

Wednesday 25th May

4.00-6.00pm Registration

Free time (evening meal)

8.00pm Performing the Bible
Sheffield Cathedral

The King James Bible has been a source of inspiration for artists, musicians and writers throughout its 400-year history. With Georg Friedrich Handel, T.S. Eliot, Maya Angelou and Pink Floyd as models, expect wide-ranging interpretations of this bible “performed”.

Thursday 26th May

9.00am Registration (*for late arrivals*)

9.30am Welcome and Introduction: Aims and Goal of the Conference

10.00am **Biblical Studies and Cultural Literacy (session)**

“Joseph of Arimathea among the disciplines”

William John Lyons, Dr., Department of Theology and Religious Studies,
University of Bristol

The overly narrow focus of current academic studies of the Bible and the relative biblical illiteracy of practitioners of other disciplines has led to a situation where crucial questions about the Bible's presence and impact in a wide variety of historical contexts are often left unasked.

In this presentation, something of the pervasive nature of the Bible's (sometimes major/often minor) influence will be demonstrated through an examination of the multiple appearances made by a single minor figure, Joseph of Arimathea, within the history of interpretation. The use of the term *minor* here, undeniably accurate from the viewpoint of Biblical Studies, singularly fails as a description of the figure who parades/is paraded down through two millenia. Joseph is introduced here through a whistle-stop tour of material of interest to academic disciplines as varied as English, Colonial Studies, History of Art, Women's Studies, Cultural Studies, Folklore Studies, Politics, Film Studies, Music, Bereavement Studies, and Drama.

10.30 “Biblical Literacy among the Classical Sociologists:
Who's afraid of the Bible?”

David John Chalcraft, Professor of Sociology,
University of Derby

Both Max Weber and William Dubois used ideas and themes from the Bible in order to illustrate social processes. In Weber's case, this is to illustrate a point

about the future of the German people after Versailles, while Dubois identifies Black experience post-emancipation with the wandering in the wilderness as narrated in the Hebrew Bible. Yet both sociologists also see the Bible as data that needs to be explored critically- as data for historical sociology. Moreover, Weber sees the Bible as an important cultural influence- or rather selected parts of it as championed by various 'carriers'- on the rise and nature of modernity.

Drawing on the experience of teaching "Bible in Culture and Society" among students of sociology and cultural studies, this paper reflects on the paradox of a secular science which is both suspicious of and strangely reverent toward the Bible. *This paper will be followed by extended discussion.*

11.30 *Break for refreshments*

12.00 **The Bible as a Way In to Other studies** (session)

"Introducing the Bible as Philosophy"

Philip Davies, Professor of Biblical Studies, emeritus,
The University of Sheffield

When the Bible is approached as a philosophical response to ancient and modern human problems, whether individual or social, biblical texts can be explored, challenged and appropriated rather than simply received. This paper will put forward a secular alternative to "biblical theology", which looks at human nature, justice, history, and the good life.

13.00 *Lunch*

14.15 "Creative Writing and the Bible"

Carl Tighe, Professor of Creative Writing
University of Derby

The Bible is one of several "foundation texts" used by students when examining the transition from an oral to a literate culture, and the visibility of oral origins in texts. At the University of Derby, a Representation in Writing module aims to question BA students' certainties about the act of writing and consider the difficulties of representing ideas in language. Case studies include Baruch, Jeremiah, and the account of the siege of Jabesh-gilead in 1 Samuel. (30 minutes)

14.45 "Using Older Narratives in Today's Universities:

Perspectives from Economy and Media"

José Luis Lopez Calle, Department of Business Economics, Carlos III
University, Madrid, & Department of Modern History, Audiovisual
Communication and Publicity, University of Valladolid

Debt crises are not peculiar to modern times. Economics students at the University of Madrid are encouraged to consider the consequences of debt for rights and social status through the study of passages from Genesis and Ezra-Nehemiah. At the University of Valladolid, media students examine biblical texts as a means to understanding how a message can be incorporated into narrative

form to the extent that it becomes a foundation myth. This paper will reflect on both the practicalities and consequences of such pedagogy. (30 minutes)

15.15 *Break for refreshments*

15.30 “Beyond Belief: Responding to Biblical Illiteracy in Higher Education”

A roundtable discussion.

Hugh Pyper, Professor of Biblical Studies with colleagues from the School of English, The University of Sheffield

Taking into account the day's presentations, this jointly-led session will consider ways of bridging the “biblical literacy gap”, responding to the challenges faced by students and staff in English Literature and other disciplines. (60 minutes)

16.30 *Free time*

Friday 27th May

9.00 *Registration* (Friday-only participants)

9.15 Introduction to the day's programme

9.30 **The Bible in the Classroom (session)**

“From Story Books to Bullet Points: Comparing the Status of Books in Primary and Secondary RE, and the implications for the Bible in school”
Julia Ipgrave, Dr., Senior Research Fellow, Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit, University of Warwick

Classroom observations, teacher and pupil interviews in twenty diverse schools demonstrate the continuing enthusiasm of primary age children for books, and for stories from religious traditions and scriptures. In contrast, secondary RE classes show negativity towards text, as audio-visual resources, class discussion, the use of short scriptural extracts and bullet points have often taken the place of traditional engagement with and interpretation of Scriptures.

Can the Primary models enhance the status and meaning of scripture in the Secondary classroom and increase young people's awareness of the inspiration of the scriptures in the lives of people of religious faith? (40 minutes)

Discussion will follow the second paper.

10.10 “Teaching Biblically Rich Texts to Biblically Poor English Students”

Mrs Sarah Phillips, Farmington Research Fellow & Assistant Head of English, Leventhorpe School, Hertfordshire

Presentation of a research project on biblical literacy in Secondary English.

11.00 *Break for refreshments*

11.30 “This is not a Bible/Ceçi n'est pas une Bible”
Yvonne Sherwood, Professor of Old Testament / Tanakh,
University of Glasgow

This presentation offers some new, recently discovered resources in and about The Bible. The texts on show will include legal criteria for what counts in the public realm as “religion” and media reports reviving the category of blasphemy in relation to a publicly abused Bible at a Modern Art Museum.

The image-texts will include a page of the KJV as interpreted by the artist Tom Phillips (the artist behind the project *A Humument*); the graffitied Bible recently displayed, so controversially, at Glasgow Gallery of Modern Art; and *Ceçi n'est pas une Bible/This is not a Bible*, borrowed from AK.M. Adam as a spinoff from the famous *Ceçi n'est pas une pipe* (“The Treason of Images”) by the Belgian surrealist painter René Magritte.

These are offered as a package of resources for thinking about what a Bible 'is' and where we need the limits and edges of “the Bible” to be. (90 minutes)

13.00 *Lunch*

14.00 “Buying in to Biblical Literacy:
Using Advertising to Overcome Student Ambivalence to Biblical Studies”
Katie Edwards, Dr., Sheffield International College,
The University of Sheffield

Educationalists may lament the lack of biblical knowledge among their students, but students often perceive the Bible as an outdated tome with limited relevance in contemporary society and no impact on their own cultural space.

The pervasive influence of biblical imagery in advertising - especially premium or luxury brand advertising such as Christian Dior, Nina Ricci and DKNY, with which the majority of students are very familiar - is an effective way to help students recognise the continuing cultural impact and relevance of the Bible. This paper will demonstrate how a focus on advertising and visual culture can enable students to access and engage with the biblical text. (30 minutes)

(15 minute break to allow delegates to move between venues as necessary.)

14.45 **Workshop(s) and Demonstrations**

Afternoon workshops and demonstrations will run in parallel, with some options repeating (subject to demand).

There will be a short break for refreshments at 15.45.

Option 1. “Dare2Engage: Exploring the Book of Job creatively with today's
16 - 19 year olds”
Lat Blaylock, R.E. Today, and
Toni Coulton, Festive

Rage, Despair and Hope: emotions teenagers know well, providing excellent subject material for 16-19 RE Days or SMSC provision. The Wisdom Literature provides rich resources on these topics both theologically and personally, but how may biblically illiterate young people access them? Job, in particular,

challenges the facilitator to present, in a short timescale, not just the outline narrative but also the “searching arguments” of the work.

Dare2Engage commissioned artist Si Smith to create a means of communicating the richness of Job to the target audience. The resulting exhibition is of 22 triptychs, combining the old and the new, simple and complex, and most importantly including points of reference for students. The experience is completed with an ipod commentary of 22 readings of the texts that inspired the artist. This creative approach allows young people to access and investigate biblical material and link it with their own, and others', rage, despair and hope. Following an introduction, delegates will experience the presentation of the work through sight and sound. There will be time for questions and discussion. The session closes with a challenging description of the project's recent impact. (60 minutes)

Option 2. “Uncovering *The Text* within the texts: A Level English Literature in context”
Susan Coyne, Project Leader, The Cross Reference Project, Stapleford

How can A Level English students and their teachers understand the biblical and cultural allusions that permeate western literature? The Cross Reference Project aims to supply a practical answer: www.crossref-it.info and its sister sites, m.crossref-it.info and texts.crossref-it.info provide free, accessible, academic guides to interpreting particular A Level texts, as well as a wealth of supplementary material to aid comprehension of the Bible and wider British culture. (30 minutes)

Option 3.a “Telling Tales Introduced”
The University of Sheffield

An introduction to the educational resources developed to support the exhibition, *Telling Tales of King James' Bible*. Following a brief overview of the development process, delegates will be able to explore the resources designed for use during a cathedral visit and in classrooms. (25 minute session at 15.15)

Option 3.b “Telling Tales Unwrapped”
The University of Sheffield

Following on from session 3.a., this session will seek to evaluate the *Telling Tales* resources and discuss how similar projects might develop in the future. (25 minute session at 16.30)

Option 4. “Bringing in the Bible”
Facilitator: Chris Burke, Revd., Canon for Learning and Development,
Sheffield Cathedral

A facilitated discussion of the particular challenges and opportunities open to clergy and other church-workers addressing biblical literacy. Discussion may include work with young people and adults, in school and church contexts. Participants will be encouraged to reflect on the relevance of the other sessions for their own work. (50 minutes.)

17.00 Plenary

- 17.15 *Free time*
- 19.00 Reception at the Cathedral, 1554 Gallery
Delegates and other invited guests will gather at the cathedral for a drinks reception, prior to the evening's lecture. Those not present at Wednesday's performance event will have a second opportunity to view Sheffield's *Telling Tales* exhibition in situ.
- 19.45 **THE SIR HENRY STEPHENSON LECTURE 2011**
"Putting Words in Our Mouths:
The King James Bible and the English Language"
Gordon Campbell, Professor of English Renaissance
University of Leicester
Sheffield Cathedral
- Introduction from the Vice-Chancellor of the University.
- Gordon Campbell, author of *Bible: The Story of the King James Bible 1611-2011* (OUP), will reflect on the origins and impact of the King James Bible, and its influence on the English language.
- In association with the Stephenson Trust.

Saturday 28th May

- 9.30 "The Bible and the Politics of Religious Education"
Dr. Liam Gearon, University Lecturer in Religious Education and Senior Research Fellow, Harris Manchester College, University of Oxford
How and why has the Bible declined within school teaching? Where has it survived? This paper will explore the Bible's role in the wider cultural heritage, and reflect on how, why and where it will continue to thrive. (90 minutes)
- 11.00 *Break for refreshments*
- 11.30 Plenary discussion and plans for further development
- This period of facilitated discussion, arranged to accommodate different interest groups, will reflect on the conference, giving consideration to the different issues raised and resources presented.
- Groups will aim to produce concrete proposals with regard to addressing biblical literacy needs. Partnerships will be encouraged, and initial plans may be made for funding bids to support the furthering of biblical literacy, both to develop new resources and enhance those already available.
- There will be an opportunity for those operating within a confessional context to consider their own role in furthering biblical literacy.
- 1.00 *Lunch and Departures*

Useful Information

A book stall and exhibition space will be open throughout the day on Friday and at scheduled times over the rest of the conference period. Please contact the Project Coordinator if you wish to reserve exhibition space. (Contact details below.)

Accommodation is not provided. A list of options may be downloaded from the King James Project web site.

Please see: <http://sheffield.ac.uk/kjv/conference/location/accomm>

Lunch and light refreshments will be provided during the day. The conference organisers will propose possible venues for evening meals, though delegates may prefer to make their own arrangements. Morning and evening meals are not included in the conference fee.

Catering will include vegetarian options. If you have any additional dietary requirements, please advise the Project Coordinator at the earliest opportunity.

Accessibility

All venues are wheelchair accessible. If you require a hearing loop or other assistance, please advise the Project Coordinator at the earliest opportunity.

Telling Tales DVD Offer

Delegates booking for the full conference prior to 15th April 2011 will receive a copy of the Telling Tales DVD-Rom in advance of the conference. Delegates booking after the 15th April deadline will receive their inspection copy upon arrival. *Those attending part of the conference will have the possibility to purchase a copy at a preferential rate during the conference.*

Contact us

The **Department of Biblical Studies** is based at
45 Victoria Street, Sheffield, S3 7QB.

The telephone number for reception is 0114 222 0508. An out-of-hours contact number will be made available to delegates prior to the conference.

The **Project Coordinator** can be reached by email to:
king.james@sheffield.ac.uk

This programme may be subject to change.

01/04/2011