuetudinibus Angliae* (Of the Laws and Customs of England c. 1220, revised c. 1250). The king, Bracton argued, lies under the law, since it is the law that appoints him. Directly and without philosophizing he was transcribing the route to English understanding of law, as something objective, and that became part of the character of English law, something not to be invented and imposed but discovered and obeyed.

In Bracton the emphasis was not upon the power of the crown, but in responsibility. The monarch was the subject of God, subject to God's law (as was expressed in the law of the land) and to his feudal court. In Bracton, the King owed some responsibility to listen to his lords. Bracton's writings later became a *de facto* antidote to the absolutism of the Tudors and Stuarts.

That the king is subservient to the law is discovered in the Holy Scriptures, not so much discovered as revealed. Braxton said:

And that he (the King) ought to be under the law appears clearly in the analogy of Jesus Christ, whose vice regent on earth he is, for though many ways were open to Him for his ineffable redemption of the human race, the true mercy of God chose this most powerful way to destroy the devils work, he would not use the power of force but the reason of justice.

Braxton was arguing that justice in Scripture takes precedence over power.

In other words as Francis Schaeffer comments... *God in His sheer power could have crushed Satan in his revolt by the use of that sufficient power. But because of God's character, justice came before the use of power alone. Therefore Christ died that justice, rooted in what God is, would be the solution. Bracton codified this as follows: Christ's example, because of who He is, is our standard, our rule, our measure. Therefore power is not first, but justice is first in society and law. The Prince may have the power to control and to rule, but he does not have the right to do so without justice.*

This was the basis of English Common Law. The Magna Carta (1215) was written within 35 years (or less) after Bractons' De Legibus and in the midst of the same universal thinking in England at that time.

A Christian Manifesto p.28

The Reformation (300 years after Bracton) refined and clarified this further. It got rid of the encrustations that had been added to the Judeo- Christian world view and clarified the point of authority- with authority resting in Scripture rather than church and Scripture. This not only had meaning in regard to doctrine but clarified the bases for law.

That base was God's written Law, and the content and authority of that written Law is rooted back to Him who is the final reality. Thus, neither church nor state were equal to, let alone, above, that Law. The base for law is not divided, and no one has the right to place anything, including king, state or church, above the content of God's Law.²

² Schaefer observes: *The humanists push for "freedom", but having no Christian consensus to contain it, that "freedom" leads to chaos or to slavery under the state (or under an elite). Humanism,*

The founding Fathers of the United States understood well the relationship between one's world view and government. John Witherspoon (1723-1794) the only pastor to sign the Declaration of Independence saw that the linkage of Christian thinking and the concept of government were not incidental but fundamental. John Witherspoon who was a Presbyterian knew that he stood in the stream of Samuel Rutherford (1600-1661), who wrote *Lex Rex* in 1644. *Lex Rex* means law is king. The Stuart monarchs were firm believers in *Rex Lex*; that is the king is law. In the Declaration of Independence we see Bracton's and Rutherford's Biblical view entering American law.

In the fullness of time these great principles became identified with and preserved by the authority of the Authorised Bible. The high regard in which it was held, its universally accepted precepts made it the bastion of righteous law and true liberty. The Authorised Version came to be regarded as the safeguard of our liberties and our defence against tyranny.

The British character was profoundly influenced by this concept of Common Law.

For the British people the law was an objective reality: it did not (as we have seen) depend on the will of sovereigns or parliaments, but stood in judgment upon them.

It was to be likened to the Holy Spirit - always present, always vigilant, always personal, always benign. As the late Master of the Rolls Lord Denning expressed it, justice is above all merely human law. The policemen on his beat was its real embodiment, kindly, impartial and the guardian of the community. When a felon transgressed it was not the state but the Law which pursued him, and the essential goodness of the Law was symbolized by the fact that the policemen carried no arms. The American sociologist Geoffrey Gorer, exploring English character in 1955, found universal enthusiasm for the English police as role models, distinguished by their fairness, gentleness, decency and devotion to duty.

Roger Scruton. *England an Elegy* p.57

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with its lack of any final base for values or law, always leads to chaos. It then naturally leads to some form of authoritarianism to control the chaos. Having produced the sickness, humanism gives more of the same kind of medicine for a cure. With its mistaken concept of final reality, it has no intrinsic reason to be interested in the individual, the human being. Its natural interest is the two collectives: the state and society.

Christian Manifesto F. Schaeffer p.30- 29

THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE ON ENGLISH CHARACTER.

Sense of duty.

Stanley Baldwin (1867-1947) three times Conservative Prime Minister between the wars writing in *British Life and Thought*... comments on the fact that leaving aside the many defects in our national character there is one notable and persistent and worthy characteristic i.e. the instinct of the English mind to find out what is unjust among us and undo it, to know what is our duty and to do it, as God's bidding. He traces some of its origins in Caedmon, "*For us it is very right that we praise with our words, love in our minds the Keeper of the Heavens, Glory King of Hosts.*" It was the same spirit that worked in Chaucer's time that worked in the Vision of Pier's Plowman and spoke through the voice of Gower the poet and contemporary of Chaucer, who called him "*Gower the Moral, a voice crying in the wilderness, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord.'*" It needed not in those days that a man should be a Wickliffite to see the griefs of the Church and people, and to trace them in their root to duties unperformed.

British Life and Thought p.442-3

See also p.245 England an Elegy.

This sense of duty manifested itself in many ways through literature and prose eg. in Nelson's famous words at Trafalgar, "*England expects that every man will do his duty.*" We have it in Tennyson's, Ode on the death of the Duke of Wellington. *Not once nor twice in our rough Island's story the path of duty has being the road to glory.* Also in Wordsworth's Ode to Duty. In Mrs. Heman's famous Casabianca, and in Baldwin's affirmation that *where an Englishman sees his duty, he will follow to the gates of hell.*

"It would hardly be too much to say," wrote W. MacNeil Dixon, "*that into this one word, duty, the English have distilled the whole body of ethics.*" *The merits of this notion, he argued, lies in its simplicity, it strikes no high-pitched or rhapsodical note; it applies as well to daily drudgery as to the heroism of war. It makes no claim at all for the person who obeys it, but on the contrary records his acts as something expected implying that anything else would be an aberration.*

England an Elegy Roger Scruton p.56

The concept comes up time and again in the writings of the Puritans. Matthew Henry said, *We must do our duty and leave the rest to God.*

The Authorized Version developed Britains Protestant Identity and Outlook

Arthur Bryant called Britain the *Protestant Island*.

All this was powerfully strengthened at the time of the Reformation when the Scriptures were personally and individually taken to the hearts of ordinary people. In thousands of homes the Bible was read and re-read and great portions of it known by heart. Through the reading of the Scriptures and the hearing of them expounded Britain's natural propensity towards Protestantism was re-born and strengthened and woven into the concept of nationhood and national identity.

The Bible played a large part in moulding English nationalism, in assessing, the supremacy of the English language in a society which from the 11th to the 14th century had been dominated by French

speaking Normans. In the 17th century the Bible was central to all spheres of intellectual life....the Bible was foundational to all aspects of English culture.

The English Bible and the 17th century Revolution. Christopher Hill p.7

Political Liberty and justice

The Bible certainly played a gigantic part in securing the political liberty which has characterized these islands over the years. As men, women and children read the great themes of Scripture, Justice (Abraham at Sodom and Gomorrah, *let not the innocent be punished with the guilty*), liberty, (the Exodus), righteousness (the 10 Commandments) mercy, forgiveness, self-sacrifice, service, loyalty and many other great precepts were fixed in the hearts and consciences of the population.

Humility and dependence on God

Bible reading produced a humble dependence on God and a humble obedience towards God.

What was the effect of the Bible on the character of the Englishman? To us, looking back, it is not difficult to see. To those living in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries ignorant of what lay ahead, it was impossible to pierce through the mists. I should describe the effect on the common Englishman, as generation after generation that amazing language of the Bible fell on his ears, Sunday after Sunday, was something like this. He became soaked unconsciously in the Hebrew tradition which in some strange way accorded with his native temper and disposition.

The Hebrew spirit was always conscious of the mystery of life, and of human weakness. From that consciousness necessarily arose the sense of dependence on a higher power, God, whose ways were past finding out. Given that attitude to a Creator, unless a man is completely indifferent, he seeks to reconcile his conduct to what he believes is the will of God; that is to reckon his conduct by a standard of right and wrong..... the generations which received this impress have long been dust, but consciously or unconsciously we of today are still their children and their heirs.

Stanley Baldwin Conservative Premier 1923- writing in
An Illustrated Survey by Various Contributors p.443³

British Life and Thought

Responsibility

Built into this Biblical outlook on life was also the firm belief that individuals must take responsibility for their own lives and suffer the consequences of their actions. Staying on the right side of the Law was not merely a duty therefore; it was also a liberation. For it guaranteed that you were safe, that no busybody could give you orders or force you to comply with a routine that you had not chosen. The Law was there not to coerce you or to shape you into regiments obedient to the state. It was there to

³ Stanley Baldwin was Conservative P.M. 1923-24, 1935-37. He was the Member of Parliament for Bewdley.

See Scrutton p.245-6

free you from the state and its officials, and to allow you to "get on with your own life" in private. Those who minded their own business and attended to their duties were rewarded with inalienable rights. The most important of these was the right to do what you ought.

Freedom and Independence of Spirit

The extraordinary result of this was that, while the English believed in law and authority, they despised officialdom and distrusted the state. English society was the creation of amateur initiatives; its most valuable institutions were the result either of private patronage or people making, common cause in clubbing together. Such networks of mutual self-help are natural, and are the fruit of the Christian conscience, they exist wherever the state does not extinguish them - as it extinguish them in Revolutionary France and later in Nazi Germany and Communist Russia. In England, however, private foundations, amateur circles, clubs and friendly societies sprang up not merely from the normal superfluity of social energy, but in response to social problems, calling upon the resources and consciences of Christian men and women to resolve them. It was not the state but Friendly Societies and Building Societies which provided industrial workers with housing. It was not the state but People's Dispensaries and Volunteer Hospitals which first brought the benefits of modern medicine to the poor. Schools, universities and colleges began as private foundations and, when it came to leisure, every village was a centre of spontaneous institution building, with its football club and cricket club, its Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, its Women's Institutes and its circles of amateurs devoted to needlework, music, photography, theatricals, brass bands, jam making etc. almost always centred on the village church. (Based on Scruton p. 58).

Bible reading made individuals sensible , concerned and active towards the needs of others ie The Good Samaritan.

A number of tributes to the influence of the Authorized Bible on British social life.

The first from a surprising source Thomas Huxley the biologist and Darwinian evolutionist. Writing in his Educational Essays (1874) draws attention to the..

Great historical fact that for three centuries this book has been woven into the life of all that is best and noblest in English history; that it has become a national epic of Britain, and is familiar to noble and simple, from John O'Groats to lands end; that it is written in the noblest and purest English, and abounds in exquisite beauties.... By the study of what other book could children be so much humanized, and made to feel that each figure in that vast historical process fills, like themselves, but a momentary space in the interval between the Eternities; and earns the blessings or curses of all time according to its effort to do a good and hate evil?

The Bible has been the Magna Carta of the poor and of the oppressed; down to modern times no state has had a constitution in which the interests of the people are so largely taken into account, in which the duties so much more than the privileges of the rulers are insisted upon, as that draw up for Israel in Deuteronomy and Leviticus; nowhere is the fundamental truth that the welfare of the state, in the long run, depends on the uprightness of the citizen so strongly lay down.

Quoted by Gabriel Sivan. The Bible and Civilization p.77

John Milton said:

There are no songs compatible to the songs of Zion; no orations equal to those of the prophets; and no politics like those which the Scriptures teach.

Could add more examples from F. W. Farrar *The Bible its Meaning and Supremacy*.

THE BIBLE AND DEMOCRACY.

The translation of the Bible into English culminating as it did in the publication of the Authorized Version 1611 open in every way the minds of those who read it. It facilitated and enabled true debate and discussion of all manner of topics religious, political and sociological.

This undoubtedly helped laid the ground for democracy. Now that this book was widely available, argument and debate were licensed and legitimated. A sermon from the book of Judges or Kings might stimulate debate on good and bad government, or the beneficial effects of a good monarch or the tyranny and oppression of a bad one. One might theoretically plan a revolution through debate on the Sermon on the Mount, or out of a sermon on a chapter from the Old Testament prophets, speak of justice or oppression or the building of the New Jerusalem.

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In the English Civil War, a furnace of ideological conflict, Charles I was convinced that unrestricted access to the Bible, conjured up and enforced by his father, had nourished the discontent of the people. Throughout the Civil War, one extreme group after another sought and found the justification for its radical social views and political actions in the sacred pages of the King James Version.

Yet after the Civil War, this began to change and change quite rapidly. The King James Version was now seen as the bedrock of monarchy and Englishness. And so it remained for more than three hundred years until, in a misguided fit of mere modernising, it was "revised", that is to say adulterated, diminished, stripped of everything that had made it last and made it count.

It was a small step from the English Civil War to the American Civil Rights Movement; in both, the Bible was key as an inspiration against brutal and tyrannical authority. Yet in America, as in England three hundred years previously, once the blood was let, the King James Version reverted to its natural home, which is at the centre of a Christian state.⁴

Twelve Books that Changed the World Melvin Bragg p. 283

The Authorised Version has been called, ***The most unifying text in existence.***

Looking further afield we might notice that it was pre-eminently the use of the Authorized Version by

⁴ (See my p. 29 for further note on this.)

See *The Case for Traditional Protestantism* Terry Johnson pp.153-5

the first Puritan Colonists that enforced the primacy of English as the language of the new continent nation which was to become the United States of America. It was in the spiritual sense being prime factor which gave its citizens a deep loyalty to the Christian faith and their consequent love of liberty and justice. The influence of the Holy Scriptures remains in "*the land of the free*" right up to the present day. The President in the White House still begins each day with prayer and the reading of Holy Scripture.

*The grip Protestantism has on the United States is strong and fundamentally influential in its political practices. The majesty of the language so transparently established in America's great public spoken moments, such as Lincoln's Gettysburg address, informs and is embraced by the leading democratic nation on the planet. Through this Bible the Protestant voice in English became the ruling tongue of two successive world empires. It also said to the world that Christianity was the leading faith the Christian God the one true God and Christ the true and only Redeemer. **This Bible has had more impact on the ideology of the last four centuries than any other creed, manifesto or dogma.***

ibid p.282

It was in protestant England that democratic theory was first put to the test and in time the results of that experiment rippled out to the margins of the globe. Through the influence of the modern missionary movements and the influence of the Bible Societies it is perfectly legitimate to speak of the Authorized Version of the Bible as the Book that Changed the World.

Daniel Webster once remarked that the tavern was the headquarters of the American Revolution - meaning, in part, that ideas of self-determination could only emerge in a setting where free discussion naturally took place. That discussion was free because the English Reformation had established the right to it, by virtue of the place the English Bible had in people's lives.

Before the advent of the vernacular Bible, which was made available to the general public by printing, most people did not know what the Bible said. Thereafter, they could read it for themselves and decide, for themselves, what it meant. Their free discussions about the authority of the church and state fostered concepts of constitutional government in England, which in turn were the indispensable prerequisites for the American colonial revolt. Without the vernacular Bible- and the English Bible in particular, through its impact on the reformation of English politics- there could not have been democracy as we know it, or even what we call today the "Free World."

The Making of the English Bible. Benson Bobrick. p. 277

This popular Bible reading marked the origin of a culture belonging to the man in the street which increasingly reached towards popular and democratic institutions. This awakening of the minds of ordinary people brought about in turn the birth of the popular press. The popular press first began to develop in London in September 1513. Between 1590 – 1610 at least 450 English news-books as they were first called appeared.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE AUTHORISED VERSION ON THE MORAL ETHOS OF BRITISH SOCIETY.

Grotius the Dutch theologian after returning home from a visit to England in 1613 wrote: *theology rules there*. Casaubon (the Swiss scholar 1559-1614) made a similar report after his visit to the court of James I. This was a period when the nation was saturated with biblical truth.

This was to have an extraordinary moral affect. It certainly manifested itself in the in the literature of Jeremy Taylor, George Herbert, Milton and Bunyan and many others. It certainly lay behind the high moral tone of Cromwell and his parliament and the ministers of the English and Scottish Puritans. At that time it was said that ordinary men took their Bibles with them to the marketplace and to the work shop, they bought and sold with its words on their lips and in their hearts. It was their guide in every part of their life; and when duty called them to take up arms they charged the enemy as it were with *the sword of the Lord and of Gideon in their hands, and David's psalms on their lips*. It made men like Faithful and Greatheart and Gaius, and women like Mercy and Christiana.

From the very first the spread of the Authorized Version made for progress and freedom. It was the study of the English Bible which in a single generation raised so many in the 17th century from the puerilities, superstitions, and prejudices of the Middle Ages, and made them strong, far- seeing men; tender, and tender heroic women. It raised the nation at one bound to the foremost place among the nations of Europe, and more than all else, kept it there. It taught us that the only enduring national prosperity is that which is based on loyalty and obedience to the Word of God. Piety which is nourished on manuals of devotion and the lives of the saints is of the hot house order. It is those alone who are nourished on the Bible who can stand the storm and flourish in the open-air. It is they who become explorers and reformers, colonists and pioneers of.....truth.

Our Grand Old Bible William Muir p. 178

It reappeared at the time of the 18th century revival.

It is well known that the Evangelical revival brought about a moral transformation of written and as we tend to forget many other countries also. Canon Overton wrote of its effects as follows:

Of the faith which enabled a man to abandon the cherished habits of a lifetime and to go forth ready to spend and be spent in his Master's service; which nerved a man to overcome the natural fear of death, and, indeed, to welcome the last enemy as his best friend who would introduce him to the better land he had long been living for; which made the selfish man self-denying, the discontented happy, the worldling spiritually minded, the drunkard sober, the sensual chaste, the liar truthful, the thief honest, the proud humble, the thriftless thrifty and the godless godly.

The Evangelical Revival of the 18th Century. p. 131

In 1787 George III issued a proclamation for the "*Encouragement of Piety and Virtue, and for the Preventing and Punishing of Vice, Profaneness, and Immorality.*" This stimulated the setting up of

various societies such as: *The Society for the Preservation of Public Morals*, *The Society for the Suppression of Public Lewdness*, *The Society for the External Observance of the Lord's Day*, etc. Many other societies were formed including, *The British and Foreign Bible Society* formed in 1807, the forerunner of our *Trinitarian Bible Society*, 1832.

In the early and mid-Victorian era the Bible held massive sway in our nation. On the Sunday of the 1851 census the records show that half the population were in church. On the same day over 2 million of the nation's children were in Sunday school and the figures for Sunday school attendance continued to rise throughout the century. From the 1850s the crime rate was also falling every year in spite of an increase in population.

Serious crime fell by 60% between 1850 and 1890. In 1888 three out of every four children attended Sunday school. Illegitimacy fell by the end of the 19th century to 4%, divorce was almost unknown, and single parent families in the modern sense virtually unheard of. Drunkenness was a decreasing problem due to the influence of the Temperance Movement.

The virtues of self-control, self help, self discipline, hard work, independence, thrift, propriety, the concept of cleanliness is next to godliness, temperance, honesty, promptness, regularity etc. were held in the highest regard.

Margaret Thatcher reminiscing in 1983 summed this up when she spoke of the values (she ought to have said virtues) which made this country great.

We were taught to work jolly hard. We were taught to prove yourself; we were taught self reliance; we were taught to live within our income. We were taught that cleanliness is next to godliness. We were taught self-respect. We were taught always to give a hand to your neighbour. We were taught tremendous pride in our country.

Evening Standard, April 15, 1983 quoted by Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The Demoralization of Society*. P.4

The way these precepts were worked out in everyday working-class Victorian homes has been described as follows.

For men it meant having a job, however lowly and for women managing a clean, orderly, and thrifty household; for children, being obedient at home and school, doing chores and contributing, if possible to the family income. For the family as a whole, it meant staying out of the workhouse and off the dole, belonging to a burial club or Friendly Society so as to be spared the ignominy of a pauper's burial, having a clean paid up rent book, wearing clean even if threadbare clothes and, for special occasions, Sunday best, giving no cause for disgrace (such as being arrested for drunkenness or having an illegitimate child).

Himmelfarb p.32. It was said of England of that time, "*England is a domestic country, here the home is revered and the hearth is sacred.*"

Good behaviour/ Christian behaviour was expected of high and low.

We have come to regard the crown as the head of morality. The virtues of Queen Victoria or the virtues of George III have sunk deep into the popular heart. We have come to believe that it is natural to have

a virtuous sovereign and that the domestic virtues are as likely to be found on the throne as they are in the humblest cottage.

Karl Beckson, London in the 1890s, quoted by *ibid.* p. 55

In the late 19th century the Roman Catholic writer F.W. Faber penned this unexpected compliment to the influence of Authorized Version on the character and morals of the nation.

It lives on the ear like in music that can never be forgotten, like the sound of church bells which the convert scarcely knows how he can forgo. Its felicities often seem to be things rather than words. It is part of the national mind, and the anchor of the national seriousness. Nay, it is worshiped with a positive idolatry, in extenuation of whose fanaticism its intrinsic beauty pleads availingly with the scholar. The memory of the dead passes into it. The potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses. It is the representative of a man's best moments; all that there has been about him of soft and gentle and pure and penitent and good, speaks to him for ever out of his English Bible. It is his sacred thing which doubt never dimmed and controversy never soiled; and in the length and breadth of the land there is not one Protestant with one spark of religiousness about him whose spiritual biography is not in his Saxon Bible.

Quoted by FW Farrar *The Bible its Meaning and Supremacy* p.251

It was to the eternal truths of God's Word and the unchanging law of righteousness that Arthur Mee turned the thoughts of his readers in the dark days of 1940. He wrote, "*If for one day the common people of these islands loose their faith in God the cause of freedom must perish.*"

Our Finest Hour 1940 p.27

THE BIBLE AND SPIRITUAL REVIVAL

Latourette the renowned church historian reminds us that for some time prior to the 16th century, Christianity had appeared to be on the wane. He writes:

At the beginning of the 1500 the outlook for Christianity appeared unpromising. In many respects what remained of Christianity, seemed a diminishing force. Was Western Europe shedding its Christianity? Christianity, although driven out of much of the Mediterranean world by Islam, had been a tutor to bring civilization to the barbarian peoples of Northern Europe. Were these peoples outgrowing their teacher? Now that they were coming to manhood's estate were these rude folk whom the Church had taught the rudiments of culture to regard Christianity is something out - worn, as swaddling clothes which should now be cast aside? Were a thousand years of certainty to be followed by centuries of decisive and final decay. As the world had witnessed the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, was it now to see the decline and disappearance of the faith with which the Roman Empire in its latter years had been so closely identified. The facts prove to be quite the opposite to the gloomy prognosis. Never had the influence of Christianity been so pronounced and widespread as it was after

K.S.Latourette's History of the expansion of Christianity 1500-1800. Introduction

Clearly it was the translation of Scripture into the common tongues of the European people's that brought about the extensive revival and expansion of the Church in that period. We see here that the translation of the Authorized Version was one of the ripe fruits of that period of spiritual awakening. The widespread reading and the periods of the widespread preaching of the Authorized Version in the 17th 18th and 19th centuries again brought extensive revival of the church.

It is often remarked that this great era of Bible translation and the spiritual revival it produced also unlocked and stimulated all that was best and most noble in the human spirit. It was a revival of literature, science, of discovery and art and music etc. to a most remarkable degree.

This is summed up by Arthur Bryant as follows:

In this period England produced the world's greatest seaman, Drake, the greatest poet Shakespeare, and its greatest scientist Newton. In this period the foundations of Britain's maritime ascendancy were laid. There were founded the thirteen colonies which were to become the United States of America. What is remarkable is how much, with their material limitations, this little nation of five millions achieved.

Like their Catholic ancestors the English of the first Protestant generations believed implicitly that the world was government by moral law. Released from the international bureaucracy and doctrinal straight-jacket of Roman orthodoxy, they differed, often violently to the character of that law, but they still believed that God, its embodiment and enforcer was all seeing, and that men and nations who transgressed it would be punished. The civil wars which convulsed England in the middle of the 17th century, with all their heroism, nobility and tragic waste, were a witness not only to their pugnacity and factiousness, but to the intensity of their religious feelings and striving for moral betterment. And when their fanatic enthusiasms in religion and politics provoked, as they were bound to do, a reaction, they embarked with equal enthusiasm on the task of making human existence more comfortable and intelligible. By their energy, curiosity and good sense they helped to lay the foundations of the modern world.

Protestant Island Arthur Bryant p.12

THE BIBLE AND SOCIAL REFORM

It is not infrequently that we hear the charge levelled against Evangelicalism that it has no social concern and that its pursuit of the salvation of souls excludes any interest in the everyday problems of society. Those who level such a charge only reveal their ignorance of history. It has been said that social reform in our own and other countries owes more to Biblical Christianity than to any other

⁵ See The Rise of Christian Europe H. Trevor Roper. pp. 14 - 15

influence. Kathleen Heasman in her study *Evangelicals in Action, an Appraisal of their Social Work*, states that in the 19th century a good three quarters of the charitable and voluntary societies which were set up were evangelical in character. Many of the functions of the Welfare State were recognize and met, not by social economists and Socialists, but by practical and practicing Christians, whose action was characterized by an intensely personal concern for the individual and his family for prostitutes, cripples, drunkards, and even navvies and cabmen.

It was John Wesley, William Wilberforce, Thomas Clarkson, Granville Sharp, Fowell Buxton, who fought the slave traffic, and they were all evangelicals.

It was John Howard and Elizabeth Fry, both evangelicals, who championed the cause of prison reform.

To the memory of the great reformer, Lord Shaftesbury, a pioneer emancipator of industrial England, and also an evangelical, stands the Eros monument in Piccadilly Circus, purchased with the pennies of the grateful poor.

It was John B. Gough, Frances Willard, Fred Charington and Sir Wilfrid Lawson - all evangelicals - who attacked the entrenched interests of the drink traffic, and whose labours resulted in many Temperance Societies for both old and young.

It was Robert Raikes, an evangelical, who inaugurated Sunday Schools in this country, which, say's J.R. Green the historian, "were the beginnings of popular education."

It was Benjamin Waugh, George Muller, William Quarrier, C. H. Spurgeon, J.W.C. Fegan, and T.J. Barnado, all pronounced evangelicals, who espouse the cause of the children, and established orphanages in England and Scotland some of which continued to the present day.

It was William and Catherine Booth who brought into being the vast and worldwide organization of the Salvation Army. Sir George Williams originated the Young Men's Christian Association. Arthur Broome founded the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (R.S.P.C.A.); and Florence Nightingale was the great reformer of hospital nursing. All of these were deeply rooted believers in the Word God.

*What is not so often remembered is that particularly towards the end of the 19th century the individual churches and chapels engaged in a tremendous amount of social work in their immediate vicinities. A pamphlet published in 1883 by the Rev. W. C. Preston a Congregational minister entitled *The Bitter Cry of the Outcast Poor*, did a great deal to stimulate this work.*

*The publication of *The Bitter Cry* would probably have caused less concern had it not appeared at the time when the unemployment and under - employed of the 1870's was beginning to gain the attention of the public. Widespread discussion of social conditions was taking place both among the workers and the intellectuals, and socialist ideas were being revived. *The Bitter Cry* was the response of those evangelicals who appreciated the situation and who wished to apply similar remedies with an evangelical emphasis. This method of approach was quickly seized upon. Williams Stead made it the basis of an article in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and it inspired the *Liverpool Daily Press* to publish some vivid accounts of "squalid Liverpool". It also suggested the lines which were followed in 1890 by William Booth's *In Darkest England and the Way Out* - a book which was widely read in the last decade of the century and roused not only the Salvation Army, but other groups of evangelicals to recognise their social duties.*

Notable amongst churches to take up this kind of direct social action was the Metropolitan Tabernacle London.⁶

Some of this work was very innovative for example the societies set up to rescue women from prostitution established by men such as the Rev. Baptist Noel and Theophilus Smith. The London Female Mission with a home in White Lion Square, London held periodic midnight mission meetings to which hundreds of prostitutes attended to hear the message of the Gospel and receive practical help.

If there had been no Word of God little of this work would have ever started. Britain would have remained in the condition it was in the early part of the 18th Century as described in great detail in Dr. Bready's famous book, *England Before and After Wesley*. See Baldwin's summary in footnote below.⁷

⁶ See p. 50 *Evangelicals in Action*.

⁷ *It's was just about 200 years ago that one of the great spiritual revivals of Christian history broke over England. Two men Whitfield and Wesley, devoted themselves to the evangelistic work. From early morning to late at night, in fields and byways, amongst crowds of miners, in the roughest quarters of our towns they preached and taught and organized. Their lives put an end to apathy, "it's used as a" had been liberated and there was a stirring of the dry bones far beyond the bounds of the Societies which they founded, incalculable in its results.*

When Wesley created the organisation which was to bind his followers together, he came to rely more and more on lay helpers for the day to day administration of that great body. The results of this was throughout the whole country there were found earnest and sincere men, many of them of the working classes, who were giving all their spare time and some all of their time to definitely Christian work among their fellows, I used the word "incalculable" of the results of this movement: incalculable indeed was the result of the example of such men in that rough industrial world that was so swiftly growing up.

In point of time I should perhaps have spoken of the religious revival of the 18th century before I sketched for you to the development of co-operation in the industrial age, but I put it last so as to try to impress it on your mind, and will make clear what I meant by insisting on the use of the word "incalculable" with reference to that Revival. No one, a hundred and fifty years ago, could have foreseen the rapid development of democracy, the shifting, as it were, of the political sense of gravity, in democratic States: far less could anyone have foretold the political developments within the different countries during the last quarter of a century. But in all these movements that have grown up among the working classes you will find their foundations are laid on a Christian basis. Amongst these the Friendly and Co-operative Societies and the Trade Union Movement are the most conspicuous and successful examples self help and self government among the working classes. They embody and are naturally determined by the Christian social philosophy which prevailed throughout the greater part of the 19th century.

You will find amongst the creators of these organisations and amongst the workers in them, generation after generation, men who are themselves workers in the various Christian denominations to which they belong, men of markedly Christian lives, and their general aim, consciously or unconsciously, is to make life itself more worth living for themselves and for their fellows to build up rather than to pull pool down. It has been a revolutionary spirit more in the religious than in the political sense. Here in my view lies the profound difference between our outlook and that which governs some of the current movements on the Continent, and so long as that outlook, temper, tradition, or whatever you like to call it, remains in England, so long will the Englishman fight to the end any attempt to subject them to a way of life which to him is death.

British Life and Thought Article by Stanley Baldwin.(Written 1940) pp 454-5

THE BIBLE AND SCIENCE

Undoubtedly Biblical Christianity is the mother of modern science because it insists that the God who created the universe has revealed himself in the Bible to be the kind of God he is. Consequently, there is a sufficient basis for science to study the universe. This must be emphasized as much current popular opinion would hold that science grew thanks to the Classical and in spite of the Biblical tradition. Much is made of the retarding influence of the medieval church on the development of science. The role-played by medieval Biblical exegesis in offering resistance to new scientific spirit on the movements of the earth and the planets has been emphasized again and again. In the first place we might say just as it would be wrong to blame Aristotle for all the prejudiced, dogmatic and even silly interpretations of his philosophy put forward by his medieval Scholastic followers, so it would be wrong to lay to the account of the Biblical authors the short sighted interpretations of those who used the Scriptures to oppose legitimate scientific opinions and discoveries.

Herbert Butterfield Regius Prof. of history at Cambridge wrote in his, *The Origins of Modern Science*. That modern scientific investigation is firmly rooted in the Reformation. Scientific thinkers amongst the French Huguenots, the Dutch and English Protestants and the later Puritans believed that they should come to the book of God's works with the same reverence as they came to the book of God's words.

They believed that as God had made all things in order, so the natural laws of creation are orderly, and therefore the subject of scientific investigation

Just as God at the beginning of the Bible in Genesis caused Adam to name the animals and creatures, so all living things can be classified and studied in a orderly fashion.

As in the Bible we see moral cause and effect: so the natural laws of creation can be studied as to their cause and effects.

As God has promised the stability of natural laws in his Word; therefore the natural laws are stable and can be the subjects of rational study.

Finally God the Creator is revealed in Scripture as good, so the creation is for the benefit of mankind and we should learn therefore all we can about the laws of nature and use this knowledge for the good of man in his earthly condition.

CS Lewis summed this up well when he said.

Men became scientific because they expected Law in nature, and they expected Law in nature because they believe in a Legislator.

*Quoted by F.W. Prior *The Gospel in a Pagan Society*. Hodder and Stoughton p.77*

It is of the utmost significance and to be well noted that the era of modern science coincided with the period of new translation of Scripture from the original tongues. Also the widespread

reading and discussion of Scripture culminating in the translation of the Authorized Version.⁸

As R. Hooykaas observes:

In the epoc when modern science arose, religion was one of the most powerful factors in cultural life. What people thought about God influenced their conception of nature, and this in turn influence their method of investigating nature, that is their science.

Religion and the Rise of Modern Science p. XIII

The essential difference between the ancient Greek concepts of science which dominated the world up until the time of the Reformation was largely that scientific thinking was bound up within the confines of human reason. Whilst human reason plays an important part in scientific investigation the process of bringing all observations to the bar of human reason tended to put a straitjacket of traditional thinking and circularity on all scientific investigation.

Francis Bacon who is often called the father of modern science expressed this difficulty as follows.

In Bacon's opinion the root of all evil in science is the violation of the truth of nature by rationalistic prejudice.

"We copy the sin of our first parents..... they wished to be like God, but their posterity wished to be even greater. For we create worlds, we direct and domineer over nature, we will have it that all things are as in our folly we think they should be, not as it seems fittest to the divine wisdom, or as they are found to be in fact.... we clearly impressed the stamp of our own image on the creatures and the works of God, instead of carefully examining and recognizing in them the stamp of the Creator Himself." Thus we lost our dominion over nature, "because we desire to be like God and to follow the dictates of our own reason". And then Bacon implores his readers to "discard these preposterous philosophies which have led millions captive, and triumphed over the works of God; and to approach with humility and adoration" the works of God, to reverently un-rolle the volume of creation and read what it says. Bacon criticized the inadequate intellectual reasoning of the Greeks, their neglect of experiments and their premature construction of theories, as spinning out of laborious webs of learning upon a too narrow basis of facts.

⁸ Its celebrated preface, "The Translator to the Reader," justified not only its own rendering but the entire Reformation enterprise of translating the Bible, and it therefore spoke for the movement as a whole:" But how shall men dictate in that which they cannot understand? How shall they understand that which is kept closed in an unknown tongue? As it is written, except I know the power of the voice, I shall be to him that speaketh a Barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian to me." Describing itself as having been "with the former translations diligently compared and revised." The Authorized Version was by far the most successful of all English translations of the Bible.

This way of thinking exactly parallels the way that the Reformers looked upon God's revelation in Scripture. In true religion we are obliged to accept the way in which it pleased God to reveal himself, that is, in Jesus Christ, without whom no communion with God is possible. This way may not correspond to the ideas about the Godhead which human reason has produced but if we're ever to break free from the confines of our own fallen nature and limited powers of reason we must accept the authority of Scripture.

Religion and the Rise of Modern Science. R. Hookaas p.39..

This was recognized by the English physicist Robert Boyle, founder of the Royal Society 1645.

Boyle considered science to be an excellent school for religion. He pointed out that both science and religion are based on fundamentals that are incomprehensible, and that both are founded on facts "historical" rather than rationally cogent. The scientists finds much in nature that he does not thoroughly understand and he has therefore a special aptitude for accepting things that seem to be beyond belief to the "vulgar philosopher" - the man who thinks that he understands all things and that nothing which does not conform to his philosophy could be true. The scientist is prepared to learn even from unlearned people; just as it would be possible to learn more about the natural history of America from a companion of Columbus than from a hundred Schoolmen, so too one could learn more about God from those unlearned men, the Apostles, who were in close contact with "Him who was at the heart of the Father", than from any philosopher.

Religion and the Rise of Modern Science R. Hooykaas.p.48

The fact that a Christian understanding of the world has made true scientific advance possible is well summed up as follows:

Our Modern understanding of the structure of the physical world originates in the scientific revolution of the 17th century. It has been argued persuasively by Michael Foster and others that it was the Christian doctrine of creation which enabled this step to be taken in Western Europe, a step which had not proved possible in the equally technically advanced setting of, say, Chinese culture. To the Christian, God is reasonable and so the works of the Creator are intelligible and open to rational inspection. Yet, because God is free, there is a contingency in creation which means that its order cannot be determined by a priori thought but must be discerned through experimental observation. Torrance puts this very well when he says: "The intelligibility of the universe provides science with its confidence, but the contingency of the universe provides science with its challenge." The separation which Christian theology maintains between Creator and creation de- sacralises the world and so makes its contingency open to empirical inquiry, free from the danger of impiety. Because the universe is God's creation, it is a fit subject for study. Thus it was that in the 17th century Christian theology provided the ideological setting in which science could embark on its task of investigating the pattern and structure of the physical world.⁹

⁹ As people like Herbert Butterfield and A. N. Whitehead have shown convincingly, science grew up within a Christian tradition: and for many years it was in no sense distinct or separate. The founder of science and Oxford, in the early 13th century, was

Robert Grosseteste, author of a *Compendium Scientiarum* and later Bishop of Lincoln. He had no hesitation in saying that it was "impossible to understand Nature without experiment or described her without geometry." By this he clearly implies the unity of science and faith, just as much as his distinguished pupil, the Somerset friar Roger Bacon who in his *Opus Maius*, sought to show that the new knowledge, so far from being an enemy of Christian faith, was actually an aid, even in the business of evangelising mankind.

This same wholeness of outlook lasted well into the beginning of modern science. Our Royal Society was founded in 1645, and to its growth in importance much of the dissemination of knowledge without which science cannot live, is due. Among its members were John Wilkins and Seth Ward, both bishops; John Wallace Doctor of divinity and mathematician; Robert Boyle the chemist bequeath the sum of £50 a year to found a lectureship for "proving the Christian religion against notorious infidels," and "chiefly recommending to his sister" (his executor), believing of the greatest part of his estate for, Charter, the Fellows were commanded to direct their studies "to the glory of modern creator, and the advantage of the human race. "the advance or propagation of the Christian religion among infidels", John Rae, the founder of systematic botany and zoology, who great book *The Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of Creation* exercised a profound influence among thinking people and was even used in a shortened form by John Wesley in training his travelling preachers; Christopher Wren, astronomer and architect of St Paul's Cathedral; as well as the greatest figure of them all, Isaac Newton, who claimed that his theological studies were at least as important as his strictly scientific ones. It may be true that religious discussions as such were not permitted at meetings of the Society, balanced in their second charter where the fellows were exhorted "to direct their studies to the glory of God the Creator and the advantage of the human race." Any doubts regarding the relation between the Society and Church was dispelled by its first historian, Sprat, who wrote:

I do here in the beginning most sincerely declare that this design (of a Royal Society) should in the least diminish the reverence that is due to the doctrine of Jesus Christ, it were so far from deserving protection that it ought to be abhorred by all the polite and prudent, as well as by the devout, part of Christendom.

C.A. Coulson *Science and Christian Belief* Fontana Books. pp. 22-23.

¹⁰ See also:

What if Jesus had Never Been Born. D. James Kennedy. pp. 130,134,126-

We may also add the following:

Adam was thought to have possessed a perfect knowledge of all sciences, a knowledge lost to posterity when he fell from grace and was expelled from the Garden of Eden. The goal of 17th century scientists such as Francis Bacon and his successors in the Royal Society of London was to regain the scientific knowledge of the first man. Indeed for these individuals, the whole scientific enterprise was an integral part of the redemptive enterprise that, through the Christian religion, was to help restore the original race to its original perfection. The biblical account of the creation thus provided these scientists with an important source of motivation, and in an age still totally committed to traditional Christianity, the new science was to gain social legitimacy, on account of these religious associations.

Internet article, The Biblical Roots of Modern Science.

THE BIBLE AND ENGLISH LITERATURE

It is not an exaggeration to state that but for the Bible the English language and English literature as they are today would never have been. The language of the Authorized Version has been recently described as: *that incomparable masterpiece which has defeated all attempts at vulgar modernization beside the AV the language of modern versions read like the language of a plumber's manual.* (Simon Sharma B.B.C. Radio 4 lecture on the Authorized version, January 9th, 2011).

It came about at a time of great literary excellence. 1611 was the year of Shakespeare's swan song, *The Tempest*. It was also the year in which John Donne the preacher, poet first began to rise to prominence. The language of the Authorized version has also been described as sacred truth clothed in flesh and blood, and its language powerful, muscular and sinewy. (Simon Sharma *ibid*). It's very language brings with it the consciousness of God who is awesome but never remote and always present. Its language lodges in the mind and disturbs the temporal with the haunting sound of the eternal. (*ibid*)

The journalist Peter Hitchens has given as the following examples of the Authorized Versions incomparable English, commenting that other versions in comparison are: *as flat as Kansas and as dreary is the planes of Karangander.*

And the king was much moved and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he

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See also W.R. Mathews. The Christian Faith p.316

went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom my son, my son!" 2 Samuel 18:33

This does not seem to me to be in any way hard for 20th-century man to understand. Indeed, you can hear and feel the woe and regret in it across the centuries, an old man weeping alone. Whereas take a few modern versions: *The King was the greatly moved and went up to the chamber over the gates and wept. And of thus he said as he walked, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son my son!"*(*New American Standard Version*). Or *"the King was shaken. He went up to the room over the gateway and wept. As he went, he said: "O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you – O Absalom, my son, my son!"* (*New International Version*).

Or where the Authorized Version has: *"And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert, from the tempest; as the rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land,"* Isaiah 32:2

The New International Readers Version becomes: *A King will come who will do what is right, His officials will govern fairly. Each man will be like a place to get out of the wind, he will be like a place to hide from storms. He'll be like streams of water flowing in the desert. He'll be like the shadow of a huge rock in a dry and thirsty land."*

Hitchens concludes *..No contest, really is there? The new versions tend only to be tolerable at all when they stick closely to the Authorized Version's poetic texts.*

As for *thee* and *thou* and *ye*, these remind the reader will this the veil in the poetic and eternal concepts, not reading Harry Potter or listening to the radio news. And, as it happens, almost every other major language has retained these important distinctions. And is it not true that *"would God I had died for thee"* is immediately more pointed than *"would God I had died for you?"* *Thee* (as any Yorkshire man knows), refers only to one person. *"You"* can refer to a whole room full of people.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch referring to the Authorized Version of the Bible comments:

The Scriptures in our Authorized Version are part and parcel of English.

The Authorized Version has set a seal on our natural style, thinking, and speaking; it is in everything we see, hear, and feel, because it is in us, in our blood.

Speaking of the Authorized Version's affect upon English Literature he describes it as:

The most majestic thing in our literature, a well of English undefiled.

Cambridge Lectures on the English Language.

In his *History of the English People*, J. R. Green comments:

As a mere literary monument, the English Version of the Bible remains the noblest example of

the English tongue, while its perpetual use made it, from the instant of its appearance, the standard of our language.

Macauley said of the English Bible:

If everything else in our language should perish, it would alone suffice to show the whole extent of its beauty and power.

It is difficult to think of literate people who have not been influenced by the Authorised Version.

We may think of the influence of the Authorized Version on writers such as John Bunyan. Edmund Goss said of his writings:

It is the matchless and inimitable crystallization into imaginative art the whole system of Puritan Protestantism.

All of which we may note based on the Bible.

We may add the names of Crashaw, Quarles, Jeremy Taylor, Milton, Andrew Marvell, Addison, Defoe, Dean Swift, Samuel Johnson, William Cowper among the 17th and 18th century men of literature, influenced by the Authorized Version.

In the 19th century we may include the names of Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning, Carlyle, Ruskin, Coleridge, Scott, Thackeray, Charles Reade, the Bronte's Hawthorne, Longfellow and Southey, Christina Rossetti, Harriet Beecher Stow and many more.

In the 20th century we find its influence in Kipling, Auden, McLeish, T.S. Eliot, G. K. Chesterton, John Betjemen, Alistair Cooke, C. S. Lewis

An index of Bible references in the writings of Ruskin makes a volume of over 30 pages, and in Van Dyke's book on Tennyson there is a list of the poet's biblical quotations and allusions which covers 24 pages.

David Lyle Jeffrey published a massive work in 1992 which was 16 years in the making, comprising of a Dictionary of Biblical Tradition in English Literature covering 960 pages. In his introduction he states:

The Bible is foundational for Western literature. To understand something of the Bible, and of its transmission in and through English literature is to reckon sympathetically with the development of English cultural consciousness in its richest and most coherent levels of expression.

p.xi, xiii

The Authorised Version has influenced everyday speech in a most profound way.

The influence of the Authorised Version on everyday speech can be illustrated by such expressions as: highways and byways; lick the dust: a broken reed: the root of all evil; weighed in the balance and found wanting; the sweat of his brow; a word in season; heap coals of fire; a pearl of great price: the burden and heat of the day; wars and rumours of wars; an eye for an eye and the tooth for a tooth; casting ones pearls before swine; and hundreds more.

Whenever we sing, The National Anthem, God save the King/Queen we are using biblical language. (I Sam 10:24). The inscription over the portico of the Royal Exchange is from Psalm 24, *The earth is the LORD'S and the fullness thereof*. The motto of the University of Oxford is *Dominus illuminatio mea, The LORD is my light, Psalm 27*.

To return to Sir Arthur Quiller Couch's Cambridge lecture on reading the Bible. He read to his students the following sentences from Scripture.

Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off. Isaiah 33:7

And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place and as the shadow of a great rock a weary land. Isaiah 32:2

*So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality.....*I Cor. 15:54

Then observed: that when a nation has achieved this manner of diction these rhythms for its dearest beliefs, its literature is surely established..... the Authorized Version set a seal on our national style... It has cadences homely and sublime, yet so harmonizes them that the voice is always one. The language of the Bible has shaped the speech of England.

The Outline of Literature Ed. John Drinkwater p. 78

Footnote.¹¹

THE INFLUENCE OF THE AUTHORIZED VERSION ON MUSIC AND ART.

If there had been no Bible there would be no Psalms and who can tell the influence the 150 psalms have had on countless lives and through their inspirational strength and impact at times turned the whole course of history. Study for example the influence of Psalm 46, Luther's Psalm on European history. What a loss never to be able to sing, Ye gates lift up your heads on high, I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, O send thy light forth and thy truth, all people that on earth do dwell, O God our help in ages past, Let us with a gladsome mind, the Lord's my shepherd I'll not want.

We might think of the great hymns of the New Testament, The Magnificat, the Benedictus, the Gloria in Excelsis, and the Nunc Dimittis.

¹¹ See James Stalker The Four Men p129

The church of Christ has always sung. The song began in the Upper Room at the institution of the Lord's Supper when they sang part of Psalms 113-118. Paul teaches us that the early Christians sang not only with their spirit but with their understanding. Also that they joined together in the singing of Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.

Time and space permits only a reference to the vast treasures of Scripturally inspired hymnody. Watts and Wesley alone have enriched the songs of the Christian world beyond measure.

Amongst the British composers of sacred cantatas and oratorios we might mention Purcell's Jubilate, Sullivan's The Light of the World, Stainer's Crucifixion and Maunder's Olivet to Calvary. The libretto of Handel's famous Messiah is almost entirely taken from the Authorized Version. It is a fact that Jennings the compiler of the libretto of the great oratorio by demonstrating that the coming of Christ the Messiah was long prophesied in the Old Testament and the fact that God is sovereign over all the events of history was a direct refutation of the teaching of the Deists who were fundamentally a- historical, wishing their "natural religion" to have nothing to do with something as statedly divinely regulated as biblical history.¹²

See footnote.

This great tradition was clearly carried on in our own country through the influence of the Authorised Version.

As far as the Authorized Version has influenced Art we might just list some of the notable British artists and the paintings that have been influenced by the Scripture narrative.

Sir John Everett Millais 1829- 1896 Jephthah

Lord Leighton 1830 – 1896 Elijah in the Wilderness

Sir Joshua Reynolds 1723 – 1792 The Infant Samuel Kneeling at Prayer

Ford Madox Brown 1821- 1893 Elijah Restoring the Widows Son.

Sir Edward Burne Jones 1833 – 1898 David giving directions the Solomon for the Building of the Temple.

¹² *It has been said that no area of high culture was more profoundly influenced by the Reformation than music. Luther himself was a gifted musician, and he strove to compose singable hymns with a strongly Biblical content. He did a stanza by stanza recital of the Ten Commandments as a hymn, and his best known hymn A mighty Fortress is our God, was incorporated into the fourth movement of Felix Mendelssohn's Fifth Symphony and is a free rendering of the Psalm 46, God is our refuge and strength.*

Whose Bible is It? Pelican p.177 Penguin

Gabrielle Dante Rossetti 1828 – 1882 David as King

G. F. Watts 1817 – 1904 Samson.

Holman Hunt The Light of the World

Joshua to Job the Art and life Library W. Shaw Sparrow

THE BIBLE AND THE INDIVIDUAL

Profound and far reaching as the influence of the Bible has been on public life incalculable has been its influence on the private and devotional life of countless individuals. Wesley wrote:

*When quiet in my house I sit,
Thy book be my companion still
My joy thy sayings to repeat
Talk o'er the record of thy will
And search the oracles divine,
Till every heart felt word be mine.*

Innumerable are the testimonies to the saving, strengthening, consoling, purifying power of the scriptures in the lives of the saints through the centuries.

From the very beginning we read of how Timothy was early taught the Scriptures at home by his mother and grandmother.

Tertullian tells us that reading the Bible aloud in the home was one of the common practises of the early Christian families.

When Oliver Cromwell was dying he asked for Philippians 4: 11-13 to be read to him.

He repeated the words of the text:

*Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content.
I know both how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.
I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

The he said:

“It is true, Paul, you have learned this, and attained to this measure of grace, but what shall I do? Ah, poor creature, it is a hard lesson for me to take out! (Learn) I find it so.”

But when he came to the words which followed, faith began to work, and his heart found comfort and support, and he said.

“He that was Paul’s Christ is my Christ too.”

The story of Sir Walter Scott when dying is also well known.

He said to his son-in-law, Lockhart. “Bring me the Book.” “What book replied Lockhart?” “The Book,” said Sir Walter:- the Bible, there is but one Book.”

Katharine Chorley reminiscing on her Manchester upbringing in the early years of the 20th century speaks of her parents beliefs as follows:

As I look back on Sunday at Ferns I see very clearly that I must distinguish between a materialist philosophy of life and a belief in the economics of capitalism as a basis for one’s activities in the world. Father and mother believed, as I have said in the capitalist system, and the outer setting of their lives was framed on its harsh and impersonal economic assumptions, but they and most of their friends were not materialists. For them the inward personal life of a human being was directed to values sanctioned by some authority even more august and compelling even than the inexorable law of the market. Although she might never talk about it, mother I know lived with a sense of a last reckoning, the final judgment in the course of which men’s motives and actions would be assessed and explained on a standard of absolute and unshakable values and by an Authority whose verdict admitted of no appeal. In short, most of them believed in absolute and objective values and were immune from the rotting miasma of subjectivism which has soaked into the vision of their successors. We their successors, have been pleased to regard absolute values as out of date because we have cheapened and made superficial the speculations of thinkers whose researches we have only half understood and half understanding have erected into the laws of life. And so, encouraged by the determinists that we really could not help ourselves since circumstances and environment and heredity shaped our characters and controlled our actions numbers of which were reflex anyway, and by the psycho-analysts who told us that what we are derives from recondite happenings of our remote childhood, we have substituted a sentimental subjectivism for the virile and uncompromising conviction of personal responsibility to which our parents subscribed. And further enlightened by the creative evolutionists who explained to us that conscience and ethics are simply varying products of the experience of countless generations of human beings striving to bond themselves into societies in order to live, we have obliterated the distinction between social morality and personal sin. My generation makes mistakes and does not commit sin. Their generation may have broken and stunted men’s bodies in the interests of economic success. But we have extinguished men’s souls and that for no real purpose or goal whatsoever.

Manchester Made Them. Katharine Chorley p. 180-81

We may conclude by saying of Holy Scripture.

That it never leaves a man where it finds him, because it bestows privilege, opens up opportunities, and creates responsibilities every time we consult its pages.

Being of divine origin, it speaks with sovereign authority, and each of us turns aside from it at the cost of our present and eternal ruin.

Let us take this precious Word to our hearts and to our family life, our business life, our church life, our national life indeed to every aspect of our lives let it in all things lead us to Christ the only Saviour and it will prove itself indeed to be the very Word of the living God, the fount of all life and blessedness.

Holy Bible book divine precious treasure thou art mine.

Tolle Legge, tolle legge. Take and read, take and read.

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