

Review: *The Forbidden Book – The History of the English Bible*, New Liberty Video, 2005

Runtime (min): 58

A Well of Information but Discernment Required

This is an information-filled chronicling of the Bible, some Church history, and biographies of important Christians. The main biographical sections are well done: John Wycliffe, Martin Luther, and William Tyndale. Interplay between narration and documentary is professional and well-balanced.

The academic Dr. Craig Lampe, a Christian, is quite learned and seems to recognise the spiritual bankruptcy of Roman Catholicism. The narrator is a popular figure which gives weight to the story being unfolded.

The visuals as well as the music create at times a moving atmosphere, e.g. the Culdees, Martyrs and King James' chapters.

The main weakness is the inaccurate chapter on the Apocrypha, as well as its continual mention throughout the production. Given it is not inspired it is therefore not part of the Bible and so one would think giving any attention to it is unwarranted.

In contrast, the King James Bible is allotted one short chapter, shorter than the Apocrypha.

The crimes of the Roman Church against Christians are mentioned, as well as its false teachings regarding indulgences and transubstantiation. However the production stops short of identifying Rome as what she truly was (and is), the Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth, drunk on the blood of the saints.

When these aspects accumulated, the discerning Christian may be forgiven for suspecting a Jesuitical influence in the whole production.

A grand quote concludes the DVD:

“It is impossible to mentally or socially enslave a Bible-reading people.”
(Horace Greeley, 1852)

I) Introduction (3 min)

Some interesting facts are given: (skin) of a whole flock of sheep was required to produce one 400 AD New Testament, a Bible was worth a whole year's income of a priest in 14th C, and the modern verse divisions were only finalised in 1551¹.

Attention given to the apocrypha bewrays a Jesuitical influence in this DVD. E.g. mention of the addition of three chapters to Daniel making fifteen as opposed to twelve, and AV translation overseer Archbishop Bancroft imposing a fine a one-year prison term for anyone printing a Bible without it.

II) Early Manuscripts (5 min)

Historic writing materials are outlined: rice paper (in the East), stone, animal skins, etc. giving the modern viewer an appreciation of the difficulty preserving information in written form.

The revelation Moses was the author of Genesis which was [thousands of years] *before* he was born is particularly powerful given its historical detail. All of this must have been dictated straight from God, the reliable eye witness on Mt. Sinai.

Ezra the scribe is said to have assembled the whole Torah on what would have been a single large roll, possibly 500 feet. This was c4th C BC. Dr. Lampe's presentation is effective as he has the materials at hand: a 1485 Latin Vulgate Bible off the Gutenberg (moveable type) printing press, and a one-thousand year old Torah.

The preservation of the Torah is proved by the fact not one difference exists in any book between it and the Dead Sea Scrolls, a testament to scribal technique and sacrifice!

¹This was Robert Estienne's fourth Greek NT edition, along with Erasmus' Latin version and Jerome's Vulgate.

Eastern Orthodoxy and Constantinople are mentioned, alluding to the preservation of the Greek New Testament.

III) Church Fathers (2 min)

No background information is given on these men misleading both the casual viewer and the searching Christian into a dangerous and false conclusion the canonization of the NT was progressive, a decision of men and not God.

Origen put together a canon in 210AD which excluded James and Jude, Eusebius in 315AD (Revelation was left out), Athanasius of Alexandria also in 315AD (this was the first canon with twenty-seven books in the NT) and in 397AD the Synod of Carthage said the twenty seven books constituted the NT and the Septuagint the OT, however the Apocrypha was not Holy Writ and for instruction and historical reading only.

Jerome's Latin Vulgate is claimed to be the Bible of the 'Church'. While he is described as a great scholar, he did not know whether the Apocrypha was inspired so he marked it out separately. This means he was not a born-again Christian.

No mention is made of the Old Latin Italic, or of the Syriac Peshitta, both two hundred years before these councils and strong evidence against the assumptions made in this chapter.

By 400AD, the Bible had been translated into over 500 other languages. The Roman Empire with the Pope at its head managed to maintain dominance with a simple and effective strategy of mind control via education, education control via language, and making the language of education latin only.²

IV) Dark Ages (3 min)

400AD-1400AD is covered, being the Dark and Middle Ages.

Pope John XXII drafted a list of indulgences, which was first published by

²From Ec. 1.9c Rome's tactics have not changed. The primary goal of the Jesuits are to (re)educate all youth in the 'Ignatian' way.

Pope Leo X:

Robbing a church: \$2.25

Burning a house: \$2.75

Kill a man: \$1.75

Forgery and lying: \$ 2.00

Eating meat in Lent: \$2.75

Ravishing a virgin: \$2.00

Striking a priest: \$2.75

Robbery: \$3.00

Priest to keep concubine: \$2.25

Procuring an abortion: \$1.50

Murder of parents or wife: \$2.50

Absolution of all crimes: \$12.00

[list copied verbatim, no source is given nor currency conversion]

One hundred thousand prostitutes were employed by the 'church' derived from Augustine's teaching they were a necessary evil!

Pope Leo X: "How profitable the fable of Christ has been to us."[!]

Urban VI (in Rome) versus Clement VII (in Avignon, France) were battling each other for supremacy. [this providentially enabled John Wycliffe to begin the Reformation in England]

V) The Culdees (1.5 min)

Tradition is relied upon, that Joseph of Arimathea, called 'culdee', meaning 'certain stranger' went to Glastonbury, England and built the first above-ground Christian church. Columba was a culdee who in 563AD started a Bible college on the small island called Iona off the north-west corner of Scotland. It became the beacon of the Gospel for seven hundred years, during the dark ages.

VI) John Wycliffe (5 min)

John is said to be a descendant of the culdees. He was President of Balliol college, Oxford and taught from 1362-1372.

Again, the difficulty of life is brought out how all notes had to be hand-copied and gad about by students, many who came from overseas. This was how the light of God's words began to spread throughout Europe.

Wycliffe was forced from his teaching position at Oxford by Rome. He then went to minister at his Church in Lutterworth and undertake his great task of translating the Latin Vulgate. Wycliffe's translation is *not* mentioned and his Lollard missionaries are only referred to in passing.

John spoke out against the Mass and Transubstantiation with his tracts. Religious phrases are mentioned: 'hoc est enim corpus meum' ('this is now my body') said by the priest is where the saying 'hocus pocus' comes from, and 'cani-baal' actually means 'feast of Baal'.

Without modern printing, it is said ten months were required to copy out a whole Bible!

The Archbishop of York in 1408 proscribed the translating of the Bible into English or any other vernacular by 'unauthorised persons'. This is the first recorded prohibition of its nature.

In 1448, *forty-four* years after Wycliffe's death, Pope Martin V had his bones dug up and burnt such was the Roman Catholic hatred of him and his work.

In Czechoslovakia, John Huss' execution at the stake was kindled by parts of Wycliffe's writings. He made his famous prophecy then: within one-hundred years God would raise up a man whose call for reform could not be ignored. That man was Martin Luther.

VII) Printing Press (2 min)

In 1455 John Gutenberg invents the printing press in Mainz, Germany. He was financed by John Faust and helped by a servant Peter Schafer over a period of ten years. The (Latin) Gutenberg Bible was its first product, and is claimed to be the most beautiful book in all of history.

VIII) Greek Texts and Revival (2 min)

In the early 1490s, Professor Lineacre of Oxford went to study Greek in

Italy in one of the Greek refugee camps [caused by the Ottoman conquest of Byzantium]. After reading the Greek, Lineacre detected the corruption in the Vulgate. Either this wasn't the gospel, or he wasn't a Christian!

John Colet from Oxford university visited a church in Florence pastored by Savonarola. It was filled to overflowing because Savonarola was translating the Greek NT so the people could understand it.

John then went back to St. Paul's Cathedral and read Paul's epistles in Greek, translating it into English. Within six months fifteen to twenty thousand people crowded in to hear him.

IX) Erasmus (2.5 min)

Described as the greatest scholar that ever lived, it is pointed out he probably knew the least due to the time spent translating literary works, leaving none to learn them. There is no mention of the number of his NT editions [five] except his first one of 1516.

Inspired by John Colet and Professor Lineacre, he desired to translate and print the NT in Greek, English and other languages.

Being unable to perform a translation from the Greek in England he went to Basle, Switzerland. He took manuscripts from Thomas More³ and John Colet and friends from the University of Paris.

From 1514-1515 he assembled manuscripts to create his first edition. The preface contains his personal views that all should be able to read the scriptures in their own language. All includes the unlearned, the weakest woman and the farmer at the plow.

His work was the foundation for Luther and Tyndale's within a few years.

Erasmus died in 1536.

X) Chains of Freedom (2 min)

³Murderer of Christians (burning six at the stake), made a saint by Pope Pius XI in 1936. See <http://reformation.org/sir-thomas-more.html>.

Thomas Bilney was the first English 'convert to the Reformation' that was burned at the stake (in 1531). Bilney was converted to Christ after buying a forbidden copy of Erasmus' Greek/Latin diglot.

From 1519, as an ordained and licensed priest, his witness led to hundreds of men on the campus of Cambridge becoming Christians. Fragments of Tyndale's Bibles were used to kindle the flames at his execution, the same manner as with John Huss.

The jovial accompaniment is out of place given the subject matter.

XI) William Tyndale (9 min)

Born 1494, Gloucestershire England. He received a Master's degree at Oxford University in 1515 and was a master of languages, speaking eight fluently.

The White Horse society in Cambridge was formed by him to help translate the scriptures – it consisted of about twenty five men, most of which were later martyred.

Tyndale's famous defiance of the pope's law before the Bishop of Bristol. In 1524 he was able to visit Luther in Wittenberg, then on to Cologne to print his English Bible. Church bounty hunters find out about this but Tyndale manages to escape up river, 50 miles to Worms. There, the same Peter Schafer helped print six-thousand copies of the Bible and exported to England.

Denounced by Bishop Tunstall there, who held burning ceremonies as well as a buying up any and burning them at St. Paul's Cross.

Led into a trap by a [Romish] bounty hunter John Phillips, he was captured and imprisoned in the state dungeon in Castle Vilvoorde. He was in prison for *five hundred days!*

The only primary source of his captivity is a letter to the dungeon master, a noble request for the meagre comforts of a warmer cap due to cold suffering of his head, a cloke, Hebrew Bible and grammar. No one knows whether this request was granted by his captors.

Perhaps the most honorable part of the DVD, the treatment is done well in giving Tyndale his due place amongst Christendom.

On 6/10/1536 he was chained to a stake, strangled then burned.

XII) King's Eyes Opened (2 min)

After Tyndale's famous prayer, in 1537, Henry VIII licensed John Roger's 'Matthew' Bible. The same year the Great Bible was Authorized by him and a single copy to be distributed to each Church in England, of which there were about twenty thousand.

This was effectively 97% the work of Tyndale.

A piece on the Apocalypse of John is done explaining the large number of woodcuts and marginal notation, necessary because of the difficult nature of the book.

XIII) Martyrs (2 min)

A haunting track with rolling wood cut images from Foxe's Book of Martyrs powerfully shows those who were killed for their faith. This is the most powerful chapter of the DVD. Eye-witnessed methods of execution and torture included: chopping off hands and feet⁴; boring through the right eye with a drill; stomach impaling of women with child; dashing brains out with a club; and slowly spit roasting over fire with salt and vinegar. [!]

The wicked Roman Church is claimed to be the 'established Church' but no mention is made of it as the Whore of Babylon.

XIV) Geneva Bible (2.5 min)

English refugees fled to the safety of Geneva, Switzerland. These included Myles Coverdale and John Knox which set to work translating a new Bible with extensive notes, called the Geneva Bible.

The notes were such that they were likened to a Bible school in a single

⁴Cf. Sura 7.123-124 for comparison to Islam.

volume. One example of the 1595 edition is given of Revelation 11.7, that the Pope is the beast that comes out of the pit and 'hath his power out of hell and cometh thence'.

It was the first Bible to be printed with verses based on Stephanus' 1550 Greek Text work.

In 1560 it was finished and one hundred and fifty were printed. The narrator claims [incorrectly] for two hundred and fifty years it was the Bible for 'Protestants'.

It is famous for being the Bible Shakespeare quoted from, what the pilgrims took on the Mayflower, and the Puritan's Bible.

XV) Martin Luther (6 min)

Born 1480 in Worms, Germany, Luther was the Christian all owe a great debt to for their emancipation from Rome. Peter Waldo, a great Waldensian whose people were wiped out by the Inquisition is given credit as well.

In 1517 the famous ninety-five theses were nailed to the Church door at Wittenburg. Habbakuk 2.14, and Romans 1.17 were the doctrinal verses which led to his conversion to Christianity out of darkness.

At the Diet of Worms on 17 April, 1521, Luther made his famous ten second speech, that he stands by God's words and can do nothing else. Expecting to be burned at the stake, he was whisked away by friends to Prince Frederik's Castle in Wartburg. There, using Erasmus' Greek Text he translated the Lutheran Bible in only ninety-days.

17/4/1521 should then be celebrated as Christian Day of Independence.

XVI) King James Bible (2 min)

Praise is rightfully heaped on this translation as the greatest book ever printed and its incalculable influence over the English speaking world. Notwithstanding the brevity of this chapter is shocking, the Apocrypha receives more time.

Nothing is mentioned about King James, the Jesuit Treason of 1605, the unparalleled excellence of the translators, etc. A Jesuitical influence is likely that the viewer may 'gloss over' the high point in Biblical history.

This is the weakest part of the documentary, although the music is fitting.

XVII) Apocryphal Books (2.5 min)

The King James Bible is said to have been printed with eighty books, it is *not* mentioned the Apocrypha was set aside as a separate section and labelled 'Apocrypha' because it was *not* inspired.

The Hebrew Bible at the time of Jesus is said to have contained three extra chapters of Daniel, Son of the Three Children, Bel and the Dragon, and Susanna. It is also stated Jesus and the Apostles quoted from it [as part of the 'LXX'], however Jesus clearly states the Old Testament canon in Luke 24.44.

Archbishop George Abbot's one-year prison term and USD100,000-equivalent fine is mentioned, that he was 'worried' it might be left out. This is quite a subjective statement.

It is bluntly stated history proves the Apocrypha was part of God's words for 2000 years, until 1885 (when the British and Foreign Bible Societies excluded them). These statements are deceptive at best, betraying an ignorance of Church history and God's words.⁵

XVIII) The Bible's Influence in America (3.5 min)

The Bible is found in such lofty documents as the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution. By 1777,

⁵None were authored in Hebrew, no author claims inspiration for their work; the Jewish Church in Jerusalem never acknowledged them; they contain fables; contain un-Christian practices such as prayers for the dead; and teach immorality such as lying, suicide, assassination and wizardry. See Ps. D. A. Waite, *Defending the King James Bible*, Collingswood, NJ, The Bible for Today Press, 1992 (2006 ed.), pp. 71-73.

The famous Indian Pocahontas and her tribe was converted using the Geneva Bible.

the British US embargo had stopped Bible importation.

From 1791 it was the best selling book year in and year out for 200 years.