**Dr. Ted Hildebrandt, John Eliot, Apostle to the Indians, Session 3, Bible, King Philip’s War, Tributes  
Resources from NotebookLM**

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

**1. Abstract of Hildebrandt, John Eliot, Session 3, Bible, King Philip’s War, Tributes, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**  
  
This source is a transcription of a lecture providing an overview of the life and work of John Eliot, a 17th-century missionary known as the "Apostle to the Indians." **The session focuses on three key aspects of Eliot's endeavors:** his monumental effort in translating the Bible into the Algonquin language, culminating in the Eliot Bible published in 1663 and its subsequent second edition after the devastation of King Philip's War, the impact of King Philip's War (1675-1676) on Eliot's missionary work and the Native American communities, and finally, tributes to Eliot's enduring legacy and remarkable dedication to his mission despite immense obstacles and societal shifts. **The lecture highlights the linguistic challenges Eliot faced, the cultural barriers in translation, the profound impact of the war on his work and the converted Native American "praying Indians," and concludes with admiring reflections on his character, perseverance, and lasting influence.**

**2. 18 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of   
Dr. Hildebrandt, John Eliot, Session 3 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Church History 🡪 John Eliot).**



**3. Briefing Document: Hildebrandt, John Eliot, Session 3, Bible, King Philip’s War, Tributes**  
  
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Briefing Document: John Eliot - The Eliot Bible, King Philip's War, and Final Tributes

**Executive Summary:**

This briefing document summarizes the third session of Dr. Ted Hildebrandt's teaching on the life and work of John Eliot (1604-1690), the "Apostle to the Indians." The session focuses on Eliot's monumental achievement of translating the Bible into the Algonquin (Wampanoag) language (the Eliot Bible, first edition 1663, second edition 1685), the devastating impact of King Philip's War (1675-1676) on his missionary efforts and the praying Indian villages, and concludes with final tributes highlighting Eliot's remarkable dedication, humility, and lasting legacy. Despite facing immense linguistic, cultural, and political challenges, including the destruction of his Bibles and the displacement of the Native American communities he served, Eliot's commitment to his work and his deep care for the Indigenous people remain profoundly inspiring.

**Main Themes and Important Ideas/Facts:**

**1. The Eliot Bible (Algonquin/Wampanoag Bible):**

* **Monumental Achievement:** Translating the entire Bible from Hebrew, Greek, and English into the Algonquin language was Eliot's "greatest achievement." This was the first and perhaps only time such a complete translation into this language was accomplished.
* **Motivation and Early Efforts:** Eliot's "great longing and desire" was to sanctify the Indian language through scripture translation. He began this work around the 1640s, roughly 14 years after he started preaching to the Indians.
* **Linguistic Challenges:** The Algonquin language was "an extremely difficult language" with no prior written form or literature. Eliot had to "start from scratch," developing an alphabet with new symbols to capture unique sounds. He created foundational materials like a catechism, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments.
* Dr. Hildebrandt highlights the uniqueness of this: "Eliot was the only missionary to devise a new alphabet from an unwritten language for the purpose of teaching and preaching the scriptures. So, it had been over a thousand years since anybody had developed an alphabet to describe what he was hearing."
* He even had to create new words or adapt existing ones to translate concepts unfamiliar to the Native American culture. For example, when translating "lattice" in Judges, he initially considered "eel pod" but ultimately used "lattice ut" with an Indian ending.
* The language featured very long words formed by compounding, and a different system of noun classification (animate vs. inanimate) compared to European languages.
* The lack of a substantive verb ("is," "was") and a direct equivalent for "Jehovah" posed significant translational hurdles. Eliot ultimately used the name "Jehovah" directly in the translation.
* **Collaboration and Support:** Eliot received crucial help from Coconoo, an Indian man who knew both English and Algonquin, in the translation process. He also tirelessly advocated for Indian schools to promote literacy in their own language.
* **Publication and Printing:** The printing process was fraught with financial difficulties. The New Testament was printed in 1661, followed by the complete Bible in 1663, both in Cambridge, Massachusetts, at the basement of the Indian College, using a press operated by Samuel Green and later Marmaduke Johnson. James Printer, a Native American, played a vital role in proofreading.
* Eliot expressed his anxiety about funding: "Oh, that the Lord would so move that by some means or other, it may be printed."
* **Impact and Significance:** Seeing the Bible in the hands of the Natick Indians brought immense joy to Eliot, akin to Simeon's joy at seeing the infant Jesus: "'now, Lord, let us thy servant depart in peace for my eyes have seen thy salvation.'"
* **Destruction and Second Edition:** Most of the 1663 edition was destroyed during King Philip's War by both settlers who hated the Indians and Indians who distrusted the English connection. A second edition was printed in 1685, largely due to Eliot's persistence despite waning support and financial challenges. He even used his own savings to initiate the printing of the Old Testament for the second edition.
* Eliot's passionate plea for the second edition: "My age makes me importunate, and I shall depart joyfully. May I but leave the Bible among them, for it is the word of life."

**2. King Philip's War (1675-1676):**

* **Devastating Impact:** This war was a turning point that "upset everything" and significantly damaged the relationship between settlers and Native Americans, effectively halting the progress of Eliot's missionary work in many areas.
* **High Casualties:** Proportionally, King Philip's War resulted in more deaths than almost any other war in American history up to 1968.
* **Breakdown of Trust:** The war led to a complete breakdown of trust between the English settlers and both the hostile and the "praying Indians." Settlers questioned the sincerity of conversions.
* **Internment on Deer Island:** Fearing collaboration with hostile tribes, the settlers rounded up the praying Indians from the 14 villages and interned them on Deer Island in Boston Harbor during a harsh winter with no adequate food or shelter, leading to many deaths.
* **Opposition to Eliot:** Eliot faced severe criticism from settlers who viewed his continued support for the Indians as betrayal. He was seen as "helping the Indians who are killing us," leading to him being considered a "traitor."
* **Interference with Aid:** Settlers actively tried to prevent Eliot and Daniel Gookin from bringing supplies to the interned Indians, even ramming their boat.
* **Shifting Military Strategy:** The tide of the war eventually turned when the settlers began to trust and utilize some Indians as scouts and allies.
* **Destruction of Villages:** Ten of the fourteen praying Indian villages were destroyed during the war. Natick was one of the few that was rebuilt.
* **Decline of Missionary Zeal:** After the war, the "interest and zeal" for Christianizing the Indians never fully recovered. Efforts to print a third edition of the Bible failed.
* **Loss of Leadership in Native Churches:** While Eliot successfully ordained Daniel Takawambait as the first Indian pastor in Natick, after Takawambait's death, English pastors took over, signifying a shift in control.
* **Resilience of Faith:** Despite the hardships, some praying Indians expressed deep sorrow at being driven away from their newfound faith: "'we are not sorry for what we leave behind, but we are sorry that the English have driven us away from praying to God.'"

**3. Final Tributes to John Eliot:**

* **Humility and Self-Sacrifice:** Despite his immense accomplishments, Eliot remained deeply humble, describing himself as "'but a shrub in the wilderness'" and his efforts as "'poor and small and lean doings.'"
* **Lasting Legacy:** Eliot left behind a significant legacy as a dedicated missionary, linguist, and advocate for the Native Americans. His work is commemorated in street names, churches, schools, and historical markers throughout the Boston area.
* **Dedication to the End:** Even in his old age, after relinquishing his formal ministry, Eliot continued to serve by catechizing and teaching children (including Black and Indian children) in his home.
* **Peaceful Death:** His last words were "'welcome joy.'"
* **Contemporary Recognition:** Dr. Hildebrandt expresses profound respect for Eliot, highlighting his "amazing" character, "tremendous amount of respect," and the inspiring nature of his story. He laments that these stories are not more widely known.
* **Eulogies and Historical Perspectives:** Tributes from historical figures emphasize Eliot's moral courage, self-sacrifice, tireless labor in translation, and profound impact. He is remembered as a man with a "'nobler, truer, warmer spirit.'" His translation of the entire scriptures into the native language is considered an unparalleled feat of resolute and successful labor.

**Quotes:**

* "I have a great longing and desire, if be the will of God, taught our English, our Indian language might be sanctified by the translation of the Holy Scriptures into it." - John Eliot (1653)
* "Eliot was the only missionary to devise a new alphabet from an unwritten language for the purpose of teaching and preaching the scriptures." - Benge and Pickowicz (quoted by Dr. Hildebrandt)
* "'now, Lord, let us thy servant depart in peace for my eyes have seen thy salvation.'" - Luke 2:29 (alluded to by Dr. Hildebrandt regarding Eliot's joy)
* "My age makes me importunate, and I shall depart joyfully. May I but leave the Bible among them, for it is the word of life." - John Eliot (pleading for the second edition)
* "King Phillip's war killed more people, percentage-wise, than almost any war that America would ever face." - Winslow (1968)
* "'we are not sorry for what we leave behind, but we are sorry that the English have driven us away from praying to God.'" - Tewksbury Indians
* "'but a shrub in the wilderness.'" - John Eliot (on his view of himself)
* "'poor and small and lean doings.'" - John Eliot (on his own work)
* "A nobler, truer, warmer spirit than John Eliot ever lived." - Cited eulogy for John Eliot

**Conclusion:**

Dr. Hildebrandt's session provides a compelling overview of a pivotal period in John Eliot's life and work. The creation of the Eliot Bible stands as a testament to his linguistic gifts and unwavering commitment to making scripture accessible to the Algonquin people. However, King Philip's War brought immense suffering and effectively dismantled much of his progress, highlighting the complex and often tragic interactions between early European settlers and Native American communities. Despite these setbacks, Eliot's enduring spirit, humility, and final years dedicated to teaching children of all backgrounds underscore his profound and lasting impact as a remarkable figure in American religious history.

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**4.** **Study Guide: Hildebrandt, John Eliot, Session 3, Bible, King Philip’s War, Tributes**

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Study Guide: John Eliot, His Bible, and King Philip's War

Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. What were John Eliot's primary roles and the key locations associated with his ministry in the New World?
2. Describe the significance of the year 1663 in relation to John Eliot's work with the Native American population. What challenges did he face in accomplishing this?
3. Who were some of the key individuals who assisted John Eliot in his translation and printing efforts of the Algonquin Bible? What were their specific contributions?
4. Identify and briefly explain two specific cultural or linguistic challenges John Eliot encountered while translating the Bible into the Algonquin language.
5. What was the initial impact of King Philip's War (1675) on John Eliot's missionary work and the communities of praying Indians?
6. Describe the events that led to the confinement of the praying Indians on Deer Island during King Philip's War. What were the conditions like for them there?
7. How did the perception of John Eliot by the English settlers shift during and after King Philip's War? Explain why this change occurred.
8. What was the fate of the first edition of the Eliot Bible after the outbreak of King Philip's War? What does the existence of a copy at Gordon College signify?
9. Discuss John Eliot's efforts to produce a second edition of the Algonquin Bible after King Philip's War. What obstacles did he face, and how did he overcome some of them?
10. What were some of the key characteristics and actions of John Eliot in his later years, as highlighted in the final tributes to him?

Quiz Answer Key

1. John Eliot was a Puritan minister known as the "Apostle to the Indians." He primarily ministered in Roxbury, Massachusetts, and established the praying Indian village of Natick. His work focused on converting Native Americans to Christianity and translating the Bible into their Algonquin language.
2. The year 1663 is significant because it marked the publication of the first complete Bible in the Algonquin language, also known as the Eliot Bible. Eliot faced immense challenges, including learning the complex unwritten language, developing an alphabet, and securing funding and printing resources for this monumental task.
3. Coconoo, a Native American who knew both English and Algonquin, was crucial in teaching Eliot the language and assisting with the translation. Samuel Green was the printer at Harvard College who oversaw the printing process, and Marmaduke Johnson was hired specifically to help print the Eliot Bible. James Printer, a Native American, also played a vital role in proofreading the Algonquin text.
4. One challenge was the lack of equivalent concepts for religious terms, such as "Father" in the Lord's Prayer, which was foreign to their understanding of the divine. Another was the absence of words for everyday objects, like "lattice" in the Bible, requiring Eliot to find analogies or adapt existing words to convey the meaning.
5. King Philip's War had a devastating impact, leading to the burning of many copies of the Eliot Bible and the dispersal or destruction of most of the praying Indian villages. The war created deep mistrust between the settlers and the Native Americans, severely hindering Eliot's missionary efforts and the progress of his work.
6. Amidst the growing tensions and violence of King Philip's War, the English settlers, fearing that the praying Indians might side with other tribes, rounded them up and confined them on Deer Island in Boston Harbor during the winter. The conditions were harsh, with limited food and shelter, leading to significant suffering and death among the confined Native Americans.
7. Before King Philip's War, Eliot was largely seen as a heroic figure dedicated to bringing Christianity to the Native Americans. However, after the war, as settlers faced attacks from Native American tribes, Eliot's continued support for the praying Indians led many settlers to view him with suspicion and even as a traitor for seemingly siding with the enemy.
8. The first edition of the Eliot Bible, published in 1663, was largely destroyed during King Philip's War, as both English settlers and some Native Americans burned or tore up the books due to the conflict and its associations. The existence of a rare 1663 edition at Gordon College is significant as it represents a surviving example of this historically important and largely lost publication.
9. After King Philip's War, Eliot was determined to produce a second edition of the Bible, believing it was essential for the spiritual well-being of the remaining praying Indians. He faced difficulty raising funds due to the war's impact on settler attitudes, but he persisted, even using his own savings to begin the printing of the Old Testament, eventually leading to the publication of the second edition in 1685.
10. In his later years, John Eliot was characterized by his enduring charity, humility, and continued dedication to teaching. Even in his eighties, he ministered to and taught reading and writing to children of different backgrounds. His final words, "welcome joy," reflect his deep faith and peaceful acceptance of death after a life of tireless service.

**Essay Format Questions**

1. Analyze the motivations behind John Eliot's commitment to translating the Bible into the Algonquin language. What does this endeavor reveal about his understanding of evangelism and cultural engagement?
2. Discuss the complex and often contradictory relationship between John Eliot, the English settlers, and the Native American population, particularly in the context of King Philip's War. How did the war challenge and reshape these relationships?
3. Evaluate the long-term impact and legacy of John Eliot's work, considering both his achievements in translating the Bible and the significant setbacks caused by King Philip's War. Did his efforts ultimately succeed in their aims?
4. Explore the cultural and linguistic challenges John Eliot faced during his translation of the Bible. How did he attempt to bridge the gap between English Christian concepts and the Algonquin worldview?
5. Consider the significance of the tributes paid to John Eliot after his death. What aspects of his life and work were most admired and remembered by his contemporaries and later generations?

**Glossary of Key Terms**

* **Apostle to the Indians:** A title conferred upon John Eliot in recognition of his extensive missionary work among the Native American tribes of New England.
* **Algonquin Language:** The family of Native American languages spoken by many tribes in the region where John Eliot ministered; specifically, the Massachusett dialect into which he translated the Bible.
* **Eliot Bible:** The first complete Bible printed in a Native American language, translated by John Eliot into the Algonquin (Massachusett) dialect and published in 1663. A second edition followed in 1685.
* **Praying Indians:** Native Americans in colonial New England who converted to Christianity and lived in organized communities, often adopting English customs alongside their Christian faith. Natick was the first and most prominent of these villages.
* **Natick:** The first and most significant "praying Indian" village established by John Eliot in Massachusetts around 1650. It served as a center for his missionary work and the translation of the Bible.
* **King Philip's War (1675-1676):** A major conflict between Native American tribes led by Metacomet (King Philip) and the English colonists in New England. The war had a devastating impact on both sides, including the praying Indian communities.
* **Waban:** A prominent Nipmuc leader who was among the first Native Americans to convert to Christianity through John Eliot's preaching and became a key figure in the praying Indian community.
* **Daniel Gookin:** An English colonial official who was a strong advocate for and supporter of John Eliot's missionary work among the Native Americans.
* **James Printer:** A Native American man from the praying Indian community who worked as a printer and played a crucial role in the production of both editions of the Eliot Bible, particularly in proofreading the Algonquin text.
* **Samuel Green:** The English colonial printer based at Harvard College who printed both editions of the Eliot Bible, a significant undertaking for the time.

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**5. FAQs on Hildebrandt, John Eliot, Session 3, Bible, King Philip’s War, Tributes, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)**  
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Frequently Asked Questions about John Eliot and His Work

1. Who was John Eliot and what was his primary mission in the New World?

John Eliot (1604-1690) was a Puritan minister who emigrated from England to Massachusetts in 1631. He is best known as the "Apostle to the Indians" for his extensive efforts to evangelize and minister to the Indigenous people of Massachusetts, particularly the Algonquin-speaking tribes. His primary mission was to bring the Christian faith to the Native Americans and to help them establish settled, Christian communities.

2. What was the significance of the Eliot Bible?

The Eliot Bible, also known as the Algonquin or Wampanoag Bible, was the first complete Bible printed in the Western Hemisphere. John Eliot dedicated many years to translating the Old and New Testaments into the Algonquin language, with the first edition of the New Testament appearing in 1661 and the complete Bible in 1663. This was a monumental achievement, requiring Eliot to learn a complex, unwritten language, devise an alphabet for it (a feat unmatched in a thousand years according to some), and overcome significant linguistic and cultural barriers in translation. The Eliot Bible was central to his efforts to teach the scriptures to the Native Americans in their own language, which he believed was essential for their genuine understanding of Christianity.

3. What were some of the major challenges John Eliot faced in translating the Bible into the Algonquin language?

Eliot encountered numerous obstacles in his translation work. The Algonquin language was structurally very different from Hebrew, Greek, and English, featuring extremely long, compound words and a system of animate versus inanimate nouns rather than gendered nouns. The language also lacked direct equivalents for important biblical concepts and words, such as "Father" in relation to God, the concept of forgiveness of enemies (due to the importance of revenge in their culture), and even common terms like "shepherd." Furthermore, the absence of a written tradition meant Eliot had to create an alphabet and essentially build a written form of the language from scratch, relying heavily on the help of Native individuals like Coconoo and James Printer.

4. What role did the "praying Indian villages" play in Eliot's mission?

Eliot established "praying Indian villages," such as Natick, as centers for his missionary work and for the acculturation of Native Americans to Christian and English ways of life. These villages were organized with structures based on groups of ten, fifty, and one hundred families, and they included meeting houses, schools, and eventually churches. Eliot and his associates would regularly visit these villages to preach, teach, and catechize the inhabitants. Natick, founded around 1650, was the first and most prominent of these settlements, serving as a model for approximately 14 such villages that were established by 1674.

5. How did King Philip's War (1675-1676) impact John Eliot's missionary work and the praying Indian villages?

King Philip's War was a devastating conflict that severely disrupted Eliot's missionary efforts and the praying Indian villages. The war led to widespread distrust and hostility between the English settlers and the Native Americans, including the Christian converts. Many settlers questioned the loyalty of the praying Indians, fearing they might side with King Philip. As a result, many praying Indians were forcibly relocated to Deer Island in Boston Harbor during the harsh winter, where hundreds perished due to exposure and lack of resources. Ten of the fourteen praying Indian villages were destroyed or left in shambles. While Natick was eventually rebuilt, the war significantly undermined the progress Eliot had made and led to a decline in support for his mission among the English colonists.

6. What was the reaction of the English settlers towards John Eliot and his work, particularly during and after King Philip's War?

Initially, John Eliot was widely respected for his dedication to evangelizing the Native Americans and for the monumental achievement of translating the Bible. However, the outbreak of King Philip's War dramatically shifted public opinion. Eliot's continued support for and association with the praying Indians led many settlers to view him with suspicion, even as a traitor who was aiding the "enemy." He faced criticism and hostility for his efforts to help the Indians, including risking his own life to bring them supplies on Deer Island. After the war, while some recognized the value of his past work, the enthusiasm and support for further missionary endeavors diminished significantly.

7. Despite the setbacks, how did John Eliot continue his work in his later years?

Despite his advanced age, failing health, and the devastating impact of King Philip's War, John Eliot remained committed to his mission. He continued to minister in Natick and Roxbury, and he played a key role in ordaining Daniel Takawambait, a Native American, as the pastor of the Natick church in 1683. Even in his eighties, after relinquishing his official salary at the Roxbury church, Eliot dedicated his time to catechizing and teaching reading and writing to children, including Native American, Black, and white children, in his home. He also tirelessly pursued the printing of a second edition of the Algonquin Bible, which was finally completed in 1685, demonstrating his unwavering dedication to providing the scriptures in the Native language.

8. How is John Eliot remembered and what is his lasting legacy?

John Eliot is remembered as a remarkable figure in early American history and a significant, albeit controversial, figure in the history of Christian missions. He is recognized for his extraordinary linguistic abilities, his tireless dedication to the Native American people, and his profound commitment to making the Bible accessible in their own language. Despite the ultimate decline of the praying Indian villages and the destruction of many of his Bibles, his work represents a unique and ambitious attempt at cross-cultural communication and religious conversion. He is commemorated through street names, church names, schools, historical markers, and murals, signifying the enduring impact of his life and work, even as perspectives on colonial missionary efforts have evolved over time.

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