

## **DESTROYING GOD'S WORD**

– AUGUST 13. – JEREMIAH 36. –

**"The Word of our God shall stand forever." – Isa. 40:8.**

THE PROPHET JEREMIAH was shut up in prison. The disaster upon the kingdom had, to some extent, awakened the people to a slight repentance, in which the king joined, yet it was a repentance from fear rather than heart repentance. The king had enmity against Jeremiah because the Divine Message came through him. He seems to have hoped to restrain the Prophet from further proclamation of the coming trouble through fear. However, the Lord directed the Prophet to write out all of his prophecies on a scroll, after the ancient style, in columns. Jeremiah dictated and Baruch served him as amanuensis.

By the Lord's direction this book of Jeremiah was to be read to all the people at the temple on the occasion of a general gathering for worship and repentance. Since the Prophet himself could not go, he directed Baruch, who took the scroll and read it in the hearing of the people. Its prophecies of dire disaster made a deep impression. One of the princes of the people was present and heard the reading and reported to others of the king's counselors. They sent for Baruch and had him read it before them all. They, also, were deeply impressed and concluded that it should be brought before the king. But, meantime, Baruch and Jeremiah were hidden, the probability of the king's displeasure being great.

Hearing of the manuscript the king was anxious to have it read before him by a scribe. During the reading, as two or three columns of the manuscript were read, the king cut them off with a pen-knife and threw them into the fire, until the entire manuscript was read and destroyed. By the Lord's direction Jeremiah dictated his prophecies afresh, Baruch again acting as amanuensis, and this edition was made still more complete than the former. Amongst other things it included

the Divine edict that none of Jehoiakim's posterity should ever sit upon the throne of David.

## **GOD'S WORD INDESTRUCTIBLE**

Thomas Paine, Voltaire and Ingersoll imagined that they had made the Word of God to appear so ridiculous that it would never more have influence amongst men. Robert Ingersoll is quoted as having said: "In ten years the Bible will not be read." How little the poor man knew on the subject!

The frontispiece of a well-known Wyckliffe Bible pictures Satan and others, religious and irreligious, blowing with all their might to put out a light. In proportion as they exhausted their energy the light burned the more brightly.

The story is told respecting the Tyndale Bible which illustrates the point we are making, namely the impossibility of extinguishing God's Word. Tyndale, while at the University of Cambridge, England, devoted much of his life energy to the translation of the Bible. He remarked to an opponent: "If God spare my life, ere many years I shall cause a boy that driveth the plow to know more of the Scriptures than thou dost."

Tyndale's project of publishing the Bible in the English language was so seriously opposed in England that he removed to German cities, and in the year 1525 A.D. his translation of the New Testament was issued. Copies of it poured into England. The Bishop of London was so opposed that he collected and burned as many copies as he could at St. Paul's Cross in London. Yet more copies came. He could not destroy them. The Bishop collected monies wherewith to buy up the whole edition. The purchase was entrusted to a merchant named Parkington, who went to Germany and purchased the books.

Addressing Tyndale he said: "William, I know thou art a poor man and hast an heap of New Testaments and books by thee, and I

have now gotten a merchant which with ready money will buy all thou hast." Tyndale inquired, "Who is this merchant?" Mr. Parkington answered, "The Bishop of London." "Oh!" said Tyndale, "that is because he will burn them." "Yes, he will," said [R4857 : page 222] Parkington. Tyndale was glad, because thus he could get out of debt, and he said: "The world will cry out against the burning of God's Word." The money from the same enabled Tyndale to get out a new edition with errors corrected and much better than the one that was burned.

### **BETTER INTERPRETATIONS OPPOSED**

Although we have passed the day when any would attempt to destroy the Bible, we have not passed the day of opposition to the Truth. Satan would fain have the people of God worship the Book rather than study and appreciate its contents. In consequence, not a few are opposing the light that is now shining from the Word of God, disclosing to us the fact that much that came down to us from the Dark Ages is as contrary to the Bible as to reason. Many of the professed teachers of the Church [R4858 : page 222] are heartily opposed to Bible study, although their opposition is advanced as cautiously as possible "for fear of the people" – for "fear of the Jews."

The Scriptures from first to last give us to understand that God's Word is to shine more and more brightly down to the very end of this Gospel Age. St. Peter declares it to be the "more sure Word of prophecy to which we do well that we take heed as to a light shining in a dark place until the day dawn." – 2 Peter 1:19.

The Bishop of England opposed the Tyndale translation because the practices of the time were not in harmony with the Scriptures. Similarly today there are doctrines, traditions, creeds from the Dark Ages, still revered, and which a better understanding of the Bible would correct and put to shame. Hence the opposition to the better understanding of God's Word. Nevertheless, the Word of God shall

stand forever, and the spirit of the Truth shall make free indeed all the children of the Truth.

"Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again;  
The eternal years of God are hers."

