

How The English Language Helped Distribute The Bible

Jesus said, "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). "Go into the entire world and preach the Gospel to every person" (Mark 16:15). "Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in Jesus' name to all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). "You will be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, in Judea, Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Initially, the Gospel was preached to the entire known world before the New Testament was completed. 'I thank my God through Jesus for all of you, your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world' (Romans 1:8). 'Their sound (teaching about God) went out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world' (Romans 10:18). The Gospel message was preached firstly to Jewish people in Hebrew, then after a time the Gentiles heard the Gospel (Acts 11:1) taught in other languages around the world as Christianity spread. There was a low ebb in Bible reading for centuries because it had to be hand written until the invention of the printing press. From that time onwards the Bible has been copied more than any other book ever written. Suddenly, Bibles appeared in many languages around the world. Christians finally learned about God's will concerning the Jewish people and their heritage. The Jewish people have an eternal and irrevocable claim to the Land of Israel. Christians who study their true Spiritual heritage soon discover they share in promises that were given to Abraham and the Jewish people centuries ago. The restoration of the Jewish people to their rightful homeland of Israel in modern times is part of God's will and purpose.

The English language was unknown to the original apostles, disciples and other faithful people who shared the Gospel message two thousand years ago, but English is now here to stay. We cannot underestimate the influence of the English Bible that has spread across the world, courtesy of the British Christians. Thousands of Christian missionaries have gone around the world, learned the local language and spread God's message. This has ensured many generations would discover what God promised Abraham's descendents and the fact, He would always accomplish His divine will. A new era of Spiritual learning occurred. The Bible was affordable to the masses. John Wycliffe (1320-1384) published the Bible in English in 1382. Tyndale followed in 1526. Coverdale came along in 1535 then the King James Version was published in 1611 and cemented the bond between the Jewish people and English speaking Christians, linking the history of the Hebrew people to the English.

What the English translators did was Anglicise many, but not all of the Hebrew names in both the Old and New Testaments. In deference to their English King James, the name James replaced the name Jacob in the New Testament except when the name Jacob referred to the patriarchs. Before the King James Bible was published, the Book of James was known as the Book of Jacob. Hebrew names had meanings. Isaac (Yitz'chak in Hebrew) means 'laughter'. If we read the Hebrew names of Jesus and the apostles (Matthew 10:2 to 4), we can see the differences and the lengths the translators went to, to make the Bible easier for the English speaking people to understand. Apostles and disciples in Hebrew are Talmidim. Jesus' Hebrew name is Yeshua, meaning 'Saviour'. Simon is Shimon meaning 'He who hears'. Peter is Kefa, 'the rock'. Andrew is Andrai, 'manliness'. James is Jacob pronounced Ya'akov, 'supplanter'. John is Yochanan, 'Yah is gracious' or 'giver of light'. Bartholomew is Bar-Talmi, 'abounding in furrows' – good for planting seeds. Thomas is T'oma, 'twin' also known as Didymus meaning 'longing' (John 11:16). Matthew is Mattityahu, 'gift from God'. Thaddaeus is Taddai, 'wise'. Judas is Yehuda, 'give Yah praise'. Other names that were changed are Joseph or Yosef, 'God gave this son'. Jesse is Yishay, 'gift of God'. Eve is Havah, 'mother of all living'. Adam is Adamah, 'life'. Moses is Moshe, 'drawn from water'. Elisabeth is Elisheva, 'God has promised' was the name of Aaron's wife, Genesis 6:23. Aaron is Aharon, 'bright' or 'high mountain'. Abraham is Avraham, 'father of many nations'.

The translations of the Bible was carried out by dedicated people but orchestrated by the Lord. Having the Bible in many languages brought the Gospel message to the world. It is the God of Israel Who is moving the hearts of genuine Christians to be united with the Children of Israel and we must do the right thing regarding His ancient chosen people. Concern for Jewish well-being has been growing for a couple of centuries as increasing numbers of Christians have been reading their Bibles and obeying God's commands to, "Comfort My people. Speak kindly to Jerusalem" (Isaiah 40:1 & 2). The whole Bible is full of promises for reconciliation between God and the Jewish people, Israel's restoration, Jerusalem's return to Israeli rule as the capital and for the Jews' to return to their homeland. When Christians come to know God and are sincerely seeking His will, they will come to love the family of Jesus, the Jewish people. The wave of true Christians loving and appreciating the Jewish people is not new. The early church was made up of evangelistic Jews who spread the Gospel to Gentiles by the love of God for the whole earth. God loved the world so much He gave Jesus to us so whoever wants to receive eternal life, can do so (John 3:16). Now it is our turn to love the Jewish people as much as they loved the Gentiles two thousand years ago and often gave their lives so the Gentiles could learn about salvation. The Scriptures say the world was not worthy of these righteous, faithful people. 'Some were tortured, not accepting their deliverance so they might obtain a better resurrection. Others were

tried by mocking and scourging, yes, by bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned. They were sawn apart. They were tried (in court). They were slain with the sword. They went around in sheep or goat skins being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated, of whom the world was not worthy, wandering in deserts, mountains, caves and in the holes of the earth' (Hebrews 11:35 to 38). This is what the first Jewish evangelists went through so Gentiles could hear the Gospel message. It was the Jews who gave us salvation (John 4:22) and we should show our gratitude by helping them establish themselves in Israel prior to the return of Jesus.

God has raised up many genuine, God fearing, Bible believing Gentiles to help with the creation of a modern homeland for dispossessed Jewish people. For about two centuries, genuine, righteous, faithful English speaking Christians, mostly from the British Empire and the Anglican church have been claiming Israel for the Jewish people. Lord Arthur James Balfour was famed for his declaration of Britain's intent to establish a national homeland for the Jewish people. The Guatemalan ambassador to the UN, Dr Jorge Garcia-Granados was the first to proclaim the State of Israel before the General Assembly of the United Nations. Major General Sir Charles Wilson was guided by Scripture and prayer as he walked every inch of Jerusalem to produce the first accurate map of the Holy City in 1866. In 1917 Lt Col John Henry Patterson took command of the Jewish Legion, the first Jewish fighting unit since Bar Kochba fought the Romans two thousand years ago. In 1917 the Australian Light Horsemen won the battle in Bathsheba, opening the way for the British to reopen the Jewish homeland for its native sons and daughters. Then General Allenby forced the Muslims to hand over Israel to its ancient people, the Jews. In 1936 Captain Wingate organised Jewish resistance against increasing Arab terror that was trying to retake Israel.

Hundreds of clergymen, bishops, puritans, catholic priests and even Pope Benedict XV supported the Balfour Declaration of 1917. Some of their comments are as follows. "There is nothing more certain than the return of the Jews to Jerusalem." "By talking with the Jewish people and serious Bible study, we find the time of their call draws near and this nation of England will be first to transport the sons and daughters of Israel to their promised land for an everlasting inheritance." "The restoration of Israel is common sense and divine wisdom." "The survival of the Jews through centuries of persecution and attempts to annihilate them could be none other than what God spoke through His prophets of their destiny in the Latter Days when He will gather them to their ancient homeland and to Himself in true faith." "To care for the Jews is to glorify God. The whole Bible shows us God has a special affection for Israel. God is not finished with Israel and He has not rejected His people. The Jews will give life to this (spiritually) dead world." "Christians do not think enough about this. If anything is promised in the Bible then it already is. There is an actual restoration of the Children of Israel. They will go up into Zion with supplications into Jerusalem. May that happy day come soon." "Their wonderful survival as a distinct people all through the persecutions, changing circumstances and wanderings of the past centuries to the present time is a standing miracle, attesting to the truth of God's Word and assuring us of His purposes in their future." "The revival of Israel through the people of Israel is a miracle. Rome destroyed your homeland and today as you seek to rebuild it you are overcoming the might of Rome. This is Divine Providence. This is what Almighty God desires. This is a great idea."

"We cannot help but rejoice at the Hebrews returning to their land once more. God speed them! They have long been away from their land and once more they will become a nation and make the Holy Land fruitful and prosperous, the home of a free and happy people." "Out of all places of the dispersion, God's purpose is to bring them home again and to draw them to Himself by faith forever." "Oh, pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6). The ancient city of the people of God is about to resume an important place among the nations and England is the first of the Gentile kingdoms to cease treading down Jerusalem" (Luke 21:24). "The Jewish state will be reborn according to the ancient prophets and most certainly, Israel will become a blessing to the whole world (Genesis 12:3)." "The Christian religion and Western civilisation owes Judaism a huge debt." "No Christian can doubt the Jewish people are beyond all question, the most remarkable race which has ever appeared in the entire world." "I should truly rejoice to see Israel a strong guard of the Jews, established and flourishing agriculture settlements and ready to hold their own on the mountains of Israel against all aggressors. I can wish for nothing more glorious in this life than to share in helping them do so." "The part played by the Jewish League is assured a niche in history because it fought in Israel for the restoration of the Jewish people to the Promised Land." Let us all give God the glory for organising this entire restoration of His people, His land and His one and only Holy City.

Yes, there have been some people who have claimed to be Christian who have done terrible and shocking things to Jewish people, but we want the modern Jews to know, that behaviour is not true of all Christians. There are many thousands of genuine, born-again disciples who love God, love the Jewish people and support Israel. Some people support Israel financially, some give their time, some buy their goods and exports to support Israeli jobs. We, as modern disciples should show unconditional love and mercy to the Jewish people. We need to pray for them, give what we can to them, serve them as we are able and speak out on behalf of God's plan. God is working towards the complete restoration of Israel and the Jewish people and no human on earth can ever stop Almighty God, Ancient of Days from completing the task He foretold.

With the advent of computers, the English language is now universal and plays a huge role in teaching genuine disciples about the Jewish people, Israel and the will of God regarding the descendents of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Some countries have English as their second language and it is taught in schools, universities and other educational facilities. Individuals in every one of those countries can read the Bible in English if they want to. It is quite amazing, such a tiny nation like Britain could become an Empire and take its language all over the globe. It is just as amazing, a tiny nation like Israel could take the oracles and deep teachings of God, plus their holy feasts, their holidays, their food, their sacred Scriptures and the love of God all over the globe, starting in Jerusalem, just as Jesus instructed the apostles and disciples. Thanks to the devout Jewish people, we can learn to know God as our Creator and Sovereign and we can learn about the Messiah as our Saviour Who sacrificed His life for us. As we await the second coming of the Messiah Jesus/Yeshua, we can thank the Jewish people for giving us that information and we can thank the English language for helping to reach every corner of the world, just as Jesus told us to.

Thanks to the Hebrew/Jewish people, both ancient and modern, there will be at least one person from every tribe, family, nation, ethnic group, language both ancient and modern, who has accepted salvation through the love and mercy of God. 'They sang a new song saying, "You are worthy to take the Book of Life and to open its seals, for You were slain and bought us for God with Your blood, out of every tribe, language, people and nation' (Revelation 5:9). 'After these things I looked and behold, a great multitude which no man could number out of every nation and of all tribes, peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, all dressed in white robes with palm branches in their hands. They cried out with a loud voice saying, "Salvation be to our God Who sits on the throne and to the Lamb" (Revelation 7:9 & 10). 'I saw a holy angel flying in mid heaven, having an eternal Gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on the earth, to every nation, tribe, language and people' (Revelation 14:6).

Amen and God bless you.

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