

Naval Military & Air Force Bible Society

Celebrating the 400th Anniversary of the King James Bible



From the Archbishop of Canterbury,

The Bible - especially the well-loved and well-tried King James Bible - has proved itself again and again as a source of strength and inspiration in the most testing of situations. I am very happy to be involved with the Naval, Military & Air Force Bible Society as its patron, and to support its work of sharing this treasure with HM Forces personnel and merchant seafarers, and I wish the Society every blessing.

+ Rowan Cantuar

www.nmafbs.org

Registered Charity 1102593

Naval Military & Air Force Bible Society

Castaway House
311 Twyford Avenue
Portsmouth PO2 8RN

Email: info@nmafbs.org

Providing resources for:

Chaplains to the Armed Forces and Military Christian Organisations

working with:

**Royal Navy
Royal Marines
Army
Royal Air Force**

Chaplains to the Cadet Corps

working with:

**Air Training Corps
Army Cadet Force
Sea Cadet Corps**

Chaplains to Seafarers' Missions

including:

**Apostleship of the Sea
Fisherman's Mission
Sailors' Society
Seamen's Christian Friend Society
The Mission to Seafarers**

Publication of the King James Bible because, for the first time, ready access to the

The availability of the **King James Bible** was to revolutionise society, not least those who fought for King and Country. Today the King James Version and modern translations continue to provide spiritual strength to members of HM Forces and Merchant Seafarers.

When facing danger, many have found that the Word of God inspires courage and provides inner strength. And the prayers of both past and present commanders reinforce this:

Sir Jacob Astley, Royalist Commander in the Civil War, made this very human prayer at the Battle of Edgehill in 1642,

“Oh Lord, Thou knowest how busy I must be this day; if I forget thee, do not thou forget me.”

Admiral Lord Nelson similarly appealed to his Lord with disarming humility before the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805,

“For myself individually, I commit my life to Him who made me and may His blessing light upon my endeavours for serving my country faithfully. To Him I resign and the just cause which is entrusted to me to defend.”

es Bible in 1611 is celebrated it gave the ordinary citizen the Holy Scriptures.

Lt Col Chris Keeble, The Parachute Regiment,
In the loneliness of command at the lowest point in
the battle for Goose Green during the Falklands
Campaign in 1982, knelt to pray Blessed Charles
de Foucauld's prayer of abandonment:

*"My Father, I abandon myself to you. Do with
me as you will. Whatever you do with me, I thank
you. I am ready for anything. I accept everything.
Provided your will is fulfilled in me I ask for
nothing more, my Father."*



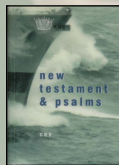
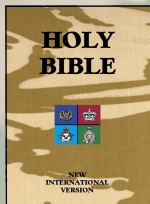
But surely the most desperate, yet gracious,
prayer for deliverance was the one Jesus made
on the eve of his crucifixion:

*"Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup
from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be
done."*

Luke 22:42 (King James Bible)

We give thanks for those who made the King
James Bible possible and we pray for the needs
of all who serve their country today in the cause
of peace and freedom.

Naval Military & Air Force Bible Society Bibles and New Testaments



A Mission to Seafarers Chaplain presents a Bible to a merchant seaman in Australia.



L/Cpl Johnson Beharry VC (right) receives a Bible to replace one he lost on the battlefield.

History

Founded in 1779 as 'The Bible Society' its name was changed to Naval and Military Bible Society in 1804 on formation of the British & Foreign Bible Society. Its aim, *to purchase Bibles for distribution among British soldiers and seaman of the Navy*. The name was amended in 1961 to include the Royal Air Force.

The Society has enjoyed support from many famous personalities. Early vice-presidents included William Wilberforce MP and Lord Palmerston. The Duke of Wellington was its President from 1816-1842.

Records show that its Bibles were widely distributed to Army Regiments and ships of the Royal Navy. In



1820 the Society began supplying Bibles to Merchant Seafarers' Missions. The Society's oldest surviving Bible was believed to have been placed aboard HMS Bounty in 1787 before sailing from Portsmouth. It was the source of Christian teaching to generations of Pitcairn Islanders and is now kept in the Island museum.



The Society is governed by a board of trustees, these include officers and chaplains of the three Armed Forces, Merchant Seafarers Missions and the Cadet Corps under the chairmanship of The Venerable Ron Hesketh CB, former Chaplain in Chief, Royal Air Force. Executive Director is Richard Prendergast.

The Society continues to fulfil its mission of distributing Bibles and booklets at home and abroad. In 2010, it supplied 60,000 items of Christian literature that included 25,000 Bibles and New Testaments.