WYCLIFFE CONTROVERSIES



JOHN de WYCLIFFE

By: H. D. Williams, M.D., Ph.D.

WHAT PRECIPITATED THIS MESSAGE?

 Last year, Pastor Reno and Dr. Doom spoke on translating issues and helped tweak and renew interest in the issues.

 Drs. Zeinner, Stringer, Gomez, and Waite's passion for accurate and faithful translations and the printing of them around the world.

Dr. Brown's love for Bible history and his old Bibles.

John Doerr and Chris Pinto (Adullam Films).

WHAT PRECIPITATED THIS MESSAGE?

 The multiple conflicting statements and controversies in articles such as:

 Were Wycliffe/Purvey/Trevisa/Hereford translators of the Wycliffe Bible (or not)?

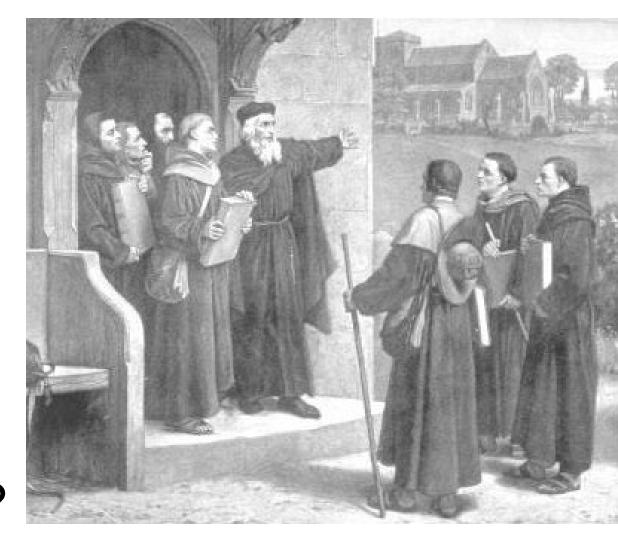
 Did Wycliffe et al use Old Latin MSS (translated from the Greek RT in Northern Italy) or the Latin Vulgate?

WHAT PRECIPITATED THIS MESSAGE?

- Did Wycliffe translate <u>any</u> of the Bible that goes by his name?
- Was John Purvey, Wycliffe's curate, a Jesuit, because, when he was arrested with others, his life was spared, but his Lollard 'friends' were killed? Or did Purvey truly recant? (Anne Hudson/Maureen Jurkowski)
- Did Purvey edit the LV of the Wycliffe Bible to bring it back in line with the Latin Vulgate? Or Trevisa, or Nicholas of Hereford?
- And much much more—for example, the next slide

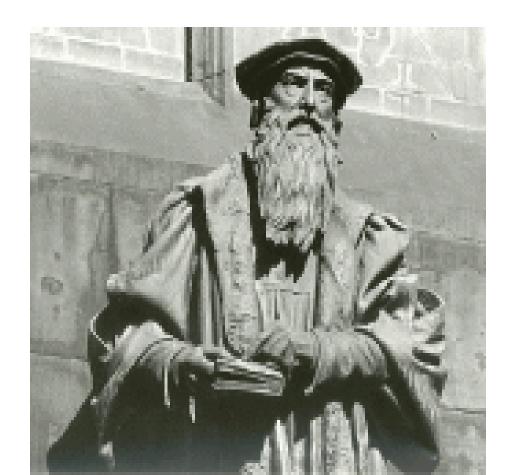
Wycliffe, sending his "Pore Preachers" to preach the Gospel. Were they Lollards, Waldensians or Wycliffites?

WYCLIFFE CONTROVERSIES



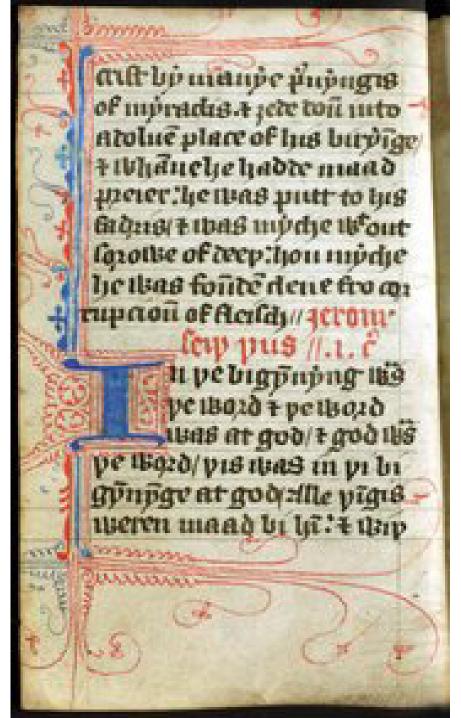
Dr. John de Wycliffe

 "Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word."

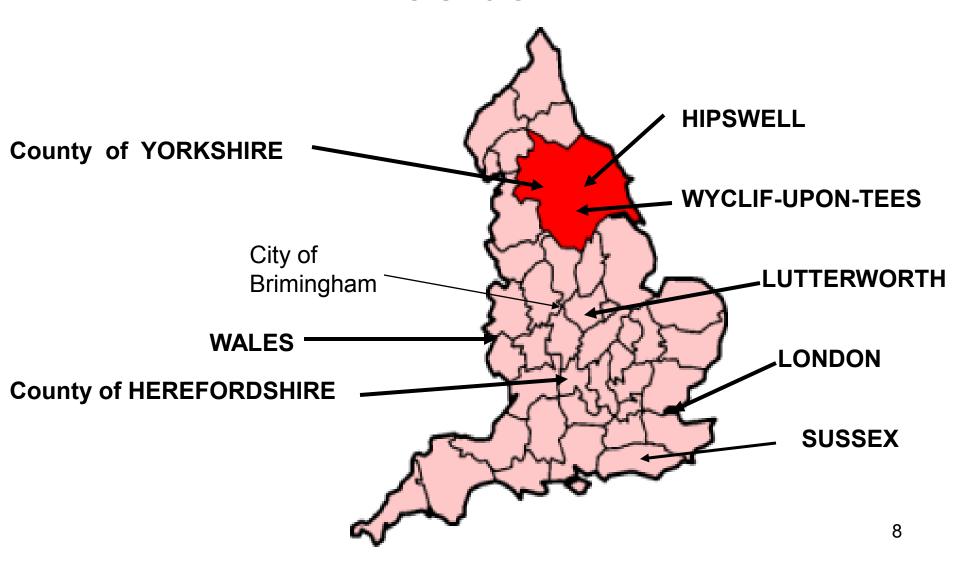


(Psalms 119:161)

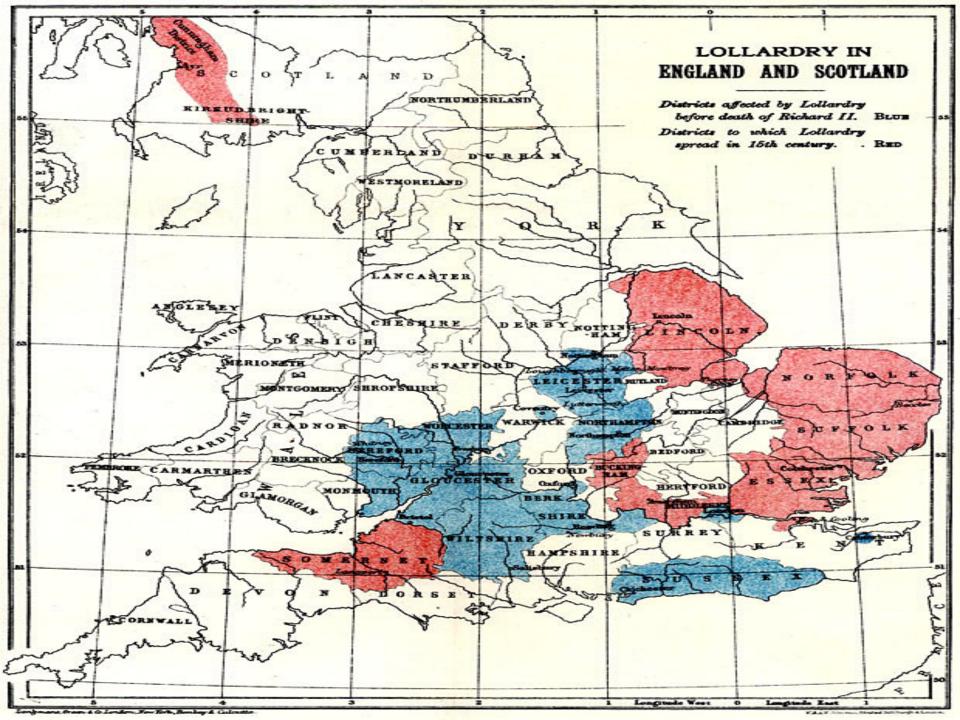
Beginning of the Gospel of John from a pocket Wycliffe translation that may have been used by a roving Lollard preacher (late 14th century).



County of Yorkshire where Wycliffe was born.







WYCLIFFE'S TITLES IN VARIOUS ARTICLES

- "The Morning Star of the Reformation"
- "The Father of the English Bible"
- "The Man of the Age"
- "Doctor Evangelicus"
- "The Fifth Evangelist"
- "The English Reformer"
- "The Father of English 'Bible-Translation"
- "The First Protestant"
- "The Great Master at Oxford"
- "The Princely Yorkshireman"
- "The Pure-hearted Pastor of Lutterworth"

JOHN WYCLIFFE (1324? – 1384) A Saxon Farmer's Son

John Wycliffe

- A. His Life
 - a. His Politics—in opposition to Rome
 - b. His Theology—in opposition to Rome
- B. His Translation(s)—in opposition to Rome.
- C. His Associates—in opposition to Rome

The Bible Is The Magna Carta Of The Poor and Unlettered People— The Weak

- Conant said: "The Magna Carta itself was the tool of princes, landlords, barons, and rich. The Bible, as the Magna Carta of the weak, is above <u>ALL</u>, which is the greatest insight of the brave, often neglected, defender of the faith,
 - Dr. JOHN de WYCLIFFE

Wycliffe Lived During a Time of Great Strife

- 1. Two popes: one at Avignon, France and one at Rome. Described as the Great Schism (1378-1453). Eventually three popes.
- 2. 100 year war: between England and France.
- 3. The murder and slaughter of anyone who rejected the rule and doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, her vassals, and her political leaders.

The Two Great Purposes of Wycliffe's Life

 1. The Supreme and Binding <u>Authority</u> of Scripture as the guide of Christian faith and life (in opposition to Roman Catholic authorities).

• 2. The <u>Right</u> of <u>All</u> Men Without Distinction to the Holy Scriptures.

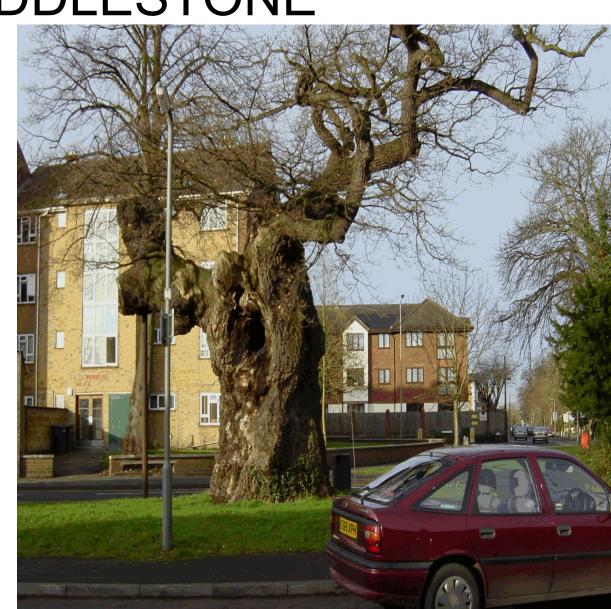
Wycliffe Said:

- "If God's Word is the life of the world, and <u>every word</u> <u>of God</u> is the life of the human soul, how may any Antichrist, for dread of God, take it away from us that be Christian men, and thus to suffer the people to die for hunger in heresy and blasphemy of men's laws, that corrupteth and slayeth the soul."
- "The sacred Scriptures be the property of the people, and one which no party should be allowed to wrest from them."

THE GOSPEL OAK OF ADDLESTONE

- Where Wycliffe's 'pore preachers,' John Knox, Spurgeon, Whitefield and others preached to thousands.
- The tree's branches are said to cast sound "out."

 Picture from logosresources.com (Dr. D. Brown)





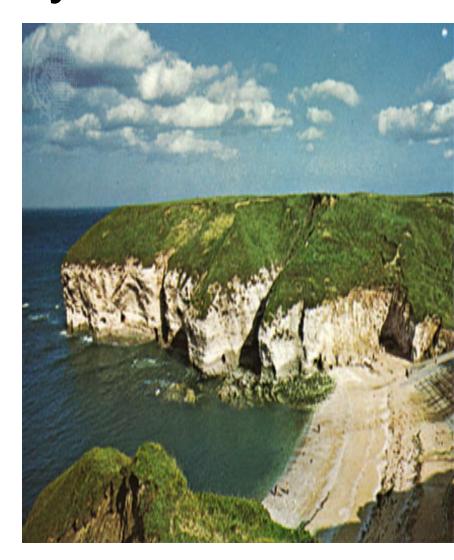
Wycliffe's Early Life

- Born, c. 1324, either in Hipswell or Wyclif-upon-Tees, West Riding, Yorkshire, UK. It was common for people to take the name of the village where they were born.
- Born in the reign of King Edward III (1327-1377). He reigned 50 years. Marco Polo was setting out on his famous voyage.
- He probably came from a family of sheep farmers; wool was a valuable commodity in those days. They could afford to send their gifted child to Oxford. Textile mills are still prominent in the county of Yorkshire, UK.

(Life, Works, Teachings of Wycliffe, Early Life, Chapt. 1)

Coast of the County of Yorkshire





 His language was Middle English (a dialect of old Saxon and Norman French); developed from Anglo-Saxon, followed by "Old English" and finally "Middle English," usually assigned c. 1200 to 1500.

 He grew up under the dominion of the Roman Catholic Church, like everyone at that time.

 He was very bright and was sent to Oxford at about the age of fifteen. (Other works say 25 years of age). He became a Roman Catholic priest.

(English Bible Hx, p. 17-18)

- He would live to see the reign of eight popes: John XXII, Nicholas V, Benedict XII, Clement VI, Innocent VI, Urban V, Gregory XII, and Clement VII.
- Rome held almost ultimate authority in the lives of all people both on the continent of Europe and in the British Isles, both in the 'Church' and 'State.'

- Became the headmaster of Canterbury Hall c. 1365 (about age 45).
- Received a doctorate in theology between 1366 1372.
- Greatly influenced by Thomas Bradwardine (1290 1348) (The Doctor Profundus) and William of Ockham (c. 1288 c. 1348) (scholastic scholar).
- Oxford founded Balliol College and Wycliffe eventually became master of the college.

23

- His reputation was gained secondary to his activity in ecclesiastical politics. (English Bible Hx. p. 18)
- Appointed Rector of Lutterworth by King Edward III, who refused to pay papal 'levies.' Wycliffe defended England's right not to pay taxes to Rome in Brugs (Burgs, Bergs), France.
- Wycliffe attacked: the extreme wealth of the Vatican, supported property rights in opposition to the pope, opposed transubstantiation...

Wycliffe's Supporter Said:

- "He was of unblemished walk in life and was regarded affectionately by people of rank, who often consorted with him, took down his sayings, and clung to him.
- His supporter said:
- 'I indeed clove to none closer than to him, the wisest and most blessed of all men whom I have ever found. From him one could learn in truth what the Church of Christ is and how it should be ruled and led.' John Huss wished that his soul might be whatever that of Wycliffe was found."
 - (William Thorpe, 1407, & Eng. Bible Hx. p. 24)

Wycliffe Wrote:

 "Holy Scripture is the preeminent authority for every Christian, and the rule of faith and of all human perfection."

 "For as much as the Bible contains Christ, that is all that is necessary for salvation, it is necessary for all men, not for priests alone. It alone is the supreme law that is to rule Church, State and Christian life, without human traditions and statutes."

Wycliffe Wrote:

 "Those Heretics who pretend that the laity need not know God's law but that the knowledge which priests have had imparted to them by word of mouth is sufficient, do not deserve to be listened to. For Holy Scriptures is the faith of the Church, and the more widely its true meaning becomes known the better it will be. Therefore since the laity should know the faith, it should be taught in whatever language is most easily comprehended... Christ and His apostles taught the people in the language best known to them."

Wycliffe Wrote:

 "The sacred Scriptures be the property of the people, and one which no party should be allowed to wrest from them."

• FBIS, John Wycliffe and the Lollards, Mar. 17, 2000

Wycliffe's Influence

 Extended into other regions: Welsh, Ireland, Scotland, Europe

 He had a great influence on John Huss and Jerome of Prague in Bohemia (Czechoslovakia)

 Bubonic plagues of 1348, 1361, 1369, 1375 greatly influenced Wycliffe's duties and course of action.

 Wycliffe's attack on transubstantiation cost him the support of John of Gaunt, King Edward Ill's fourth son (6' 7" in height). He was brother to the Black Prince. (Trevisa, protected by Thomas de Berkeley)

 The Peasants' Revolt in 1381 was charged to him.

In 1382 all his writings were banned.

 He died in 1384, secondary to the complications of a stroke.

Wycliffe Detested Rome's:

- 1. Immoral Prelates
- 2. Excessive territorial holdings
- 3. Religious extortion
- 4. Heresies such as:
 - Purgatory
 - Transubstantiation
 - Auricular Confession
 - Baptismal Regeneration
 - Tradition declared of equal authority as the Scripture. (Made a Canon at the Council of Trent.)
- 5. Called the pope the Antichrist, monasteries as "dens of thieves, nests of serpents, houses of living devils."

Rome Detested Wycliffe

 The English Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundel, wrote to Pope John xxiii:

 "This pestilent and wretched John Wycliffe, of cursed memory, that son of the old serpent... endeavoured by every means to attack the very faith and sacred doctrine of Holy Church, devising—to fill up the measure of his malice the expedient of <u>a new translation</u> of the Scriptures into the mother tongue."

Rome Detested Wycliffe

 The 'continuator' of Henry Knighton's Chronicle in 1392 contemptuously wrote:

 "This Master John Wyclif translated from Latin into English—the Angle (Anglo-Saxon) not the angel speech—the Gospel that Christ gave to the doctors and clergy of the Church... so that by this means it has become vulgar and more open to lay men and women who can read than it usually is to quite learned clergy of good intelligence. And so the pearl of the Gospel is scattered abroad and trodden underfoot by swine."

(David Daniell, *The Bible in English*, p.67)

Rome Detested Wycliffe

- His opponents claimed:
- "The jewel (Bible) of the clergy has become the toy of the laity."

 "Every second man that you meet is a Lollard."

• (English Bible Hx. p. 23, greatsite.com)

Rome Convinces England's Parliament

 1. In 1401 England's Parliament also passed a decree to silence Wycliffe and the Lollard's influence.

 2. By 1415 Rome's Council of Constance had Wycliffe's bones and books burned and the ashes dumped in the Severn River in Lutterworth.

 Wyciffism, like Puritanism and Lollardy, were names of derision into the Reformation.

Wycliffe's History Obscured

 "There is a lot that we do not know about Wycliffe. Many of his writings were destroyed by the Catholic authorities."

Crosby notes, "As to his opinions, it is very difficult now to have a certain account of them; because they who took do much care to burn his bones did not neglect to destroy his books, which of the two were like to do them the most hurt."
 (Crosby, Hx of the English Baptist, I p. 7)

Wycliffe's Translation

 1. They were handcopied; required about 10 months of steady work for a copyist.

 2. Rental fee for one hour with the book was one wagon load of hay.

 3. The price of a copy was the equivalent of a clergyman's entire year's salary.

Dr. John de Wycliffe's Translation(s)

- Many questions:
 - There are <u>two well known "editions" first</u>
 <u>printed</u> by Reverend Josiah Forshall and Sir Frederick Madden <u>in 1850</u> in a parallel column work.

- The Wycliffe Version [Now called the Early Version (EV)]
- The John Purvey Edition [Now called the Late Version (LV)]

Wycliffe/Purvey

Conflicting evidence:

 Daniell said: "Until the 1980s, the two versions were always known as 'Wycliff' and 'Purvey', on the grounds that Wycliff commissioned, and probably wrote (translated) part of, the first, which turned out to be less than perfect; and then got John Purvey, his secretary, to put the whole thing into better English. Recent doubts about any connection that Purvey had with Wyclif before his last days at Lutterworth, or with Bible translation, have led to his very proper dismissal from the scene" (per Anne Hudson).

But in c. 1520...

THE NEW TESTAMENT IN SCOTS

BEING

Purvey's Revision of Wycliffe's Version
Turned into Scots by

MURDOCH NISBET

c. 1520



Wycliffe's Translation Contained the Apocrypha

 "The two Wycliffite versions of the complete Bible in English (1384, 1395) included the apocryphal books as a matter of course. They were part of the Vulgate, on which those versions were based."

- "The "General Prologue' to the second version (John Purvey's) contains a strong commendation of 'the book of Tobias' (Tobit) because of the encouragement it provides to those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake...""
 - (F. F. Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture,* p. 100.)

Some Controversies:

- 1. Did John Purvey change the EV after Wycliffe's death to bring it into line with Jerome's Latin Vulgate?
- 2. Was John Purvey a Jesuit who was operating under Rome's authority?
- 3. Or, was John Purvey subjected to such persecution that he changed the EV to the character of the LV, which allegedly favored the Latin Vulgate?

John Wycliffe's Translation

 4. Did the KJB translators use the EV or the LV or neither?

- **5.** Did the EV and LV contain the *Letter to the Laodiceans*, one of 15 -16 letters allegedly written by the Apostle Paul?
- 6. Did the Lollards <u>begin</u> as followers of Wycliffe?

Did the EV and LV contain the "Letter to the Laodiceans"?

 "Although it did not form part originally of either the earlier or the later Wycliffite Bibles, two independent Middle English versions of the work made their way into the manuscript tradition of the Wycliffite Bible, and were repeatedly reproduced from the first half of the fifteenth century onward."

• (F. F. Bruce, *The Canon of the Scripture*, p. 239-240)

Multiple Versions of Wycliffe's Bibles

 From poorly written parts of the work, by those who paid a wagon load of hay to have a night with the book

 Multiple editions. They demonstrate a translation in progress.

 Editions that demonstrate additions and subtractions of prologues or comments; especially those comments in opposition to Rome.

Some Quotes About The Problems Identified In Wycliffe's History

- "The "<u>Later Version</u>" is the foundation upon which "Wycliffe-Purvey" (a version with modernized spelling), <u>like the KJV itself</u>, was built." (Intro. Wycliffe-Purvey Version, p. 11)
- "...one quickly discovers innumerable instances where the KJV follows not the "Later Version", but, instead, the "Early Version" ...the "Early Version" more closely follows the Greek than does the "Later Version," and the KJV deviates from following the "Later Version" and, to a greater or lesser degree, mirrors the "Early Version." (Intro. Wycliffe-Purvey Version, p. 12) 47

Some Quotes About The Problems Identified In Wycliffe's History

 "...comparing all three versions (KJB, EV, & LV), side-by-side, it becomes clear the KJB translators rejected numerous revisions made in the "Later Version", and chose instead individual words and phraseology found in one variant or another of the "Early Version"...Why did they do this? ...the "Early Version", both the poetry of the language and fidelity to the original Greek text are superior to that found in the "Later **Version".** (Endnote, Wycliffe-Purvey, p. 14)

150 Verses Compared that were found in:

- 1. EV (two editions)
- 2. LV
- 3. DR
- 4. KJB

A Final Conclusion About the Latin Vulgate

 "However, the final conclusion of the whole matter concerning any Bible translated from the Latin MSS, whether the Latin Vulgate or the Old Latin versions, the Itala and the North African Latin MSS, is summarized by this statement:

A Final Conclusion

 "There can be no doubt nor denying of the massive influence of the Latin Scriptures in the Western World, where for over a thousand years it was 'The Bible'. But it was only ever a version; the Latin language has no standing over against the Hebrew and Greek, so that all translations made from it are doubly at fault. It is true that all Bible texts before the general use of the printing presses are subject to the problems of hand-copying, but the Latin texts more so by their very popularity. Textbooks talk of the Old Latin, the Itala, the Hieronymian (Jerome's 405 A. D.) and the Vulgate as if there were only a single text of each, but none of these were in any way stable, always begging the question, 'Which particular one?'"

Latin Vulgate

 1. No version based upon the Latin Vulgate is suitable for Bible study, memorization, or personal reading.

 2. The L. Vulgate is a "halfway house" translation. It rests halfway between the Critical Text and the Received Text.

Lollards

• 1. "They were called 'Bible Men' because of their emphasis on the Scriptures as the sole authority for faith and practice."

• (Dr. Phil Stringer, p. 101, *The Faithful Baptist Witness*)

 2. Means mumblers or babblers because they would walk around 'mumbling' memorized Scripture.

Lollards

 1. Did they originate with Walter Lollard? Was he a Waldensian?

- 2. Did they originate as followers of Wycliffe?
- Armitage said: "The followers of Wickliff were early known by this name [Lollards]; but some trace their origin to Walter Lollard (Raynard or Reynard), who was burnt at Cologne about A. D. 1322."

p. 321, Thomas Armitage, A Hx of the Baptist, Vol. 1,

Did Wycliffe Do Any of the Translation Work?

• "One Catholic writer (Gasquet, in 1894) <u>denied</u> that Wycliffe actually translated the Scriptures..."

 Most other researchers consider the following accurate: "Though Wycliffe did have help, and though his translation was perfected after his death by a close friend, John Purvey, there is no doubt that Wycliffe himself did much of the translation."

Wycliffe, himself clearly said:

 "You say it is heresy to speak of the Holy Scriptures in English. You call me a heretic because I have translated the Bible into the common tongue of the people. Do you know whom you blaspheme?"...

(Fountain, John Wycliffe, pp. 45-47, FBIS)

Did Purvey Translate?

- David Daniell said: "Hudson...reviews what little contemporary, and near-contemporary, evidence there is about Purvey. She shows clearly that his involvement in any part of the Bible versions, including the General Prologue, was a nineteenthcentury invention.
- Purvey was not associated with Bible translation even by Bale and Foxe, both always eager to see 'the prohibition of vernacular scriptures as one of the surest marks of the beast upon the Roman church' (102). Forshall and Madden, 1850, on very shaky ground (that of an admitted guess by an eighteenth-century writer, one Waterland, or Waterton), attribute not only the Later Version and other works to Purvey, but the authorship of the General Prologue (and others). This error was followed to such an extent (Deanesly, 1920, 266-7, even added *The Compendious Olde Treatis* to his list of writings) that one used to read of 'Purvey's Principles' of bible translation."

Wycliffe Accused of Everything

 "Peasants Revolt" or "Tyler's Rising," when Archbishop Sudbury was killed, was blamed on Wycliffe.

He did not advocate violence

FBIS, J. Wycliffe and Lollards, Mar. 17, 2000

However, Even Eugene Nida Calls Upon Wycliffe

- "Tyndale knew the risks he was running. He knew that the ecclesiastical hierarchy had denounced Wyclif and had even exhumed his body, burned it, and cast the ashes into the river Swift in order that the body of such a man might not pollute the holy ground of England....The modern translator cannot afford to falter, with need and example (of Wycliffe and Tyndale) to spur him on."
 - Eugene Nida, Bible Translating, p. 8

Did Wycliffe and Associates Know Hebrew and Greek?

One author among many said:

"With <u>little knowledge of Greek or Hebrew</u>, he based his work primarily on Latin manuscripts.
 Although modern scholarship stresses Wycliff's reliance upon the Vulgate's readings, a later revision of the work by John Purvey makes it evident that Wycliff had access to some old Latin manuscripts. Purvey's later defection to Rome sheds added light on the issue."

Purvey/Hebrew/Greek

 "I haue set in y' marggent bi manner of a glose what y' Hebreu hath and howe it is vnderstonden in some place."

(Prologue to Purvey Edition)

Wycliffe/Hebrew/Greek

Wycliffe spoke of the Hebrew Scriptures being in every nation secondary to the dispersion, helping to preserve and confirm the Words of God by Jews witnessing to their sense in the Latin text. He said:

-"First, that we might have recourse to their manuscripts as witnesses to the fact that there is no difference in the sense found in our Latin books and those Hebrew ones."

Wycliffe/Hebrew/Greek

Wycliffe said:

 "as by his (Jerome's) expertise in the Hebrew language and the complete agreement of his translation with the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts."

Comparison of Verses

feith in to oure Lord Jhesu

<u> </u>		
EV	LV	KJB
and I witnessed to iewis	and Y witnesside to Jewis	Testifying both
and to hethen men	and to hethene men	and also to the
penaunce in to god; and	penaunce in to God, and	repentance to

h to the Jews, e Greeks, oward God. and faith toward our Lord Jesus *Christ*. (Acts 20:21) Glory to God in the highest,

and on earth peace, good will

64

toward men. (Luke 2:14)

Crist. (Acts 20:21) crist, (Acts 20:21) glorie be in the hijist thingis and seiynge, Glorie be in to god; and in erthe pees be the hiyeste thingis to God, to men of good wille (Lk and in erthe pees be to men 2:14) of good wille. (Lk. 2:14)

Forsothe God so louede the world, that he gaf his oon bigetun sone, that ech man that bileueth in to him perische not, but haue euerlastynge lyf. (John **3:16)** (Wycliffe Bible 1382)

faith in to oure lord ihesus

For God louede so the For God so loved the world, world, that he yaf his `oon that he gave his only bigetun sone, that ech man begotten Son, that that bileueth in him perische whosoever believeth in him not, but haue euerlastynge should not perish, but have everlasting life. lijf. (John 3:16)

Conflicting Statements:

 "And so John Wycliffe and his followers, most notably John Purvey, his secretary and close friend, translated Jerome's vulgate, the "Latin Bible," into the first English Bible."

 This is a quote from T. Noble who translated the Wycliffe-Purvey Bible into modern English.

Terrence Noble, http://www.ibiblio.org/tnoble/download/Wycliffe%20NT/03-Intro.pdf



Precursor of Saxon Language

- "The Gothic is a language of Low German origin, as well as the Anglo-Saxon and English." (The Gospels Gothic, Anglo-Saxon, Wycliffe and Tyndale Versions by Joseph Bosworth; published by Gibbings and Company in London - 1907; p.iii). To put it more clearly, one of the primary roots of the Anglo-Saxon and English language is the Gothic language. This is readily seen when we compare the Gothic with the Anglo-Saxon and the English as we see in the chart below.
- http://www.logosresourcepages.org/Versions/blocks.htm

Wycliffe Bible Precursors

- "At this point, before we look at how and when Christianity was reintroduced into Britain, I want to focus on the Gothic versions of the Bible, particularly the translation of **Ulphilas**. The great ecclesiastical historian Robert Robinson writes, "Certain it is, they (the Goths) had a translation of the Scriptures into their own language so early as the time of Ulphilas, who lived in the reign of Constantine, many years before they dismembered the empire."
- (*Ecclesiastical Researches* by Robert Robinson; Cambridge England, 1792; p. 201).
- http://www.logosresourcepages.org/Versions/blocks.htm. Dr. D. Browns' site

Cost of a copied Bible in Wycliffe's time

 "The annual allowance of a university scholar was but fifty shillings, the wages of a laboring man three half-pence a day, and two arches of London bridge only cost £25, in 1240; yet in 1274 the Abbot of Croxton paid for a fairly written Bible (Latin Vulgate) in nine volumes the sum of £33, 6s, 8d."

Thomas Armitage, A History of the Alps, Vol. 1 p. 314

THE

English Pexapla

EXPERIENCES THE

SIX IMPORTANT ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

OF THE

NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES,

WICLIF M.CCC.LXXX. GENEVAN M.D.LVII.
TYNDALE M.D.XXXIV. ANGLO-RHEMISH, M.D.LXXXII.
CRANMER M.D.XXXIX. AUTHORISED M.DC.XI.

THE ORIGINAL GREEK TEXT AFTER SCHOLZ

WITH THE VARIOUS READINGS OF THE TEXTUS RECEPTUS AND THE PRINCIPAL CONSTANTING/POLITAN AND ALEXANDRING MANUSCRIPTS, AND

A COMPLETE COLLATION OF SCHOOLS'S TEXT WITH GRIEFINACH'S EDITION OF SERCCE, 1

PRESERVED BY A.

HISTORY OF ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS AND TRANSLATORS,

" SPER I AN THAT THERE COMMEND MICH EXPENDED AND VENEZURATION OF THE BEAUTYPER OF THESE SEASONS TRANSMICTION, THE PER SE ALL THE STATES OF SECURIOR SECURITIES ADDRESSED AND THE SECURITIES ADDRESSED AND THE SECURITIES AND T



225.4

LONDON:

Samuel Bagster and Sons, Paternoster Mow:

WARRIOUSE FOR RIBLES, NEW TESTAMENTS, PRANCE-BOOKS, LEXISONS, GRAMMARS, CONCORDANCES, AND PRANCESS, IN ADDRESS AND MODERN LANGUAGES.

HOALAI per Suprey PARTEL, per Fallerstrates.