**WILLIAM TYNDALE [1494-1536]**

In contrast to Luther who lived his life in the center of public attention, Tyndale was underground outside England in Europe where he hid for 12 years translating the Bible into English. He is the “Father of the English Bible”, 1st to translate it out of Grk & Heb. Therefore also called the Father of the English Reformation. Led the charge for the Reformation. Also, father of the modern English language. It would be over 150 years before an English Dictionary existed. There were a great # of ways to spell words in elementary form in 16TH century. He was proficient in 8 languages which when he spoke natives to this language did not know he was English.

**HISTORICAL CONTEXT**: Legislation passed in 1401 entitled The Burning of the Heretic by English Parliament. To be a heretic one would either own an English Bible or produce an English translation. This law was in response to Wycliffe’s ministry. Archbishop, Thomas Arindale, wrote the constitutions of Oxford forbidding any translation into the English language. No one can read such a Bible – crime worthy of death. 7 “Lollard” dads were burned at the stake in 1519 for teaching their children the Lord’s Prayer in English.

**PRIVILEGED SON (1494-1506)** Family - landowners & merchants w/means to send Tyndale to Oxford.

**EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT (1506-1515)** Began at age 12. Gifted. Bachelors of Art, then Masters of Art. Ordained into priesthood at Oxford. He expressed great disappointment that he was shielded from the Bible and theology for 1st 9 years at Oxford. In the universities, no man was allowed to look on the Scriptures until he was 1ST nursed in heathen learning for 8 or 9 years – students were loaded with false principles which shut them out from understanding the Word. Locked up with false expositions, and with false principles of natural philosophy.

**REFORMED BELIEVER (1519-1520)** Enters Cambridge, a hotbed of Luther like books. Students meeting together in local inns – “The Whitehorse Inn”. Reformation movement was a college age movement. A group of 9 – 12 of them were burned at the stake. Discussed truths of reformation. In this context, Tyndale came to saving faith.

**PRIVATE TUTOR (1521-1524)** He was a private tutor for the wealthy Walsh family. Taught liberal arts & the Word. Led them in Bible Studies. Began to preach regularly in little surrounding villages. Realized that England was unsaved w/o gospel & that England could never come to know Jesus Christ until they had a Bible in their own language. Local priests came to dine at the Walsh manor, and Tyndale witnessed firsthand the appalling biblical ignorance of the Roman Church. During one meal, he found himself in a heated debate with a Catholic clergyman. One priest asserted, “We had better be without God’s law than the Pope’s.”Tyndale boldly responded “I defy the pope and all his laws. If God spares my life, ere many years he would cause a boy that drives the plough [referring to the common man] to know more of the Scripture than the Pope does.”

**FOCUSED MAN (1523)** Goes to London. Knew needed to get approval of Church of England & the King of England, Henry the VIII. Approached Bishop of London. Rejected. Luther had translated Bible into German 1 yr earlier, a translation that created chaos in Germany. Germans rose up in revolt against Catholic Church. Tyndale stayed in London preaching. A businessman heard him preach who was sympathetic to the Reformation. He financed Tyndale, underwriting Tyndale’s life and ministry. Tyndale realized he needed to leave England.

**DETERMINED EXILE (1524)** Determined never to marry so that he could give himself entirely to the job of translation. Went to Hamburg, Germany. Martyn Lloyd-Jones notes that Tyndale’s departure from England to the European Continent marked the origin of Puritanism: Puritanism, “I am prepared to assert…really first began to manifest itself in William Tyndale, and as far back as 1524…. “Puritanism…is a type of mind. It is an attitude, it is a spirit, and it is clear that two of the great characteristics of Puritanism began to show themselves in Tyndale. He had a burning desire that the common people should be able to read the Scriptures. But there were great obstacles in his way; and it is the way in which he met and overcame the obstacles that shows that Tyndale was a Puritan. He issued a translation of the Bible without the endorsement and sanction of the bishops. That was the 1st shot fired by Puritanism ….” Tyndale traveled to Wittenberg since Luther’s works led him to the gospel. Begins translation of NT. Philipp Melanchthon was also present there who was a brilliant Greek scholar. No doubt Tyndale was able to sharpen his skills under Philipp’s mentoring.

**NEW TESTAMENT TRANSLATOR (1525)** For the 1st time someone translates a NT into English translated out of the original Greek. Goes to Colon, Germany to do this. Largest city in Germany. Easy to be lost in the crowd. English merchants coming and going. Easy for him to hide. Finds a printer which is a challenge because if he is arrested both he and the printer would be put to death. Found a printer. But the printer’s employees one night with too much to drink got loud and were overheard by pro-Catholic forces. The print shop is raided. Tyndale had been forewarned. So he gathers up the translated portions and sails to Worms, Germany. Needed this location cuz along a river, and the Bibles once printed can’t be carried in wagons. Had to be put on a ship on a river that flows into the open North Sea so it can be put on another ship, and taken to England. Needed a mill and enough paper to produce 3 to 6K copies of the NT.

**BIBLE PUBLISHER** **&** **ILLEGAL SMUGGLER (1526)** Tyndale prints Bibles. He then hides them in bales of cotton and then placed on ships. Taken to London where believers take these cotton bales and takes out the translations. Then sold underground and dispersed throughout England for both merchants and plough boys – everyone. The Bishop of London discovers what is going on and preaches a scathing sermon against Tyndale’s Bible. Indicates there are some 2k errors in it, and publicly has multiple copies burned. A shrewd businessman sympathetic to what Tyndale was doing begins to buy up all of the versions before they can be burned up. He sends the money needed back to Tyndale to underwrite the 2nd edition. Tyndale begins to work on OT & to improve the NT.

**THEOLOGICAL WRITER (1528)** Writes The Parable of the Wicked Mammon & sets forth the teaching of justification by faith alone. Tyndale writes: “Christ is Christ is thine, and all His deeds are thy deeds. Christ is in thee, and thou in Him, knit together inseparably. Neither canst thou be damned, except Christ be damned with thee. Neither can Christ be saved, except thou be saved with Him.” Preserves his anonymity. Writes another masterpiece entitled, The Obedience of a Christian Man – underscores the import of obedience in the life of a believers. If justified by faith, you will now be on a new path to live in humble submission to the Word of God.

**HUNTED FUGITIVE (1528)** Church of England must respond. An English Cardinal, Thomas Wolsey, dispatched 3 agents to Europe to search for Tyndale. Could not find him. A Friar is sent to search for Tyndale. In meantime, Tyndale improves his skills in the Hebrew language. Few knew Hebrew. Challenge for him since he can’t go to a seminary and learn Hebrew. Teaches himself to point became as proficient in Hebrew as he was in Greek.

**HEBREW TRANSLATOR (1529)** He translates the 1st 5 books of the OT. He realizes at this point that they are closing in on him. Takes all this work & suffers a shipwreck. Got on another boat & arrives in Hamburg, Germany. Meets a businessman, Von Emerson, who takes him in. Tyndale spends next 10 months retranslating 1st 5 books of the OT. Defines in a glossary key words in the NT & in this section of the OT, and this become the 1st dictionary in the English language. Writes a prologue to these books. Emerges as a Study Body.

**CONDEMNED HERETIC (1529)** Attacks from King’s Lord Chancellor, Sir Thomas More, who is commissioned to launch a character assassination against Tyndale. Sir More writes a massive work entitled, A Dialogue Concerning Heresies: Re Tyndale, Sir More writes, “He is the captain of English heretics. He is a hellhound in the kennel of the devil. He is a new Judas. He is worse than Sodom and Gomorra. He is an idolater. He is a devil worshiper. He is a beast out of whose brutish beastly mouth comes filthy foam?” Undeterred, Tyndale now publishes what he has translated including the 1st 5 books of the OT.

**POLEMIC AUTHOR (1530)** Responds to More’s attack with a polemic of his own that is launched against the Church of England, entitled, The Practice of Prelates. Attack on Roman Papacy & the rel it has w/English Crown - in league together to suppress Reformation. Denounces Henry VIII saying his divorces are unscriptural & that he is a fornicator. So King appeals to Charles the 5TH, Emperor of Holy Roman Empire, before whom Luther had stood, to have Tyndale arrested, and returned to England. But Emperor cannot find him. He is living in back rooms of English merchants sympathetic to gospel. They gladly give Tyndale space in the backroom to sit at table and continue his translation work.

**PURSUED OUTLAW (1531)** Henry VIII commissioned Steven Vaughn who offers Tyndale a salary and safe passage back to England. Arrives in Europe & sends letters to the major cities of Germany & Belgium addressed to Tyndale hoping one of these letters will be delivered to one of the merchant’s homes where Tyndale is staying. Tyndale receives one of these letters and agrees to a secret meeting in which Vaughn makes the offer – a salary if you will stop translating the Bible into English language. Accepts offer on condition that King will commission someone else to translate the Bible into the English language. King rejects this counteroffer by Tyndale.

Sir Thomas Eliot is dispatched to apprehend Tyndale. But they cannot find him. Sir More writes a 6 volume work entitled Confutation of Tyndale’s Answer. Consisted of ½ million word attack. Tyndale shifts location within Antwerp, to a wealthy English merchant named Thomas Points. There meets a man who has been a Catholic priest in England who has come to be like a Chaplin inside this house where many English merchants were living – including John Rodgers who will be the 1st martyr burned at the stake by bloody Mary. After Tyndale is martyred, Rogers will complete the translation of the Bible. Here Tyndale completes his revision of the NT making 4000 to 5000 edits. In this 2nd edition of the NT he adds cross references in the margins. Prints 6K copies which sell out in England in one month. He removed Catholic terms that were misrepresentations of what the text says. [Ie. Elder rather than priest. Repent rather than penance]. Also coins new English words with linguistic genius like Jehovah, Passover, atonement, and scapegoat. Further, he originated such now-familiar phrases as “lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil,” “knock and it shall be opened unto you,” “twinkling of an eye,” “a moment in time,” “seek and you shall find,” “judge not that you not be judged,” “let there be light,” “the powers that be,” “my brother’s keeper,” “the salt of the earth,” “a law unto themselves,” “filthy lucre,” “it came to pass,” “he gave up the ghost” and so on. At same time, he is studying Hebrew.

**A CAPTURED CRIMINAL:** (**1535**) A wealthy dad gives Henry Phillips massive sums of money. Henry then begins to gamble, losing his Dad’s entire fortune. Catholic Church hears about his desperate situation. They realize he will do anything for money. Cut a deal – they will replace the entire lost estate if he will deliver the head of Tyndale. Phillips travels to Antwerp. Establishes friendships with other English merchants till figures out Tyndale’s location. Gets to know Tyndale. Establishes a sham friendship with Tyndale who is warned by Points who owned the home – “do not be so friendly with Henry Phillips.” Tyndale continues to draw close. Phillips go to authorities in Antwerp. Police and soldiers are positioned in a dark alley around the corner. Lures Tyndale out of the house to walk the streets with him. Leads him into a narrow passage. Points to Tyndale. Apprehended after 12 years of searching. Taken to England. John Rogers has foresight to gather up all Tyndale’s works before police arrive. Rogers then completes what Tyndale had not finished. Tyndale translated Genesis through Deuteronomy, Joshua thru rest of historical books and Jonah. Tyndale believed preachers in England need to cry out for repentance in the major cities using book of Jonah. Held in castle in Brussels for a 1 & ½ yrs awaiting his trial. While in prison, he asks for a Hebrew dictionary.

**A STRANGLED MARTYR:** (**1535**) Stood trial & condemned for preaching and teaching”: justification is by faith alone; humans are bound by sin; no purgatory; neither Mary nor the saints are to be offered prayers for us but that we are to pray to our only true HP, Jesus Christ. Defrocked and delivered over from religious authorities to secular authorities to be executed in center of town. Guards bound his feet to the bottom of the wooden cross, and a chain was fastened around his neck. He was pulled up the beam of the wooden stake. Wood placed around Tyndale to encase him in combustible material. Gun powder was sprinkled all over his body. Strangled by the neck. Then hung. Then set on fire. The gun powder blew up his entire body. And before that happened, he uttered his last words, “O Lord, open the eyes of the King of England.” And the prayer of Tyndale, unknown to him, had already been answered. Miles Coverdale had already taken Tyndale’s works while crudely completing the rest of the Bible – The Coverdale Bible. The year after Tyndale’s death, Rogers went back and retranslated what Coverdale had completed and produced The Matthew’s Bible. Less than a year after Tyndale’s death, Henry VIII officially approved the publication of the English Bible. In 1538, the King decreed that a Bible was to be chained to every pulpit in England. In 1611, the KJV was translated. 50 scholars. 90% of the NT portion of the KJV is word for word Tyndale’s work. Every subsequent translation of the English Bible stands on the shoulders of what Tyndale did.