

GOD'S WORD WHERE NEEDED MOST

Record

WINTER 2016

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Christmas Gift Catalog Inside



AMERICAN
BIBLE
SOCIETY

The Gift of Christmas



Few things bring Rita and me more joy than seeing the smiling faces of our children and grandchildren around the Christmas tree together. During the Christmas season, God seems to teach us something new about giving to others—whether it’s giving of our time, energy or resources. Giving is joyful work, especially during this season of joy, thanksgiving and reflection.

As I’ve gotten to know the financial partners of American Bible Society during the past two years, I have been astounded by your example of biblical generosity. To me, no group of people better exemplifies the words of Jesus quoted in Acts 20:35: “There is more happiness in giving than in receiving.”

But of course, receiving thoughtful gifts isn’t so bad either! In fact, I’d encourage you to consider that the most important gift this Christmas season is not a gift that you will give, but a gift that you will receive.

Isaiah 9:6 heralds this great gift of Christmas. “A child is born to us! A son is given to us!” And John 1:14 unwraps God’s gift to us in more detail: “The Word became a human being and, full of grace and truth, lived among us.” We’ve heard these verses so many times.

But this Christmas, I hope you’ll join me in reading these verses with fresh eyes. Reflect upon how the Word himself, who appeared personally to his people more than 2,000 years ago, continues to speak powerfully to us through the written words of Scripture.

This issue of *Record* unveils some of the new ways that people around the world are personally encountering Jesus as they engage with the Bible. A new phone app is revolutionizing the way Bibles are distributed to the farthest corners of the world. In the Middle East, scattered refugees are finding healing for spiritual scars through Bible-based trauma healing. And right here in the United States, Christian partnerships in our largest cities are drawing thousands to engage with the Bible for the first time.

You will also find this year’s Christmas Catalog in the center of this magazine. As you wrap up your holiday shopping for friends and family, please consider giving the gift of God’s Word to men, women and children around the world who need it most.

As we head into 2016, the continued labor of American Bible Society is only possible because of the generosity of our faithful partners—and not just at Christmas! Friends, thank you for your faithful partnership to share God’s Word with the world. From our family to yours, have a blessed Christmas and New Year.

Serving Together,

Roy Peterson
President & CEO, American Bible Society

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

RECORD STAFF
MANAGING DIRECTOR
Andrew Hood

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Jennica Stevens

MANAGING EDITOR
Jack Newman

ART DIRECTION & DESIGN
Caleb Komorowski

PRODUCTION
Caitlin Emas
Beth Schultz

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Nick Athens

EXECUTIVE STAFF
PRESIDENT & CEO
Dr. Roy L. Peterson

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENTS
Robert L. Briggs
Laura Dabkowski
Geoffrey Morin
Julia Oliver

CONTACT US
AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY RECORD
866-895-4448
ABSRecord@AmericanBible.org

PARTNER CARE
866-895-4448 or
ABSDonor@AmericanBible.org

BIBLES.COM/SCRIPTURE INQUIRIES
(for catalog or Bible requests) 800-32-BIBLE or
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Record

GOD’S WORD WHERE NEEDED MOST
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Healing Hearts in the Southwest

Laura Burgueño’s first encounter with American Bible Society’s trauma healing program was in a magazine advertisement.

At the time, Laura found herself in the midst of a very difficult season of church ministry with her husband, Eliu—a pastor and international church leader. She was wrestling with whether or not she could handle any more full-time ministry.

The magazine ad changed all that. Laura was intrigued to discover a program all about

confronting life’s spiritual pain with the power of God’s Word. And this particular session was aimed at struggling pastoral families like hers. Stepping out in faith, Laura attended the training and faced the spiritual wounds that haunted her. She quickly realized that the advertisement was no mere coincidence. “God said, ‘I brought you here. I want you to take this training,’” says Laura.

Pretty soon, Laura was training others in the principles of Bible-based trauma healing. One of her first students? Her husband, Eliu.

With resources from American Bible Society’s generous financial partners, Laura and Eliu have begun sharing the healing power of God’s Word with the Latin American Church. “Christian people have just saved their pain and have not talked about it,” explains Laura. “Many of these people have suffered domestic violence . . . rape, even in Christian homes.” Laura says it is a blessing to provide this ministry to impoverished communities that would not normally be able to afford it.

Today, the Burgueños are passionate champions of Bible-based trauma healing in the southwest corner of North America. They have ministered in Arizona, California, Texas, Guatemala and Mexico. And there are no signs of slowing down. “We are opening more doors,” says Laura, who will soon launch a trauma healing program in Cuba. “We are trained . . . we have the passion and we really would like to help.”



Laura and Eliu Burgueño are laboring to bring Bible-based trauma healing to Spanish-speaking communities in North and Central America.

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The mission of American Bible Society is to make the Bible available to every person in a language and format each can understand and afford, so all people may experience its life-changing message. American Bible Society is a member of the United Bible Societies, a partnership of the Bible Societies throughout the world cooperating to make Scriptures available to people everywhere in their own language.

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Photo credit: Pete Morales.

To bring the healing power of God’s Word to those who need it most, visit ABSRecord.com/TraumaHealing.

National Update

Leadership Blog Fosters Bible Engagement in U.S. Churches

A new Bible Engagement Leadership Blog from American Bible Society provides church leaders with cutting edge strategies to increase Bible reading in American churches.

The blog presents issues and ideas, such as the value of Scripture email campaigns and how to ignite interest in the Bible through preaching, helping busy pastors reach the millions of Americans who like the Bible, but don't read it. According to the 2015 State of the Bible survey, 20 percent of weekly church attenders exhibit below-average Bible reading habits. "The best thing we can do is equip



their pastors," says Randy Petersen, director of Scripture Engagement Content for American Bible Society. So far, the blog has been well received by ministry leaders and has logged more than 6,000 visitors since it launched.

To check out the blog, visit ABS.US/LeadersBlog.

New Survey Reveals Bible Reading Habits of Teens

A 2015 survey conducted by American Bible Society and Barna Group unmask the major challenges and opportunities when it comes to engaging teenagers with God's Word. Just 7 percent of teenagers are actively engaged with the Bible—that's 4 percent less than their Millennial peer group (18-30 year-olds).

Some good news from the survey shows that 49 percent of teenagers have a friendly view of Scripture. This is 13 percent higher than their Millennial counterparts, which highlights the importance of equipping teenagers to engage with God's Word. Senior Manager of Youth & Millennial Engagement Arthur Satterwhite is hopeful as he interprets these numbers. "Young people are a huge part of how we will shift the perception of the Bible in America," he says. With the support of generous financial partners, American Bible Society will continue to reach teens with God's Word during this pivotal time of life.

7% of all teenagers are actively engaged with the Bible



49% of all teenagers have a "friendly" view of the Bible and are likely to affirm that it is inspired by God; only 36 percent of Millennials take this view.

of all teenagers have a "friendly" view of the Bible and are likely to affirm that it is inspired by God; only 36 percent of Millennials take this view.

To read our 2015 State of the Bible report, visit ABS.US/StateOfTheBible.

Photo credit: Andrew Hood.



New Website Brings the Bible to Troops Overseas

A new website allows U.S. military members and their families to interact with God's Word together online. On the site, troops can read through the popular Military Bible Challenge reading plan and discuss Scripture with family and friends in an online discussion group. For troops deployed to the far corners of the world, the website provides the support of a tight-knit Bible study, right on their computer.

"Troops are reading the Bible in digital formats more than anything else," explains David Keller, senior manager for American Bible Society's Armed Services Ministry. "We want to take advantage of that." Thanks to this new tool funded by American Bible Society's financial partners, U.S. troops can now read the Bible with their Christian community no matter where they are in the world.

To view the site, visit MilitaryBibleChallenge.com.

The Bible Heals Broken Lives in Phoenix

In mid-September, Christian leaders convened in Arizona to launch the first Bible-based trauma healing program in Phoenix. While American Bible Society's international trauma healing program started in Central Africa in 2010, the program has now been contextualized to address spiritual pain and abuse in American cities.

As Trauma Healing Program Associate Vanessa O'Brien explains, "We started in an African context where trauma is more obvious or systemic. But trauma is not regional; trauma is personal." The launch in Phoenix will continue with further training of local leaders in early December. With God's help, this pilot program will heal thousands of broken lives through the power of Scripture.



Photo credits: U.S. Army photo by Spc. Michael J. MacLeod; creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/legalcode; ThinkStockPhotos.com; Rebecca Silva.



Media Campaign Points Families to God's Word

At the end of September, Christian pilgrims from around the world descended on Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for the World Meeting of Families—the world's largest gathering of Catholic families. People poured into the city for several appearances by Pope Francis, including a Mass celebrated on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway.

To reach the hundreds of thousands of people roaming Philadelphia with God's Word, American Bible Society ran a multifaceted media campaign championing the role of the Bible in the life of the family. Bus wraps, train advertisements and subway posters pointed people to a website with customized Bible studies and devotional ideas for families. Please continue to pray that this strategic campaign will achieve its desired end: to draw Philadelphians and families from around the world to engage more regularly with God's Word.

Check out the site at: EnterTheStoryNow.com.

International Update



IRAQ: Bible Societies Nourish Refugees with God's Word

Christians in Iraq have been living under increasing religious persecution since 2003, but the arrival of ISIS last year took the pressure to new heights. Tens of thousands of Christians have left home with nothing but the clothes on their backs, desperately seeking refuge. Bible Societies in the Middle East have responded by providing Christian families on the run with much needed food, medicine and Scriptures.

“The typical Iraqi Christian has, over the last 30 years,

been displaced four or five times,” says General Secretary of the Bible Society in Lebanon Michael Bassous. “Many of them will never be able to leave Iraq, for financial reasons.” With support from American Bible Society’s financial partners, Dr. Bassous and Bible Societies in the Middle East are nourishing Iraqi Christians with God’s Word, ensuring that they don’t face their spiritual wounds alone.

CHINA: Bible Booklets Point Thousands to Christ

God’s Word is spreading through China via easy-to-use evangelistic Scripture Portions. These miniature Scripture booklets contain Gospel portions, testimonies from Christian celebrities and instructions on how to become a Christian. Because the booklets are slim, they are easy to distribute at large conferences and sporting events.

Designed by United Bible Societies’ China Partnership with support from American Bible Society’s partners, these customized Scriptures have reached thousands of Chinese citizens in the wake of natural disasters and at major cultural events. One recipient named Li was inspired by the good news she read in the booklet, saying, “Through the testimonies of famous people, I am encouraged to see that nothing on earth can be our perfect help except Jesus.”



INDIA: TV Program Broadcasts God's Peace

During the last decade, the Eastern Indian state of Orissa has suffered from religiously motivated riots stirred up by Hindu fundamentalists. Rioters burned churches and homes to the ground, leaving many innocent people homeless.

In response, Bible Society of India is broadcasting 30-minute television programs centered on the hope and peace found in God’s Word. Episodes are comprised of Christian songs and Bible lessons. Please pray that this Scripture message of hope and consolation will bring healing and a clear understanding of God’s love.

ANGOLA: Waiting Christians Receive the Bible in their Heart Language

Several new Bible translation projects in Angola are nearing completion, thanks to support from American Bible Society’s financial partners. With computers, translation software and hands-on training from the Every Tribe Every Nation alliance, translators are getting God’s Word into the heart languages of waiting Angolans faster than ever.

In the past, African Bible translators worked by candlelight, slowly typing out their translation on one computer. But with state-of-the-art technology and training, minority languages in Angola, including Songo, Umbundu and Nkumbi, will have their first complete New Testament and Old Testament Portions by 2016. Coordinator of the Kikongo translation project Manuel Dilubanza pleads, “We ask for your prayers and help that this project could be completed.”



PERU: God's Word Feeds Hungry Families

One year ago, an earthquake shook eight rural communities of Peru, leaving several hundred Peruvians without a home. The disaster was especially debilitating for a region already accustomed to poverty; more than 17 percent of children under the age of five in Peru suffer from chronic malnutrition.

In response, Peruvian Bible Society is meeting the physical and spiritual needs of children affected by the earthquake by providing them with nutritious breakfasts every day and Bible classes every week. Peruvian Bible Society also provides pastoral care and health education for impoverished adults in the region. Thanks to support from American Bible Society’s financial partners, hungry families in Peru are finding strength in Jesus, the Bread of Life.

GREECE: Study Bible for Greek Christians on the Horizon

A Greek Study Bible is in production to help Orthodox Christians in Greece and around the world engage with God’s Word. This project will produce, for the first time ever, a Bible text with study notes for Greek-speaking Orthodox Christians. The New Testament will be completed in 2016.

This new Bible will reach Greece during a difficult season. Suicide rates have jumped by 35 percent during the past two years due to the recent financial crisis. Unemployment rates remain among the highest in the European Union. Please pray that this Study Bible will help Greek-speaking Christians understand the good news of God’s Word more clearly than ever.



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NO LANGUAGE *LEFT BEHIND*

A new digital tool distributes Bibles to the ends of the earth via mobile phones.

Arfon Jones saw something strange as he biked along narrow lanes in the lush countryside of Wales. The Welsh landscape, normally speckled with green trees and white sheep, displayed an enormous pink tent—like a circus big top. But the huge pink pavilion hardly surprised Jones. In fact, he had been looking for it. He smiled, parked his bike and entered the tent.

Inside, the tent teemed with life. Thousands of people bustled about, chatting in Welsh. Choral music, folk dances and fragrant food bombarded Jones' senses from all directions. He soaked in the sights and smells of the Eisteddfod, the largest Welsh cultural festival of the year.

Every August, Welsh speakers bring poetry, art and songs to perform at the Eisteddfod. This year, Jones brought a very special gift to share with his countrymen—the Word of God in their native tongue.

Jones had joined the festival to promote a new Welsh Bible mobile app called *ap beibl*. The app features three Welsh Bible translations,

including a contemporary version Jones had been translating for 20 years. While the app is a revolutionary new way for Welsh speakers to engage with Scripture, its genius will impact the ends of the earth. The groundbreaking technology behind *ap beibl* will bring the Bible to unreached people groups around the world faster than ever.

“In all likelihood, more people on the planet own a mobile phone than a toothbrush,” explains John Mark Mitchell, director of digital innovation for American Bible Society. “People in the far reaches of the Amazon, and other remote places on earth, will soon have access to these cellular technologies.”

For Mitchell and his team, this digital renaissance is the opportunity of a lifetime. “As people whose mother tongue is not English go online and search ‘Bible,’ what are they going to find?” asks Mitchell, “Is the Bible going to be accessible to them in their heart language?”

To answer this critical question, Mitchell's team piloted a new digital tool that made possible the creation of *ap beibl*. It's called the Global Bible Reader—an advanced computer program that publishes easy-to-use



Because smartphone technology has reached the farthest corners of the world, Bible distribution will increasingly rely on the publication of mobile apps, not just physical Bibles.

“In all likelihood, more people on the planet own a mobile phone than a toothbrush.”

— John Mark Mitchell

Bible apps for unreached parts of the world, as it did in Wales. Because the program is compatible with any global Bible translation, it answers another one of Mitchell's big questions: Is it possible for a single computer program to generate Bible apps in any of the world's 7,000 languages?

With the Global Bible Reader, developers won't have to start from scratch every time they create a Bible app in a new language. Instead they can just load a completed Bible translation into the Global Bible Reader and

a newly formed Bible app is ready for people awaiting Scripture in their heart language.

But the Global Bible Reader doesn't just make life easy for app developers; it makes reading the Bible easy for speakers of minority languages around the world. “Most Bible apps available today publish their user interface in English or some other global trade language,” says Mitchell, quick to add that capable ministry partners like YouVersion® fill a massive need in the digital Bible marketplace. But if a person doesn't

Photo credit: ThinkStockPhotos.com.

Key Features:

1 For languages that have multiple translations of the Bible, readers can select their translation of choice.

2 Readers can easily jump from one book of the Bible to another using this pop-up menu.

3 Simple icons, like this search feature, make the app easy to use for readers of any language.

4 Once the app is downloaded, users don't need Wi-Fi to read the Bible.

5 Night mode allows easy reading in the dark—especially helpful in regions where power outages are common.

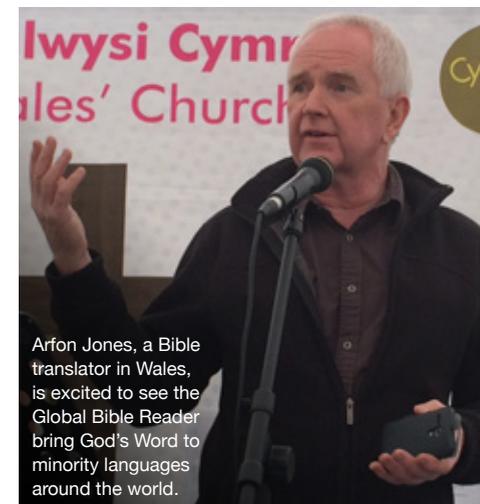
6 Text size is adjustable for readers who struggle to read small text.

know one of the major trade languages, they can't use all of the great Bible apps on the market today.

And Mitchell's team understands that efficiently churning out Bible apps won't matter if indigenous people groups around the world don't actually read those digital Bibles. One Bible translator in Indonesia shared precisely this fear. "He is very worried that the translation will be completed but sit on a 'digital bookshelf' when it's done," relates Mitchell.

To address this, apps generated with the Global Bible Reader feature a menu comprised of pictures instead of words. "The whole user interface is iconographic," explains Mitchell, "We don't need someone to translate the user interface for each translation."

This means that Bible readers from every corner of the world can intuitively jump between Bible translations, save reading history, search by chapter or verse and enter night reading mode, in which text



Arfon Jones, a Bible translator in Wales, is excited to see the Global Bible Reader bring God's Word to minority languages around the world.

Ap beibl, a Welsh Bible app created using the Global Bible Reader, launched at the 2015 Eisteddfod—the largest Welsh cultural festival of the year.

for where the global need is the greatest."

And Jones understands that this great opportunity leads far beyond a pink festival tent in Wales. "I would absolutely love to see this app used as widely as possible, among as many minority languages as possible," he says. Jones is excited to know that this digital Bible will soon touch corners of Africa, Asia and South America thirsty for God's life-changing Word.

After all, Jones' dream for Wales is the same as Mitchell's hope for the world. As Jones puts it, "We want to see as many people as possible read the Bible."

Jack Newman is a writer at *American Bible Society* and managing editor of *Record* magazine.

You can bring the Bible to those who need it most! Visit ABSRecord.com/GiveBibles.

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PRAY AROUND THE WORLD



“Yes, grass withers and flowers fade, but the word of our God endures forever.”
Isaiah 40.8 (GNT)

Bible Societies around the world are helping to spread God’s message of hope and love with those who need it most. Here are prayer requests from a select group of Bible Societies that ask you to lift them up in prayer.

Iraq

Please pray for the people of Iraq as ISIS, the extremist militant group, continues to make Iraq an incredibly dangerous place to live. Bible Societies in the Middle East are crying out to God for his love, peace and protection. Please pray for their continued labor to spread God’s Word in the midst of this hostile situation.

Cambodia

Please ask the Lord for spiritual healing in Cambodia as the people continue to experience trauma many years after the Khmer Rouge genocide, in which an estimated 1-3 million people were killed. To mark the 40th anniversary of the genocide, Bible Society in Cambodia recently held a traditional arts performance with the theme, “Forgiveness and Reconciliation.” Pray that Bible-based programs like this will continue to bring peace and healing to hurting people in Cambodia.

Liberia

Ask for God’s blessing on Bible Society in Liberia as it finalizes arrangements for construction of its new Bible House in the capital city of Monrovia. Please pray that this process will go smoothly and that the new space will enable more effective Bible ministry throughout West Africa. Please also say a prayer for three new Bible translation projects that launched in Liberia this year.

Hungary

Continue to thank God for the successful launch of a newly revised Bible translation in Hungary last year. Despite these successes, Hungarian Bible Society asks for continued prayer, as there is still much work to be done. Please pray that its publishing and advocacy projects will help this new Bible touch the hearts of its intended audience—students and young adults.

India

Please lift up a prayer for the more than 1 billion people living in India. It remains a country of starkly divided social classes; the rich, middle-class and poor all struggle with the realities of living in a patriarchal society. Bible Society of India continues to reach an incredibly diverse population with Scripture. Ask God to use his powerful Word to change lives in every corner of India.

Chile

On September 16, 2015, a strong earthquake measuring 8.4 on the Richter scale hit central and northern Chile. Cities located on the coast were also affected by a destructive tsunami. Please lift up Chilean Bible Society staff as they collect bottled water, cleaning products and Bibles to deliver to families affected by the earthquake and tsunami. Also ask the Lord to comfort the 10,000 people directly affected by this natural disaster.

January 2016

God’s Guiding Word

- 1 Psalm 1
- 2 Psalm 19
- 3 Mark 1.1-20
- 4 Mark 1.21-45
- 5 Mark 2.1-28

Epiphany

- 6 Psalm 72
- 7 Mark 3.1-19
- 8 Mark 3.20-35
- 9 Mark 4.1-20
- 10 Mark 4.21-41
- 11 Mark 5.1-20
- 12 Mark 5.21-43
- 13 Mark 6.1-29
- 14 Mark 6.30-56
- 15 Mark 7.1-23
- 16 Mark 7.24-37
- 17 Mark 8.1-26

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Begins

- 18 Mark 8.27—9.1
- 19 Mark 9.2-32
- 20 Mark 9.33-50
- 21 Mark 10.1-31
- 22 Mark 10.32-52
- 23 Acts 8.4-25
- 24 Acts 8.26-40
- 25 Acts 9.1-25
- 26 Acts 9.26-43
- 27 Acts 10.1-33
- 28 Acts 10.34-48
- 29 Acts 11.1-30
- 30 Acts 12.1-25
- 31 Acts 15.1-35

February 2016

God’s Loving Word

- 1 John 3.1-21
- 2 John 3.22-36
- 3 John 4.1-42
- 4 John 4.43-54
- 5 John 5.1-18
- 6 John 5.19-47
- 7 John 6.1-24
- 8 John 6.25-71
- 9 1 John 1.1-10
- 10 1 John 2.1-29
- 11 1 John 3.1-24
- 12 1 John 4.1-21
- 13 1 John 5.1-21
- 14 1 Corinthians 13.1-13
- 15 John 10.1-21
- 16 John 10.22-42
- 17 Psalm 23

Ash Wednesday (Western Churches)

- 18 Psalm 51
- 19 Psalm 52
- 20 John 13.1-20
- 21 John 13.21-38

First Sunday in Lent

- 22 John 14.1-31

Great Lent (Orthodox)

- 23 John 15.1-17
- 24 Mark 12.13-27
- 25 Mark 12.28-34
- 26 Deuteronomy 6.1-25
- 27 Ephesians 3.1-21
- 28 Ephesians 4.1-32

March 2016

God’s Prayerful Word

- Second Sunday in Lent*
- 1 2 Chronicles 5.1-14
- 2 2 Chronicles 6.1-11
- 3 2 Chronicles 6.12-42
- 4 2 Chronicles 7.1-22
- 5 2 Chronicles 34.1-33
- World Day of Prayer*
- 6 2 Chronicles 35.1-19
- 7 Ezra 8.1-23

Third Sunday in Lent

- 8 Nehemiah 9.1-38
- 9 Daniel 9.1-19
- 10 1 Samuel 1.1-28
- 11 1 Samuel 2.1-11
- 12 Psalm 4
- 13 Psalm 5
- 14 Psalm 11

Fourth Sunday in Lent

- 15 Psalm 12
- 16 Psalm 13
- 17 Psalm 30
- 18 Psalm 31
- 19 Psalm 32
- 20 Psalm 33
- 21 Psalm 34

Fifth Sunday in Lent

- 22 Hebrews 1.1-14
- 23 Hebrews 2.1-18
- 24 Hebrews 3.1-19
- 25 John 11.1-16
- 26 John 11.17-44
- 27 John 11.45-57
- 28 John 12.1-11

Palm/Passion Sunday (Western Churches)

- 29 John 12.12-26
- 30 John 12.27-50
- 31 John 17.1-26

April 2016

God’s Hopeful Word

- 1 John 18.1-24
- Mundy Thursday (Western Churches)*
- 2 John 18.25-40
- Good Friday (Western Churches)*
- 3 John 19.1-30
- 4 John 19.31-42
- Easter Sunday (Western Churches)*
- 5 John 20.1-18
- 6 John 20.19-31
- 7 John 21.1-25
- 8 Colossians 1.1-23
- 9 Colossians 1.24—2.19
- 10 Colossians 2.20—3.17
- 11 Colossians 4.2-18

Pascha (Orthodox Easter)

- 12 1 Peter 1.1-25
- 13 1 Peter 2.1-25
- 14 1 Peter 3.1-22
- 15 1 Peter 4.1-19
- 16 1 Peter 5.1-14
- 17 2 Peter 1.1-21
- 18 2 Peter 2.1-22
- 19 2 Peter 3.1-18
- 20 Jude 1-25
- 21 Revelation 5.1-14
- 22 Revelation 21.1-27
- 23 Revelation 22.1-21
- 24 Romans 1.1-17
- 25 Romans 3.19-31
- 26 Romans 4.1-25
- 27 Romans 5.1-21
- 28 Romans 6.1-23
- 29 Romans 7.1-25
- 30 Romans 15.1-13

You can join our online prayer community at [Facebook.com/CircleOfPrayer](https://www.facebook.com/CircleOfPrayer).

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Tell us how reading the Bible has impacted your life. [ABS.US/MaterialsFeedback](https://www.abs.us/materialsfeedback).

HEALING FLOWS FROM

JORDAN

In the Middle East, suffering people are engaging God's Word to heal the wounds of trauma.

When Ameer* crawled into the cool linens of his bed, he was in Jordan. Rosy whiffs of geraniums wafted through the white stone windows of the Christian retreat center where he slept. Peace permeated the air.

But as Ameer drifted off to sleep, his mind raced home to Syria. The anxiety of walking war-torn streets made his stomach clench as he relived a nightmarish memory for the thousandth time. In his familiar dream, Ameer walked past a schoolyard in Damascus, just as he does every night. Children poured out of the schoolyard and onto an awaiting school bus, just as they do every night. Then, just as it does every night in his dream, an enormous mortar bomb fell from the sky, landing on the helpless children.

Ameer awoke. He was back in Jordan, but the stench of smoke and the screams of heartbroken parents lingered in his memory. "This scene keeps coming back to me," Ameer laments. "There is no end."

And yet, as he crawled out of bed and dressed in the glow of the rising sun, Ameer had reason to hope. He had arrived at the Jordan retreat center seeking healing for his own spiritual wounds and for the wounds of his Syrian community. Today would

Photo credit: Benjamin Learnan.



The country of Jordan hosts more than 1 million refugees from neighboring countries like Lebanon, Syria and Iraq.

be historic; along with nearly 50 other people just like him, Ameer had come to participate in the Middle East's first-ever Bible-based trauma healing program. By engaging with the Bible, these trauma healing participants discovered God's love for their war-torn homes.

A Nation of Refugees

In 2010, Dr. Harriet Hill, director of American Bible Society's trauma healing program, helped launch the organization's first Bible-based trauma healing program in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. But the power of trauma healing didn't stay in Central Africa. With God's help, the program has strategically spread to regions of the world where the need for healing is greatest. "The ball has started rolling," says Hill.

And the need for spiritual healing in the Middle East is immense. "There are a lot of sad stories—more than [my] story," says Ameer, who volunteers to serve other Syrian refugees just like himself. "I think this is why God wants me to be in this ministry . . . I can feel what they went through."

In addition to Syrians like Ameer, Jordan plays host to more than 1 million refugees and asylum seekers from neighboring countries like Lebanon and Iraq. One man from Iraq, who attended some of the trauma healing sessions in Jordan, related countless atrocities committed against his fellow Iraqis by the terrorist group ISIS. "The situation there is so difficult for people," he says, telling stories of men who have been tortured and women who have been kidnapped and raped by ISIS militants. "These people are suffering."

In the face of these great evils, the recent trauma healing sessions in Jordan represented a twofold opportunity—to heal the spiritual wounds

Photo credit: Benjamin Leaman.

"Going with pain to the cross is powerful, because often we go through these things alone."

—Trauma Healing Participant

of participants like Ameer, and to equip them to spread the healing power of God's Word in their home communities.

"Being in worldwide community is a privilege," says Jane Jelgerhuis, managing director of American Bible Society's worldwide trauma healing ministry. "American Bible Society is committed to equipping leaders with biblically-based trauma healing resources for the wounded of soul and spirit."

Equipping the Leaders

The practical way this equipping happened in Jordan was through training sessions. Participants gathered around tables to learn lessons about domestic violence, sexual abuse, trauma for children and the mystery of why God allows bad things to happen in the world. They also found solidarity in their sufferings by praying

rape were especially challenging for the group. "[Rape] is a subject they have never talked about before in public, especially in mixed groups," explains Hill.

But candid conversations proved helpful for the group. Participants leaned forward in their seats as they listened to presenters share testimonies about how they have personally responded to traumatic events in their own lives. "When people are immersed in helping other people in severe trauma, they are highly motivated to learn the information," says SIL Global Trauma Healing Consultant Pat Miersma, who co-facilitated the training. "They soak in this material like a sponge—they can't get it fast enough."

The trauma healing sessions closed with participants writing down their darkest memories and bringing their pain to the cross of Jesus. "Going with pain to the cross is powerful, because often we go through these things alone," relates one grateful participant after bringing his pain to Jesus through the exercise.

"The situation there is so difficult . . . These people are suffering." *—Trauma Healing Participant from Iraq*

Psalm 13 aloud in Arabic as a group and then writing their own laments to God.

Hill, who facilitated the teaching sessions, admits that addressing trauma was not always easy in a Middle Eastern culture that typically remains silent on sensitive issues. Honest discussions about

Healing for the Middle East

After gathering for training in Jordan, the trauma healing participants took the most crucial step in their journey together: they scattered to spread the balm of God's Word throughout the Middle East.

ORDINARY FAITH, EXTRAORDINARY RESULTS

A FORMER EMPLOYEE OF AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY FOLLOWED GOD'S CALL TO SHARE THE BIBLE WITH THE WORLD.

The story of Art Borden's life reads like an impressive resume of international Christian ministry. From establishing national Bible Societies in seven Latin American countries to holding various leadership positions at American Bible Society to serving as president of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, Art has labored tirelessly to strengthen God's Kingdom around the world.

But for Art, genuine Christian service is not defined by a list of spiritual accolades; it is defined by a simple and humble obedience to the will of God.

"I believe that Christian service is being whatever God has called you to be and doing it to honor and serve



*"If it's worth my time,
it's worth some of my money."*

the Lord," says Art. "One can be a truck driver, surgeon, entrepreneur, waitress, pastor, teacher, et cetera and be in Christian service."

Reflecting on what motivated his own lifetime of Christian service, Art sees this rather simple obedience at work. "There was no bolt of lightning," says Art. "I just had these opportunities to go out and serve, so I went out and did it."

Despite the breadth of his lifelong ministry, Art's work for American Bible Society kindled a unique passion for the way God's Word reaches communities around the world. "I learned in the Bible Society that God is working in so many ways and in so many places and with so many different groups," says Art. "I learned to have respect for all kinds of people."

Throughout his life, Art has not only given his time and

One of the trainees, Margaret, has ministered to hundreds of refugee women from Syria through a local nonprofit for several years.

"We talk to them. We listen to them," says Margaret. "We let them talk about their problems and what they need—not [only] what they need for food or clothes, but what they need for their lives."

Margaret isn't alone. Rani, another trauma healing trainee, serves another unique demographic in the Middle East—children. "The main reason I came [to the trauma healing training] is because my wife and I have a passion to create targeted [radio] programs, and maybe TV shows, for children," explains Rani. Now he and his wife, Tamara, are better equipped to share the message of God's love with traumatized children in the Middle East.

And for Ameer, the equipping sessions provided him with the



Margaret, one of the trauma healing trainees in Jordan, ministers to hundreds of refugee women from Syria through a local nonprofit. The training in Jordan equipped Margaret with Scripture resources and mental health best practices to improve her ministry.

"We talk to them. We listen to them . . . We let them talk about their problems and what they need—not [only] what they need for food or clothes, but what they need for their lives." —Margaret, Trauma Healing Participant

courage to return to the scene of his darkest memories—the ravaged streets of Syria. "I would love to go back to Syria," he says. "And I will go back."

Strengthened by Scripture, Ameer and the other trainees from Jordan carry the hope of God's Word into the dark shadows of the Middle East. "We will show them how God loves us

through Christ," says Ameer. "He knows exactly what we are going through. He loves us."

Jack Newman is a writer at American Bible Society and managing editor of *Record* magazine.

To bring the healing power of God's Word to those who need it most, visit ABSRecord.com/TraumaHealing.

Photo credit: Benjamin Leaman.

energy to sharing the Bible with countries around the world; he has generously supported American Bible Society with his finances. "If I can't contribute to the organization that I work for, then I should not be working for them," he explains. "If it's worth my time, it's worth some of my money."

After working tirelessly since the end of World War II, Art retired in 2011. Today he and his wife, Alice, reside in Harrisonburg, Virginia; they enjoy spending time with their 13 grandchildren. But while Art's career has slowed down, his zeal for international Bible ministry has only grown stronger with time.

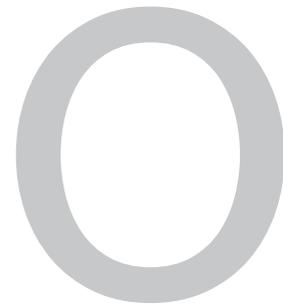
"We should have enough faith to trust the Scriptures to reach men and women," says Art, reflecting on the work of American Bible Society. "Get the Scriptures into their hands and trust God to change their hearts and change their lives."

Jack Newman is a writer at American Bible Society and managing editor of *Record* magazine.

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SPARKING AN URBAN REVIVAL

Thanks to a strategic partnership,
a Christian festival reached thousands of
New Yorkers with God's Word.



On a typical day in Manhattan, cab drivers weave in and out of traffic. Shoppers dart from one store to the next. Horse-drawn carriages plod through Central Park. But one July afternoon, thousands of singing voices transformed this familiar hustle and bustle into a site of worship.

In Central Park, 60,000 people lifted their hands toward the sky, singing the lyrics of a popular Christian praise song. These men, women and children—as diverse as the neighborhoods they came from—had gathered for CityFest, an evangelistic revival that brought together more than 1,000 churches from New York City's five boroughs.

CityFest was one of 115 summer festivals hosted by CityServe, a New York-based ministry of the Luis Palau Association. With support from its generous financial partners, American Bible Society provided Scripture resources for these events, equipping CityServe to reach thousands of people with God's Word. And the impact of this strategic partnership is helping shape the future of Bible ministry in American cities well beyond New York.

"CityFest was built on the vision that we're here to revive the city," explains Enid M. Almanzar, who directs New York City ministries for American Bible Society and serves on

CityServe's leadership team. According to Almanzar, this spiritual revival set out to reach those New Yorkers who seldom read the Bible and rarely attend church. "Through CityFest, we communicated an important message: The church is here to provide restoration and hope," Almanzar says.

For attendees, CityFest could hardly have been mistaken for a run-of-the-mill church service. After musicians Chris Tomlin and Matt Redman led worship, several speakers—including former New York Yankees pitcher Mariano Rivera and New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio—shed light on the city's greatest needs, encouraging listeners to serve New York's homeless and mentor at-risk youth.

Although these presenters energized the crowd, the heart of the event occurred when world evangelist Luis Palau shared the Gospel with thousands of listeners. His words united people from countless denominations and faith backgrounds. "There is hope for your life through Christ," Palau proclaimed, pointing to his small black Bible.

When Palau finished his address, hands shot into the air, acknowledging a desire to learn more about God's love.



"There is hope for your life through Christ."

—Luis Palau

Trained volunteers filtered through the crowd, distributing Bible-based devotionals made possible by American Bible Society's financial partners.

These devotionals, developed specifically for CityFest, reached speakers of four languages: English, Spanish, Mandarin and Korean. Through daily, one-minute readings—complete with questions and thought starters—attendees continued to encounter God's Word after they left CityFest. And on the final page of the devotional, readers were encouraged to dive deeper into Scripture through a 40-day online Bible study.

Photo credits: Luis Palau Association.

CityFest also helped root these respondents into their new Christian family. After receiving their free devotional, attendees filled out an information card, providing CityServe with their name, phone number and home church. Shortly after the event, those without a church received an email with a comprehensive list of churches in their area. Many of these churches attended CityFest, providing an easy connection point for first-time churchgoers.

Through CityFest, and two additional gatherings—one in Radio City Music Hall, another in Times Square—more than 10,000 New Yorkers responded to God's Word and



At CityFest, attendees who responded to the preaching of God's Word received a 14-day Scripture devotional created by American Bible Society, as well as an introduction to local churches in New York City.

made a decision to follow Christ.

Hoping to build on this year's event series, CityServe plans to host more gatherings like CityFest. But for Jason Malec, who directs U.S. ministries for American Bible Society, a partnership with CityServe has forged the way to something greater: a vision for urban Bible ministry built around partnerships with like-minded organizations. "By equipping organizations like CityServe to distribute life-

changing resources, we hope to see more revivals like CityFest," Malec explains. "It's all about getting God's Word into our cities."

According to Malec, American Bible Society's work in New York City has already inspired ministry alliances in Phoenix and Philadelphia. His team plans to partner with additional organizations in the coming years, empowering more people in more cities to engage with God's Word.

"Through our work, we envision a day when people from New York

City to Phoenix, Arizona reflect God's love," Malec says. "That's my prayer for our country."

Nick Hemming is a writer at American Bible Society

You can help provide God's Word where it is needed most. Visit ABSRecord.com/GiveBibles.

Photo credit: Luis Pelau Association.

Win-Win Giving

Mrs. Anna Rose Schannauer grew up attending classes in a one-room country schoolhouse. She eventually skipped a couple grades, allowing her to graduate early and begin teaching kindergarten, which she did for 33 years. Despite a lifetime of non-stop education, one of the most valuable lessons Anna Rose ever learned came from her mother: how to give generously.

Of all the ministries her family supported, American Bible Society was one of her mother's favorites. As a result, Anna Rose started giving to American Bible Society as a young college graduate. She hasn't stopped for the last 66 years.

Anna Rose learned another valuable lesson in giving when she discovered the dual benefits of charitable gift annuities. "A total win-win . . . that's exactly what I think the annuities are," Anna Rose explains. "The organization that gets the money is winning at the time of the (gift), and then you're winning because you're getting back."

Anna Rose knows she can count on her monthly check from American Bible Society because it's a trustworthy organization, "Should I live long enough, I'll get every cent of it back."

"A total win-win . . . that's exactly what I think the annuities are."

In the meantime, her annuity provides a monthly reminder for Anna Rose that her generosity is advancing Bible work around the world. "It enriches my life," she says.



Because of her mother's example, Anna Rose Schannauer says, "I always loved American Bible Society."

For more information on how a charitable gift annuity can enrich your life:

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"The Lord is my protector; he is my strong fortress. My God is my protection, and with him I am safe. He protects me like a shield; he defends me and keeps me safe." *Psalm 18:2 (GNT)*

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Given by Marilyn Anderson

My husband,
John H. Engelmeyer
Given by Beverly Engelmeyer

My husband,
Jerry Sanford
Given by Susan M. Sanford

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Florence M. Swope
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