



**American  
Bible  
Society**

# Record

DECEMBER 1997-JANUARY 1998

## ABS Stands in the Gap



**Sharing the  
Word in  
Washington,  
DC**  
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**The  
Cuban  
Connection**  
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**ON THE COVER:** Promise Keepers volunteers rush to break open boxes of ABS Scriptures to give to hundreds of thousands of men attending "Stand In The Gap."

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*The mission of the American Bible Society is to provide the Holy Scriptures to every man, woman and child in a language and form each can readily understand, and at a price each can easily afford. This purpose, undertaken without doctrinal note or comment, and without profit, is a cause which all Christians and all churches are urged to support. The Society is a member of the United Bible Societies, a partnership of Bible societies throughout the world cooperating to make Scriptures available to people everywhere in their own language.*

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## *From the Editor*

# Welcome to the "Big Tent"

**W**e want to bid a warm welcome to some new *Record* readers, folks who are new donors to the American Bible Society! Thanks to each for your gifts in response to our fall appeal. Your contributions to the Society's mission put you in a long line of people who have seen the work of Bible translation and distribution as worthy of their support.

The Bible Society was started in 1816 by a small group of people, including some of the nation's founders, for whom it was important that the Bible get into the hands of as many people as possible. They believed that the Bibles would be read if they got into the right hands. And the founders knew that when people read the Bible, and are open to what it says for them, they will be changed by the power of God.

We still believe that. It's why all of us here at Bible House, in our distribution center in New Jersey, in our field offices from coast to coast, and in a host of translation projects still focus on the Mission set by the So-

ciety's founders, "...to provide the Holy Scriptures to every man, woman and child in a language and form each can readily understand, and at a price each can easily afford."

And it's all done "without doctrinal note or comment." Why? Because the ABS is a "big tent" under which nearly every denomination gathers. We serve conservatives and liberals and folks in-between, in all sorts of churches, with the Scriptures. We don't tell them what to believe, but we know that once they read the Scriptures, God can, and will, change their lives.

This couldn't continue at the level that sometimes leaves us breathless without you and your gifts. We are grateful for your support and we look forward to a continuing, growing relationship with each of you as we provide the Scriptures that will nurture all who read them.

*Mike Maus*  
**Mike Maus**



# S ABS Stand In the Gap

by Jim Genovese

One of the million copies of the custom "Stand In The Gap" New Testament is held high in Washington.

**W**aving a bunch of New Testaments, Tom Cooke stands on a pile of boxes on the Mall in Washington, DC, and shouts: "Is anyone looking for

something free today?"

The energetic 19-year-old college student from Lima, New York, catches the attention of a few men passing by. They motion to him, and he tosses them each a copy. Then he leaps

off his impromptu podium, scoops up a few more New Testaments from an open box, and runs up to another group.

“Along with salvation,” he announces, “these New Testaments are the only free things you’re likely to get today—and we’ve got a million of ‘em!”

Like Cooke, the New Testaments—gifts from the American Bible Society—are moving fast. It’s noon Saturday, October 4, the day of the Promise Keepers mega-event, “Stand In The Gap.” With hundreds of thousands of men converging on the nation’s capital, it’s been called America’s largest Christian gathering. The 13-block-long Mall is completely filled with the throng.

Many on the Mall hold the free ABS New Testaments that Cooke and other volunteers are giving out. The books have distinctive “Stand In The Gap” covers, special sections (a 13-week devotional reading guide, indices and readers’ helps) and the complete CEV text.

“The *Contemporary English Version*?” one tee-shirted man says to himself as he thumbs through his New Testament. “Boy, these are easy to read!”

Elsewhere on the Mall, Phil Lowther, another college-aged volunteer, is also doing land-office business in New Testaments.

“Can I have two of those for my mom and my sister?” a small boy asks him.

“Sure,” Lowther replies, handing him the books.

**L**owther smiles and watches the boy trot away. “You know,” says the young man from Clinton, Maryland, “a lot of the guys who’ve come have brought their own Bibles. But they ask for extra copies anyway to take back to their friends and families.”

Since early morning, Lowther, Cooke, and other volunteers have been giving out the New Testaments at 13 strategic locations in and around the Mall. They look as energized now as when they started.

Cooke grabs several more New Testaments. Fanning them in each hand, he strides, arms outstretched, into an approaching group of new arrivals and repeats: “We’ve got free Scriptures!”

Moments later, he runs back for more. “I hear ‘Hallelujah’ and ‘Praise the Lord’ every time I pass these out,” he says. “It’s exciting! I’ll be doing this right up until the program ends, probably about six or seven tonight.”

The excitement is electric. On a crowded Metro train heading in from the Virginia suburbs, someone begins singing “Amazing Grace.” Others chime in and the car is filled with their *a capella* chorus. On the Mall and in the streets, men greet each other with smiles, handshakes, hugs and prayers.

Such spirit-filled camaraderie doesn’t surprise Gordon England. “For most of these guys,” the Promise Keepers official says, “‘Stand In The Gap’ represents a new beginning in their lives. They’ve come to deepen

their relationships with God, and to heighten their sensitivity and their sense of responsibility toward their families and communities.

“Maybe that means they’ll spend more time in prayer and Bible reading, be more attentive to their wives, throw a ball with their kids, or become more active in their churches.”

England also cites the need for racial reconciliation. “Most of our unresolved pain in the U.S. is racial,” he says. “To paraphrase 1 John, how can we love God and hate others? All of us, regardless of color or ethnic background, need to be Godly toward one another, because it’s the Godly person who strives to make fairness the norm in society.”

Televised on large video screens throughout the Mall, ABS Chaplain Fred Allen leads everyone in prayer. A sea of men go down on their knees and bow their heads to the ground. A singer follows with “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God,” the words of which are flashed on the screens.

Men of all races and denominations—many with their arms around one another—sing along, a moving mosaic of voices united in praise and brotherhood.

“**T**his is incredible!” says David Rogers, a Messianic Jew who came from Rochester, N.Y., with 17 members of his congregation, Shema Yesrail. “I found out about ‘Stand In The Gap’ at a Messianic conference in July. I prayed about

whether I should come or not, and the Holy Spirit moved me to show up. I’m really glad I did.”

Wil Colon and 30 members of the Harrisburg (Pennsylvania) Spanish Church are also excited. “We just came to praise the Lord,” he says, “and to bring back the message of Promise Keepers to the rest of our church.”

The crowd continues to swell. Fathers put young sons on their shoulders and stand tip-toed to give them a better view. Those who can’t find room on the grass stand on low walls or sit on the steps of the National Air and Space Museum and other prominent buildings along the Mall.

The women have come, too. Wives, girlfriends, sisters, mothers, friends show their support of “Stand In The Gap” by volunteering in Scripture-sharing and other support roles.

Donna Arlington of Bedford, Virginia, works her way through the dense crowd holding up a New Testament. Although almost everyone already has a copy, she finds a taker. “These New Testaments are moving like hot cakes,” says Arlington, a member of Brookhill Wesleyan Church in McLean, VA, who signed up to share the Scriptures while her husband attends “Stand In The Gap.” “When I give them out, at first people say ‘Free?’ Then they want to know who donated the New Testaments. I tell them it’s the American Bible Society, and they’re so grateful.”

Although critics have accused

*Continued on Page 24*

# Why I Stood In the Gap

by Rev. Fred Allen, ABS Chaplain



**I**n recent years the Capital Mall has become a national forum for causes—a place for movements to raise a voice against social, political and economic injustice. For me the most comparable event to the Promise Keepers *Stand In The Gap* was the August 28th, 1963, March on Washington, D.C., when civil rights took center stage.

I stood in the gap on that day, too, with hundreds of thousands of men and women who heard Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. challenge us to a new vision for the future "...when all of God's children—black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Catholics and Protestants—will be able to join hands and to sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, 'Free at last, free at last; thank God Almighty, free at last.'"


On October 4, 1997, I once again stood "In The Gap," awed by the sacred assembly of men—black men, red men, brown men, yellow men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Catholics and Protestants.

The focus of this event was not on the Promise Keepers, but on the Promise Keeper. This sea of hundreds of thousands of men began and ended the day united in prayer and praise to

God. I was privileged to lead these men to pray, "Almighty God... let the preached Word enlighten our minds with a vision of a more perfect society... in which justice and righteousness, peace and brotherhood shall reign according to your will..."

While I disagree with some of Promise Keepers' theological perspectives, I do believe PK will continue to move men toward making a greater witness for Jesus Christ in the world. Even though the present constituency of PK is predominantly Anglo and Protestant, they have demonstrated a commitment to break down and transcend traditions of racism, as well as religious and cultural barriers.

Promise Keepers is a new reformation that will produce more prophetic giants like W.E.B. Dubois, Mary McLeod Bethune, Harrett Tubman, Martin Luther King, Jr., Thurgood Marshall and others that exemplify the true greatness of our people, and more importantly, embody the Church of Jesus Christ.

I see the Promise Keepers forging channels of cooperation among Christians from all denominations, races and cultures. It is one more step along the way to national healing. 

When United Bible Societies officials John Dean and Maurice Harvey recently visited an old people's home in Kerala, India, it was to share the encouragement of God's Word with the residents. But when Dean met one elderly gentleman, he never thought he would end up with...

## His Most

by John Dean

# Precious Possession

**F**irst we met the young director. He told us that the home was started by the Mar Thoma Mandiram Jubilee Church in 1966 and now takes care of 50 elderly and disabled people.

Then we visited the former director—and current resident—of the home, A.J. Samuel. At 85, Mr. Samuel has lived there for 30 years; he served as director from 1966 to 1987. His parents were Hin-



**A.J. Samuel, 85, gave his visitor the cherished Bible which he had received from his mother nearly 70 years earlier.**

du, but 54 years ago he became a Christian.

Mr. Samuel's mother had given him a Malayalam Bible, telling him it was "the most precious gift in the world." And this same Bible was now sitting on Mr. Samuel's desk together with another more modern edition.

I took a quick look at the old book. Printed on the Christian Missionary Society press in Kottayam for the British and Foreign Bible So-



ciety (BFBS) in 1928, it was beautifully bound in leather and was clearly well worn and well used. "Every day I get up at 4:00 a.m. and read my Bible for half an hour," Mr. Samuel said.

"Do you know about the Bible Society?" I asked him.

"I have been a member of the [Bible Society of India's] Kottarakara branch for the past 15 years," he proudly replied. "We do thank the Society for subsidizing the Bible because we simply cannot afford to buy at the normal price," he added.

Mr. Samuel picked up the old volume from his desk. "You know," he said, "my mother bought this beautiful leather-bound Bible in 1928 for one-and-a-half rupees."

This led me to say that looking at this Bible printed by the Bible Society so long ago, and which he had been faithfully reading for nearly 70 years, made me feel that our work was really worthwhile.

Then I noticed that he was start-


ing to remove from the Bible all the various cards and pieces of paper that he used for bookmarks, and before I knew what was happening he was making a present of it to me.

Extremely reluctant to accept such a gift, and yet knowing I could not refuse it, I told him as best I could

"Sometimes,"  
Maurice  
replied  
thoughtfully,  
"old people  
pass on  
something  
precious  
before  
they die,  
because they  
know that  
in that way  
they will  
live on."

that I accepted his Bible on behalf of everyone around the world who has supported the Bible Society through their gifts and prayers. "I have no gift, indeed I could have no kind of gift that I could give in return for such a cherished possession," I told him.

Afterwards, I told Maurice Harvey that I had not wanted to accept it; for indeed it was the old man's most valued treasure. "Sometimes," Maurice replied thoughtfully, "old people pass on something precious before they die, because they know that in that way they will live on."

I will treasure this Bible and will tell this story whenever I speak about Bible Society work. 

**W**hen her mother became seriously ill, Karen Jordan—the only daughter out of 13 children—became a caregiver. The pressures of cooking and cleaning, look-

stress, turned to liquor.

She was nine years old at the time. “I was drinking really heavily by age 13,” recalls Jordan, now in her 20s. “Eventually I dropped out of school and started doing crack-cocaine. I

# Sisters Giving W T Troubled C Women Another Chance by Jim Genovese



**Sister Sheila Byrne (left) shares a moment with Karen Jordan and Lennette Gilliam (right) in the courtyard of Mt. Carmel House.**

ing after her mother, and going to school were enormous.

But they weren't her worst problem. A relative, living with them, sexually abused her and threatened her if she told. Jordan, buckling under the

couldn't forgive my relative for what he'd done. I had zero self-esteem.”

Angry, addicted and alone, she ended up homeless on the streets of Washington, D.C.

Today, after several years on the

skids, Karen Jordan is making a comeback: clean and sober, she's off the streets and has a full-time job. How did she do it?

"The Lord and Mt. Carmel House," says the demure, soft-spoken woman.

She cites August 20, 1996, as the beginning of her new life. "I was at rock bottom and couldn't stand it no more. So I prayed to God asking Him to pull me out of the gutter, and He answered me."

Determined to break free from her addictions, Jordan joined a detoxification program. It was there that she learned about Mt. Carmel House, a 32-bed transitional shelter and resource center for homeless and recovering women in Washington's Northwest section.

"When I got out of treatment," Jordan says, "I got my first blessing: a bed at Mt. Carmel House. Everyone here helped me learn to love people, to share the love this house has given me. They lifted my self-esteem and prepared me to move on with my life."

Alcoholism, drug abuse and domestic violence are problems from which most Mt. Carmel House residents are recovering. "Here," says Director Ann Forrest, O.S.F., "the women know they're safe. They have a place to heal."

As they sit and talk out in the shelter's small, sunny courtyard, there's a clear sense of the strong, familial bonds of love that are shared between residents and staff.

"I see the suffering these women go through," says Jean Dolton, O.S.F.,

a petite, affable nun who's in charge of volunteering and food service. "And they help me to think differently about myself and put my emphasis on others' problems instead of my own. That's how the Scriptures tell us we should be."

**I**n the large, spotless living room, a big box filled with Scriptures and other inspirational literature—which residents are encouraged to take—attests to the importance of God's Word in their daily lives. Among the reading materials are a number of ABS Portions and Selections.

The women go to daily meetings called Reflections, in which each discusses a passage from the Scriptures



**Mt. Carmel House Director Sr. Ann Forrest (center) examines some ABS Scriptures with staff members Srs. Jean Dolton (left) and Sheila Byrne.**


or from other Christian literature that she has read the night before. They also pray together.

"When I first came here," says Lennette Gilliam, an outgoing, 30-ish woman who has lived at the shelter

since August, "I was homeless and a substance abuser. But since then, a big change has come to my life. I go to Reflections every day and I read the Scriptures a lot. That's the only way I make it through the day.

"I've gone through lots of trials and tribulation," she adds. "But now I don't need drugs or alcohol. I just need the *Lord!* And it feels good!"

Sheila Byrne, O.S.F., gives Gilliam a reassuring squeeze on the shoulder. The former religious education director left a parish in an affluent New Jersey town, in August, to work with the women. "I felt it was time for me to serve those less fortunate," says Byrne, betraying a slight Irish brogue. "I really love these women. I see how they struggle to better themselves, to get jobs, and it moves me deeply."

Then, picking up a copy of the ABS Scripture Selection *Another Chance*, she adds, "This title is exactly what Mt. Carmel House is about: giving these women another chance for stability and happiness. I think these and the other ABS materials really speak to their spiritual needs." 

**Ed. Note:** Karen Jordan now lives on her own and works for Ready, Willing and Able, a non-profit maintenance company that hires recovering women and men. On Sundays she volunteers at Mt. Carmel House.

Lennette Gilliam also works for Ready, Willing and Able and still lives at Mt. Carmel House. She's in the process of finding an apartment.

# ABS Bookstore Customers

## *Please Note...*

The ABS Bookstore is temporarily closed during renovations to the front of Bible House.

The good news is that you can still order any of our Scripture products, or order a catalog, by calling  
1-800-32BIBLE (322-4253).



# for the **RECORD** **LOOKING BACK**



## 100 Years Ago:

### Scriptures Sail in Siam

The January 1898 *Record* described the vehicle of choice for Bible Society workers in Siam (now called Thailand): “The main avenues of travel in Siam are along rivers and canals, and consequently most of the touring which is done by the Bible Agents calls for the constant use of [house]boats. For about seven years the Bible Society has owned such a boat, which has made frequent trips conveying the Agent or his assistant to many towns and provinces...”

The article described the houseboat as “forty feet in length and seven and a half feet wide in the middle, having upon it a house eighteen feet long and as wide as the boat...” The upper deck was divided into two parts, a sleeping room and a living room, and the space below was used for storing Scripture supplies. Its “engine” was the muscle-power of five oarsmen.

## 50 Years Ago:


### Help For a Former Foe

“I used to have a nice home, and in our library the Bible had a special place of honor,” wrote a German man in a letter published in the January



**A young theology student in Duisburg, Germany, reads from the German Bible he received through the American Bible Society.**

1948 *Record*. “I have to confess that the Bible was not taken off the shelf very often. We then lived in the Ruhr Territory, and when our town was burned [during World War II] our library got lost and our Bible also. Now I have received a Bible from America. It is the only book in our library, but it is read.”

The Bible in question was one of hundreds of thousands of Bibles sent by the American Bible Society to Germany—suffering from a severe Scripture shortage—once the war in Europe ended. In just two years, some 520,000 Bibles, 1,220,000 New Testaments and 775,000 Gospels were shared with the German people. 

# the Cuban Connection

A daughter's  
new-found  
faith restores  
a family.

by David Singer



**T**hough confined by stark walls, high fences, and razor wire, Mirna radiates joy, humor, and a love of life. Her cheer bubbles up from her new-found inner freedom. Only occasionally does pain break the beam of her bright smile. To exchange the person she was for the person she is becoming does not come

without loss. Pain also marks the separation prison imposes—including separation from her son.

During her youth Mirna was troubled by a gnawing suspicion that somehow there was more to life than she knew. She remembers asking her mother, Emerita, who often worshipped with a demonic sect, what was going to happen to her when she died. Her mother said it was silly for a little girl to worry about death. Be-

sides, death was simply the end of everything. The thought of eternal separation from her mother grieved Mirna even then.

Her rebellious spirit chafed under Castro's Communism. At age 25 she fled Cuba, eager to seek her fortune and a husband in Miami, Florida.

Two years later her son Bernard, the "love of her life," was born. The rest of Mirna's life, however, was not going as well. Her Cuban-born husband proved unfaithful and irresponsible. Worse yet, she found that his drug use was contagious. When drugs did not fill her inner emptiness she tried church. But she didn't connect with what she found there. In desperation she secretly wrote a letter to God pleading for a way out of her life's downward spiral.

A friend offered Mirna what seemed to be an easy way out—\$6,000 if she would serve as a "mule" to smuggle just a few kilos of Cocaine from Columbia to Miami. She agreed, not realizing that her cargo of cocaine would be increased to six or seven kilos. On her return through customs, agents quickly

discovered the drugs packed into the many bottles of hair shampoo and conditioner scattered throughout her luggage.

Mirna remembers, "I had this premonition that something bad was going to happen but I wasn't fearful. I was just numb."

Released on bail, Mirna once again frantically sought "a religious experience" by going to different churches. Then, at a court hearing, she was told she would lose custody of Bernard to her estranged husband. Mirna fled with Bernard to Santo Domingo where, after living several months as a fugitive, she was re-arrested.

While awaiting extradition, a man in an adjacent cell of the detention center shared the story of Jesus with Mirna. She says, "It began my dialogue with God. I argued that all the horror I was experiencing was God's fault, that I was a good person, that I didn't deserve to suffer so much pain and separation from my son. I told God that I would get back at Him by serving Satan." But gradually Mirna's tears of bitterness began to turn to tears of repentance.

*Studying  
her Bible,  
Mirna would  
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still caught  
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and without  
God's Word.*

Says Mirna, "I was stripped of what I had loved most, my son. Now I was free to go with God's agenda. It was my rebirth. I recall telling God that I wanted to learn to do things His way but that I needed help to understand how."

More little "miracles" happened. A Christian was among the United States marshals who took her back to Miami. Another inmate named Norma gave Mirna her first Bible, asked if she knew Jesus, and taught her to fast and pray. She began seeking guidance and support from other Christian inmates.

Studying her Bible would cause Mirna to think about her mother in Havana, still caught in Satanic

worship and without God's Word. One day another inmate gave her a copy of *La Biblia en las Americas*, the United Bible Societies' magazine about its work in Latin America. In it she found the address of the Rev. José López (see the *Record*, June-July 1997), executive director of the Cuban Bible Commission. She wrote him, "My mother lives in Cuba and I talk to her about the Lord. I send her Christian tracts but she doesn't own a Bible. If you could bring her one, even if it's used. The important thing is that she gets the Word of God."

Mr. López, who lives only blocks from Mirna's mother Emerita, responded quickly with a hand-delivered Bible. He continues to visit and encourage Emerita in her new-found faith. Says Mirna of her mother, "She has changed. She is no longer pessimistic but speaks of hope."

Emerita says, "I'm sorry that I didn't know to teach my daughter or my other children about the Lord when they were young. Knowing the Lord and the Bible has brought my family together again."

Emerita, who taught her daughter that there was no after-life, has now found eternal life through her daughter. Emerita says she is sad that her daughter is in prison. But she says, "I'm happy because it is where she and I found the Lord."



**Emerita holds a card sent by her daughter from prison.**





# So They Know They're Not Forgotten



**I** am looking after 386 visually-impaired and blind people,” wrote Valentina Ryschkowa of Tiraspol, in the former Soviet republic of Moldova, in a recent letter to the Bible Society in Moldova. “Many are very old and cannot get about very well, and life here is very difficult. But many people are searching for God, and I was so happy to hear that you would be able to provide us with Braille Scriptures and large-print Portions.”


Mrs. Ryschkowa was referring to a project in which thousands of copies of the Luke and John Gospels—in special formats for the vision-impaired people—are made available in Mol-

dova, Russia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

Upon receiving her letter, staff of the Bible Society in Moldova loaded up a car with 450 Braille Scripture Portions and an equal number of Braille Psalms, and brought them to the facility where Mrs. Ryschkowa worked.

“The Scriptures you have brought,” she said in thanking the Bible Society, “will give those who read them the possibility to turn to God’s teaching daily. In a way, this can relieve the constant hardships they face and give them more courage to find solutions.”

Sharing the encouragement of God’s Word with handicapped men, women and children is an important mission of the United Bible Societies (of which ABS is a member). “We receive many letters from different countries requesting help,” notes UBS Braille Coordinator Ingrid Felber-Bischof. “Not just for books, but for clothes, food, medical supplies, anything!”

The prayers and gifts of American Bible Society supporters in the United States help make it possible to reach people with special needs with the Word of God. 

# Surprises

by  
**Arthur Caccese**  
Vice President  
for Development



**S**urprises. Life is a never-ending string of them. *The New York Times* recently published an article about a surprise that came to Children's Memorial Hospital of Chicago.

The surprise was that a woman, known to them as the Teddy Bear Lady, bequeathed \$18,000,000 to the hospital as a donation to fund research for diseases of the heart. The will bequest was prompted by a life-saving procedure that Children's Memorial Hospital performed on a family friend. So touched by the care the hospital

provided to that child, and so moved by regular visits she made to the hospital to distribute teddy bears to ailing children, Miss Gladys Holm decided to make a difference in the lives of children for decades to come by making what is the largest "surprise" in the hospital's 115-year history.

The American Bible Society is the beneficiary of "surprises" as well. Each year ABS receives several million dollars in income from people who have decided to fund a cure for

another kind of disease of the heart. So touched by the Word of God in their own lives and so moved by the spiritual condition of people they see everyday, these donors want to make a lasting difference in the lives of others by naming the American Bible Society in their wills.

The will bequests that ABS receives come in various forms and sizes. Some people bequeath a home, farm or business; others give a percentage of the value of their estate; while others pass on personal property or favorite collections.

What all these donors share in common is a desire to help people find the hope of God's Word. They also believe that ABS will channel their love for others through the effective distribution of that Word.

For 181 years, ABS has remained faithful to one mission—to distribute the Word of God to every man, woman and child in a language and form each can readily understand, and at a price each can easily afford. Every day, lives are changed, because of the gifts donors make so that ABS can distribute Bibles, Scripture Portions and cassettes.

The contributions that ABS receives from faithful friends are daily reminders of the compassion of God's people. Many of these gifts represent great sacrifice while expressing intense concern for the spiritual lives of others.


Yet, as often as gifts are made to

ABS, we continue to be "surprised" by just how large will bequests can be compared to the size of gifts contributed during the donor's lifetime. For most people, a will bequest represents the only time they will be able to give the gift they always wished they could.

**I**f that is your desire, and you have not yet named the American Bible Society to be a beneficiary of your will, please call our Development staff for assistance. We have a team of Regional Representatives who are qualified to provide the help you need. Through a phone call or personal visit, this staff of able advisors will be able to guide you through the process of preparing a valid will or living trust. You can contact us by dialing 1-800-820-6227.

If you have already prepared your will and plan to "surprise" ABS with a will bequest, please let us know. Please don't be shy, but call us, so that we can celebrate this gift together.

As large as it was, Gladys Holm's will bequest to the Children's Memorial Hospital was not unusual. People make exceptional gifts in the form of will bequests to charity every day. What is noteworthy is the growing number of people who recognize that God's Word has the potential to change a person forever.

Do you want to do something that will make a lasting difference? Call 1-800-820-6227 and let us help you help others. 

# Witnessing the Work in Asia

Introducing a New Dimension to ABS Ministry



**ABS friends who recently toured China, South Korea and Hong Kong. From left to right: Marylou and ABS President Eugene Habecker, Genette and John Wilson, Lynette and Richard Merillat, ABS Board member James Wood and his wife Frances, Robert and Harriet Mast, Bernie and Peggy Hull, Special Assistant to the President William P. Cedefeldt, Joanne and Michael McElheny, and Jane and Willard Singel.**

**D**uring their recent trip to Asia with the American Bible Society, John and Genette Wilson took in many breathtaking sights.

Yet, one of the most meaningful stops was a simple church service in Nanjing, China.

“Naturally, we couldn’t understand what was being said at the ser-

vice,” recalled Mr. Wilson, a retired businessman and Baptist minister. “So, after the pastor made what were apparently his closing remarks, we got up and began quietly chatting and getting our cameras. As we turned back to the altar we were surprised. A crowd of people had come up and were kneeling and praying!”

Realizing that the pastor had just made an altar call, the Wilsons and

the rest of their group stood in silent respect. “We were all deeply touched by this outpouring of faith,” Mr. Wilson said. “What a heartwarming example of spiritual life in China today.”

The Wilsons and 12 other ABS donor friends visited China, Hong Kong, and South Korea this fall to get a firsthand look at Bible work, how it has nurtured church growth and spiritual renewal, and to experience those nations’ culture and history. They were accompanied by ABS President Dr. Eugene B. Habecker (who delivered a message of greeting to the Nanjing church) and William P. Cedfeldt, Special Assistant to the President.

**A**mong their stops was the Amity Press in Nanjing, where more than 16 million Bibles have been printed since 1989

and some 3.4 million Bibles were printed in 1996. They also visited the Korean Bible Society in Seoul, which in 1997 has produced some seven million Scriptures, many of them for distribution to other countries.


“It was inspiring to walk through the Korean Bible Society’s vast warehouse and see so many stacks of Bibles, in so many different languages, that had just come off the presses,” said Mr. Wilson. “It was also reassuring to see the very happy, spiritual tone of Christian worship in Hong Kong, in particular the great number of young people who attend church.”

“This trip was really a wonderful



**The Reverend John Wilson and his wife Genette proudly display the Christian calendar given to them by the staff of China’s Amity Press during their recent visit there.**

opportunity,” said Mr. Cedfeldt, “for these folks to see how their money is being used in other countries to help further the Word of God.”

Two of ABS’ upcoming donor trips will include Israel and a tour of historic sites in Europe called “How We Got the Bible.” For more information about up-coming ABS trips write to the Department of Donor Relations, American Bible Society, 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023-7505. 



**Standing in the Gap, October 4, 1997.**

## ABS Stands in the Gap

*Continued from Page 6*


“Stand In The Gap” of advocating male domination over women, many of the women disagree.

To Teresa Haffner, the idea is ridiculous. “These men aren’t trying to dominate or be in power,” she says. “It’s just the opposite. They’re here to be humbled before God. If they weren’t ready to be humbled, they wouldn’t even be here in the first place. This event is about men taking a more re-

sponsible role, and families being made stronger as a result.”

Back near the stage, Promise Keepers’ Gordon England surveys the crowd and rejoices at the number carrying the New Testaments. “The Word of God is central to everything Promise Keepers is about. I’m very happy to have these ABS New Testaments to give out,” he says. “We’re encouraging the men to read these New Testaments as a follow-up to what we’ve done today. That will help them achieve a heightened spirituality. They can then take that spirituality back home and help to spread it within their own churches.”

Evidently, many men have come away from “Stand In The Gap” with just that. “I brought my 8-year-old son Isaac down with me,” Robert VandenToorn of Dorr, Michigan, a divorced father of three, said in a follow-up interview. “The worship touched both me and my boy. We went to church the following Sunday and the minister invited people to come forward to pray. My boy looked at me and said, ‘Come on, Dad, let’s go up.’ We went up, and he put his hand on my shoulder and he prayed for me.”

VandenToorn added that “Stand In The Gap” even affected his relationship with his ex-wife. “She’s remarried, so it’s not possible for us to get back together again. But things between us are a lot better now. I realize that a lot of our problems were because I needed to change, to repent. Now, thanks to my church, Promise Keepers and the Lord, I am.” 

## DR. DENNIS C. DICKERSON

**T**he Reverend Dr. Dennis C. Dickerson has a keen appreciation of the Bible Society's 182-year Scripture-sharing tradition, particularly the role churches and volunteers have played.

"These institutions and individuals are crucial to ABS," says the historiographer of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church and Stanfield Professor of History at Williams College in Williamstown, Mass. "They are the vehicles through which people are reached with the Scriptures. Developing, strengthening, deepening these relationships, as well as partnering with other Christian organizations, is central to the success of our ministry."

Dr. Dickerson serves on the Church Relations/Volunteer Activities and Finance and Administration Committees, and the Endowment Task Force (which reviews ABS' endowment fund).


Before joining the Board in 1996, Dr. Dickerson was a consultant to ABS when it reprinted its brochure

on African Americans and the Bible cause. He is an accomplished historiographer (one who employs the principles or methodology of historical study) and educator whose specialties include American and African American history, the Civil Rights Movement, African American religion, the labor movement, and the social history of American medicine.

An ordained minister, he has pastored congregations in Massachusetts, New York and Tennessee.

The Duquesne, Penn., native holds M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in history from Washington Univer-

sity in St. Louis, and a B.A. degree from Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. He has done further study at Hartford Seminary, and holds an honorary L.H.D. degree from Morris Brown College in Atlanta.

Dr. Dickerson and his wife, Mary Anne, live in Williamstown and attend the Israel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Albany, N.Y. They have four children: Nicole Denise, Valerie Anne, Christina Marie and Dennis Clark, Jr. 



**Dr. Dennis C. Dickerson**

# DAILY BIBLE

## READING GUIDE

*Knowledge, comfort, strength, and understanding come from the regular, disciplined reading of the Bible. So here's something to help you on your journey. We hope you will use this guide in your daily study of the Bible, and that you will write to tell us what you think of this feature and how you use it.*

### January 1998

#### TAKE HOLD OF THE HOPE AND FOLLOW JESUS

- 1 Luke 2.21-40
- 2 Luke 2.41-52
- 3 Hebrews 1.1-14

#### SUNDAY

- 4 Hebrews 2.1-18
- 5 Hebrews 3.1-19

#### EPIPHANY

- 6 Matthew 2.1-12
- 7 Matthew 2.13-23
- 8 Luke 3.1-20
- 9 Luke 3.21-38
- 10 Luke 5.1-16

#### SUNDAY

- 11 Luke 5.17-39
- 12 Luke 6.1-19
- 13 Luke 7.1-17
- 14 Luke 8.1-21
- 15 Luke 8.22-39
- 16 Luke 8.40-56
- 17 Luke 9.1-17

#### WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY BEGINS\*

#### SUNDAY

- 18 Luke 9.18-36
- 19 Luke 9.37-62
- 20 Luke 10.1-24
- 21 Luke 12.4-40
- 22 Luke 14.25-33
- 23 John 8.12-30
- 24 John 17.1-26

#### SUNDAY

- 25 Acts 9.1-25
- 26 Acts 9.26-43
- 27 Acts 10.1-33
- 28 Acts 10.34-48
- 29 Acts 16.1-15
- 30 Acts 16.16-40
- 31 Luke 18.18-43

*\*The Octave for Christian Unity is January 18-25, 1998.*

### February 1998

#### TAKE HOLD OF THE HOPE AND SHARE GOD'S LOVE

#### SUNDAY

- 1 1 John 1.1-10
- 2 1 John 2.1-17
- 3 1 John 2.18-29
- 4 1 John 3.1-10
- 5 1 John 3.11-24
- 6 1 John 4.1-21
- 7 1 John 5.1-21

#### SUNDAY

- 8 Psalm 5
- 9 Luke 6.20-49
- 10 Colossians 1.1-23
- 11 Colossians 1.24—2.23
- 12 Colossians 3.1-17
- 13 Romans 8.31-39
- 14 1 Corinthians 13.1-13

#### SUNDAY

- 15 Luke 13.1-30

#### 16 Luke 15.1-32

- 17 Hosea 11.1-11
- 18 Hosea 14.1-9
- 19 Micah 7.8-20
- 20 Nahum 1.1-15
- 21 Deuteronomy 6.1-9

#### SUNDAY

- 22 Matthew 22.23-40
- 23 Mark 12.18-34
- 24 John 13.21-35

#### ASH WEDNESDAY

- 25 Psalm 51
- 26 Psalm 33
- 27 Psalm 36
- 28 Psalm 136





## Half the World Is Waiting!

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**Children's Bible clubs were among the activities at a four-day festival in central Los Angeles.**

## *Gustano's Gift*

**CALIFORNIA**—It was a summertime treat for central Los Angeles: a four-day festival of music, games, good food, and the Good News.

The festival was sponsored by the American Bible Society and World Impact, a Christian mission organization, in cooperation with many local churches. Their goal was to present the Gospel, invite people to Christ, provide them with Scriptures to read so they might be grounded in their faith, and integrate new believers into local churches.

Six hundred children, teens and adults participated. Many received "Gospel Bags" containing ABS Scriptures and other Christian materials.

Gustano, a little boy with a serious speech impediment, took part in the activities. He joined a Bible club in which one activity was memorizing and reciting a Bible verse. His mother worried that the speech problem would prevent him from repeating the

verse in front of the other children.

But Gustano was so excited about the Spanish Bible he was given that he worked extra hard on his verse. And when it was his turn to recite, the verse was delivered clearly and confidently.

The festival included a gospel rally after which many people said they wanted to learn more about Christianity.

## *A CEV For Every Home*

**TEXAS**—When Kingwood First Baptist Church wanted to share the Good News, it did it in a big way. On the weekend of October 11-12, teams from the church embarked on an ambitious goal: share a *CEV* New Testament with each of the approximately 17,500 families living in the town of

Kingwood, an affluent Houston suburb.

The New Testaments—18,000 of them—were provided through the American Bible Society's Scripture Grants Program.

"Folks here are generally well-educated," said Dearing L. Garner, pastor of Kingwood First Baptist, "and they probably have at least one Bible sitting unread on their shelves. So there's a lot of biblical illiteracy here. But we knew that if they took the *CEVs*, they wouldn't sit on the shelf; they'd be read. They're readable for people at all levels of learning."

The ambitious outreach was a success, Garner reported. "Most everyone took a copy," he said. "And we ended up sharing nearly 17,000 New Testaments. Thank you all for helping us."

### *Helping Freshmen Survive*

**NEW YORK**—When thousands of college freshmen arrived on campus for fall classes, they got something to help them deal with the pressures and temptations of college life: a Freshman Survival Kit.

The kits, featuring custom-cover *CEV* New Testaments with special indices and study guides, were developed by the American Bible Society in partnership with Campus Crusade for Christ. Other "survival gear" included a pad and pencil for note-taking,



**A freshman at New York University's Manhattan campus with his Freshman Survival Kit.**

a cassette tape on improving study habits, a contemporary Christian music CD, and discount coupons for food and personal items.

One hundred thousand Freshman Survival Kits were handed out at colleges and universities across the country, and the impact has been encouraging. "Tonight we had our first official Bible study and 18 people were there," wrote Elizabeth Printki of Campus Crusade, who works at New York University's Manhattan campus. "This is so exciting I can barely stand it. God seems to really be moving and he certainly used the [kits] to get people's attention. Thank you on behalf of Campus Crusade for Christ at NYU."



The newly-launched *Light of the Amazon III* will enable Bible Society workers to reach even more people.

## *More Light for the Amazon*

**BRAZIL** — The big white boat makes its rounds along the Amazon River, delivering health care and hope to thousands of people.

*Light of the Amazon III*, launched last August, brings medical care, social services and spiritual nourishment to impoverished and isolated riverbank communities in this vast, verdant jungle region.

At every stop, scores of people— young and old, in wheelchairs, on crutches, or on foot—gather on rickety docks as *Light of the Amazon III* approaches. There is every malady from sprained ankles and abscessed teeth to cancer, malaria and AIDS. For many people it is the only opportunity to receive medical care of any kind.

But there's more than medicine on this boat.

Volunteers from the Bible Society of Brazil work alongside doctors, dentists, nurses and technicians. Their job is to give out food, clothing and blankets, share the Scriptures, pray and be in fellowship with the people.

*Light of the Amazon III* is a joint project of the Bible Societies of Brazil, the Netherlands and Canada. Its sister vessel, *Light of the Amazon II*, also ministers to the people of the Amazon.

## *So Far, and Yet So Close*

**PHILIPPINES** — Nora and Danny Lucero weren't about to let a thousand miles keep them from worshipping together.

Mrs. Lucero is deputy general secretary of the Philippine Bible Society in Manila. Her husband Danny, on a 4 1/2-year contract assignment for World Vision, was based in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Before separating, the Luceros and their children faithfully read scripture and prayed together every evening. When Mr. Lucero was given his assignment in Cambodia, they

# News

## International Update

determined that in the months and years ahead they would continue their family devotions “together.”

The Luceros selected chapters from Psalms and Proverbs and agreed to read and pray at the same time every evening—9:00 p.m. in Manila and 8:00 p.m. in Phnom Penh.

“It was hard to be apart from my wife and children,” recalls Mr. Lucero, who recently completed the assignment and is back with his family. “But we all found great comfort in reading the Bible and praying. Being united this way made us appreciate our family devotions all the more. God’s Word kept us close together...”

### *Across Rough Waters*

**GUYANA** — When you work in a country that’s slightly smaller than Idaho and divided by 11 rivers, it helps to have a boat.

Even a speedboat, which was what some Suriname Bible Society members used on a recent trip to deliver New Testaments to a prison in Bartica, northern Guyana.




**Members of the Suriname Bible Society often share the Good News via boat.**

The only way to reach the prison was by traveling up the powerful Mazaruni River. Sheets of water sprayed everyone as the open speedboat crashed through the whitecaps.

When the boat finally docked at the prison, grateful inmates—hungry for God’s Word—met the soaking visitors. The prisoners’ steel band beat out a happy tune of welcome.

The warden was there also. He thanked them for the New Testaments and said he was confident that some of his prisoners’ lives would be turned around through reading the gospel message.

“Afterward,” recalled one of the Bible Society workers, “[we] all felt it had been worth the time and effort, in addition to the soaking!” 

# Please Pray

During December and January for

## DOMESTIC

**Christian Performing Artists**—Pray for all performers who use music and drama to tell the Gospel story, including 4Him and others sponsored by the American Bible Society's Artist Relations Program, that they will touch many hearts and lives.

**Maritime Workers**—The men and women who sail on fishing fleets frequently face rough seas and harsh weather. Pray for their safety, and also that they might read the words of the greatest "fisherman" of all—Jesus Christ.

**Business leaders**—The actions of corporate and industrial managers can affect the nation's economy as well as individual lives. Pray that the Bible might be their "operations manual."

**True Christmas Spirit**—Pray that as they shop for presents, plan parties, and decorate their homes this holiday season, Christians will also focus on the Savior's birth in Bethlehem.

**Tolerance and Understanding**—Pray that the biblical principles of love, understanding and reconciliation will inspire people of all nationalities and ethnic and faith groups to live together in God's peace.

## INTERNATIONAL

**Guatemala**—As demand for the Scriptures continues to grow, the Bible Society needs more volunteers. Pray that the Lord will provide more people who are willing to help in this vital work.

**Japan**—More than 8,000 people attended a Bible exhibition in the city of Sapporo in August. Pray that many of them will find new life through the Gospel message.

**Vietnam**—"There are seven million Christians here, but only about one million Bibles," says the Rev. Le Cao Quy, the United Bible Societies' liaison to Vietnam. Pray that more Scriptures will reach those who desire them.

**Reunion Island**—Pray that through God's Word families throughout this territory of France (in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Mozambique) will grow in their Christian faith. Pray also that more people will offer their time and resources in support of Bible Society work.

**News Media**—In 1996, 27 journalists were killed while on assignment and a record 185 were detained throughout the world. Pray for their safety, and also that God's Word will inspire them to report the news with truth, sensitivity, and accuracy. 📖

# In Memory Of

*There is no finer way to memorialize a loved one than to help ensure that millions of copies of God's living Word will be made available to people who do not yet know the Lord.*

**My Husband, John Bage**  
Given by: Mrs. E. Lillian Bage

**Dr. Ruth Spritzer Berger**  
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**Frances I. Blikstad**  
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**My Husband, Milton Burleigh**  
Given by: Mrs. Virginia Burleigh

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**Theodore E. Charley**  
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**Florence Christie**  
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**My Beloved Teacher & Friend, Min. Esther Cumming**  
Given by: The Estate of Mary Catherine Fultz

**Our Son, Calvin Charles Diederich**  
Given by: Calvin & Carol Marie Diederich

**My Husband, Ralph Douglas**  
Given by: Mrs. Ruby Douglas

**The Rev. Clarence G. Ellinger**  
Given by: Mr. & Mrs. James R. Marrs & Family

**Dorothea Rodgers Emmart**  
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**Ruby B. Enns**  
Given by: Mr. Henry B. Enns, Family & Friends

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**My Mother, Alice Goetz**  
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**My Wife, Marjorie C. Hankins**  
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**My Husband, Jules Weiss**  
Given by: Mrs. J. Irene Weiss

**Audrey Young**  
Given by: Mr. & Mrs. Charles Duff, Family & Friends

*Memorials of \$100 or more for one individual or family unit will be published in the ABS Record. For further details about the memorial program, please write to: Donor Relations, American Bible Society, 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023-7505.*



# “Stuff” for Scriptures

**T**he Bible Society in Yugoslavia was eager to provide the 3,000 Serbian Children’s Bibles needed for homeless families in Belgrade. But there was no money to print them.

That didn’t stop the Society’s chairman, Serbian Bishop the Rt. Rev. Lavrentije. He called on his friends, some wealthy business people and other citizens, asking them to donate or barter to raise the money needed to print the Bibles.

One businessman gave 20 tons of cement, another a large supply of sugar. A chemical factory provided printer’s ink. Families gave sheep, goats, and other “stuff.” What couldn’t be used was sold and the proceeds put into the Bible fund.

Bishop Lavrentije’s creative fundraising worked. Not only did the Bible Society print the 3,000 Children’s Bibles, there was enough money left to print 5,000 more!

People in Yugoslavia and other Balkan nations need the hope-giving message of Scripture to face the region’s severe poverty and social upheaval. They need caring people like Bishop Lavrentije—and people like you—to bring them that message.

By sending your December Bible-A-Month Club gift today, you’ll help to provide Bibles, New Testaments, Scripture Portions and Selections for the people of Yugoslavia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Your January BAM gift will help to share the Word in India. 🇺🇸

*Every month, Bible-A-Month Club members “travel” to a different country to share the Word of God. If you would like to join this dedicated group of men and women, check the box on the attached reply form or write to: American Bible Society, Bible-A-Month Club, 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023-7505.*



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