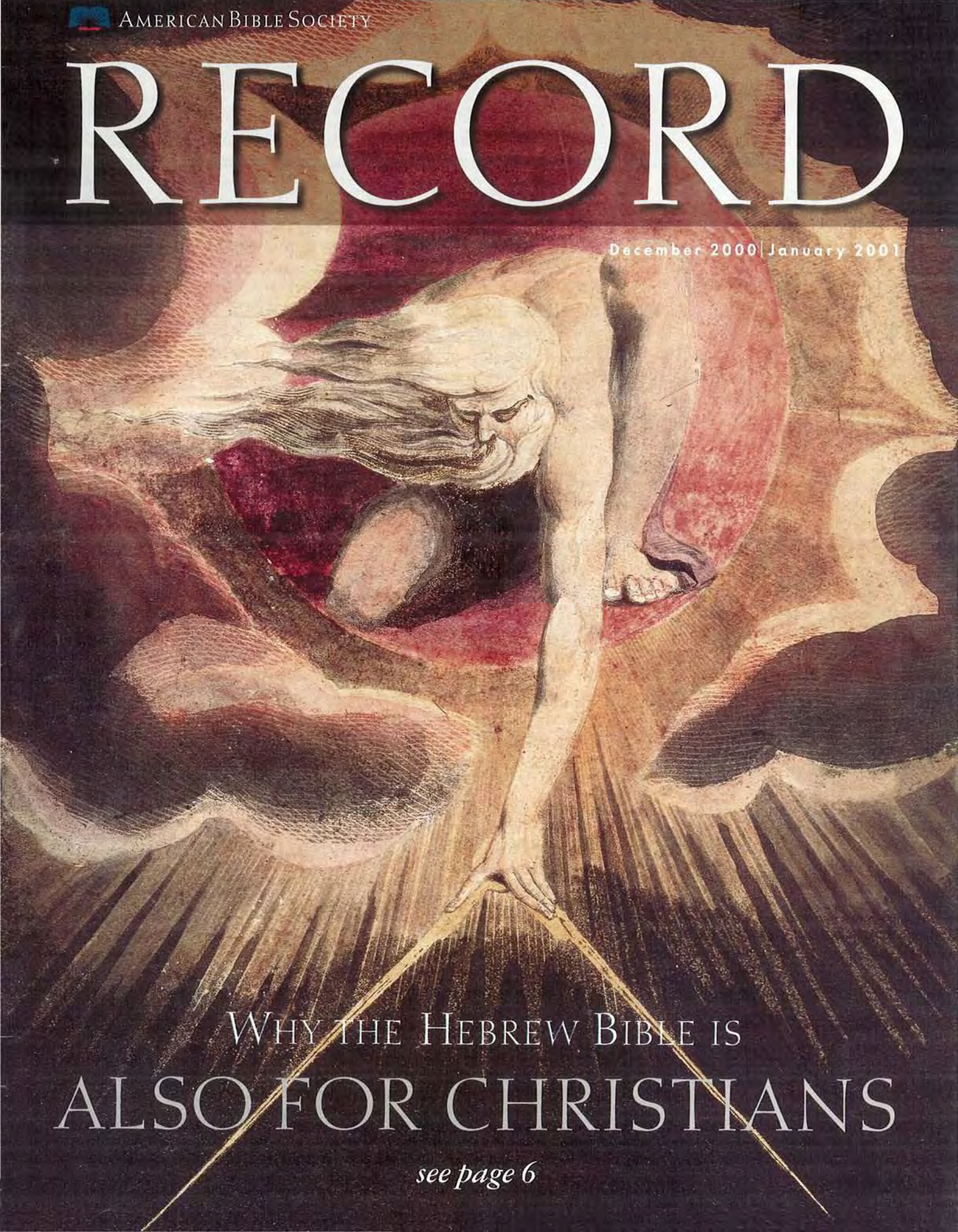


# RECORD

December 2000 | January 2001



WHY THE HEBREW BIBLE IS  
ALSO FOR CHRISTIANS

*see page 6*

# Light for Living

*You, Lord, are my light; you dispel my darkness.* —2 SAMUEL 22.29 TEV

This past year has been one of exciting change at the American Bible Society. We have brought out many new Scripture tools, such as the *CEV Learning Bible* with its many charts, historical notes, and illustrations. We have developed new programs that get people engaged with the God's Word. We are seeing lives changed through *Opportunity 21*, the largest worldwide Scripture distribution initiative in modern history.

Symbolic of these changes is the adoption of a new brandmark. While the Bible remains at the core of our symbol, our new logo also depicts the light and hope that emanates from the living Word. It captures that radiant, life-giving, quality of Scripture that the Psalmist praises in Psalm 19. "*The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.*" Echoing and expanding on this theme, John 1.4-5 reads, "*The Word was the source of life, and this life brought light to the people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out*" (TEV).



The Westminster Confession asserts, "...those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in ... Scripture ... that not only the learned, but the unlearned ... may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them."

We often think of salvation in the eternal, life-after-death sense. And that can be tremendous comfort when dealing with pain and disappointment. But Scripture also offers us a here-and-now, kingdom come, perspective.

Everyday God graces us with peace and joy and wonder that is more easily seen through a vision that is Scripture-guided. This is the blessedness that Jesus promises in the beatitudes — that even the poor, the meek, and the hungry can find light for living through fellowship with God.

That's why, for 2001 we are launching a *Crusade of Light* — crusades that include Bible distribution, but also programs that will engage whole communities and continents with the Scriptures. These crusades of hope and promise will result in light pollution of a joyous sort.

*Eugene B. Habecker*

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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.

Published continually since 1818, the *American Bible Society Record* is the official periodical of the American Bible Society and the second oldest continuous publication in the United States. It is published six times per year, and is sent to anyone contributing \$4 or more each year to the Society. Postage is paid at New York, New York, and additional mailing offices. Other publications wishing to reproduce any of the articles contained herein are encouraged to do so. A credit line acknowledging the source of the material and a copy of the issue containing such material would be appreciated.



# RECORD

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

VOLUME 146, NUMBER 1

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We encourage you to send your letters to: Editor, American Bible Society Record, 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023-7505. Telephone: 212-408-8710. Reach ABS on the web at [www.americanbible.org](http://www.americanbible.org)

# REACHING ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS

At the base of the Appalachian Mountains in southeastern Kentucky, magnificent horse farms, boasting meticulously manicured lawns and genteel estate homes, dot the landscape. But deeper into the backwoods the contrast is striking: muddy, pockmarked roads lead to simple clapboard homes and old, rusting trailers.

Most of the families that live in Owsley County, Ky., now have electricity, plumbing, and television (a few even have satellite dishes), yet they are still among America's most disadvantaged. Nearly three quarters live below the poverty line. Unemployment, illiteracy and child poverty are all egregiously high.

"This community," says David Pagano of The Day of Our Lord (Jesus Christ Ministry), who has led two ministry trips there, "is like any other, with its own problems and concerns, hopes and dreams, and a deep sense of pride."

That pride is deeply rooted in American history. Booneville, the county seat, was named after Kentucky's most famous citizen, Daniel Boone.

At the same time, Owsley County faces daunting problems often associated with inner cities. Substance abuse is becoming widespread, with marijuana, cocaine and heroin replacing moonshine as the intoxicant of choice — especially among young people. And cyclical poverty has maintained a hammerlock over generations of Appalachian families.

Bent on restoring hope



These Appalachian children were treated to a Christ-centered puppet show, and they also received gift bags that included toys and ABS children's Scriptures.

through the gospel message, Mr. Pagano and his 14-member ministry team made the thousand-mile journey from their upstate New York headquarters to Owsley County, once last June and again in October. Both times they brought food, clothing, ABS Scripture resources ... and friendship.

"The warmth they showed us was incredible," Mr. Pagano recalls. "So many people, especially on our second trip, welcomed us with love. It's really a gross inaccuracy to think of the Appalachian people as 'hillbillies,' standing on their porches with shotguns. We made real friends

here, and we're looking forward to returning next year."

During their four-day October trip, Mr. Pagano and his team visited with families and local congregations. They performed Christ-centered puppet shows for the children, which were held in the county elementary school, several local churches, and even some homes.

"We drew kids from all directions," Mr. Pagano recalls, "giving them gift bags filled with toys and children's Scriptures provided by the American Bible Society. We gave their parents much-needed groceries and cleaning supplies, along with Bibles and tracts."

As the ministry trip came to an end, one church congregation treated the team to a buffet lunch. For Mr. Pagano this was a milestone. "This fellowship was a welcome sight, because it signaled that we had gained acceptance into this rugged mountain community. That was not an easy thing to do." •

BY JIM GENOVESE



Jacquelyn Sapiie  
Associate Director of the  
ABS Library at Bible House

## askjacquie

Readers are encouraged to submit their questions about the Bible to Jacquelyn Sapiie, associate director of the ABS library at Bible House in New York City. Questions can be forwarded to [absrecord@americanbible.org](mailto:absrecord@americanbible.org), or Jacquelyn can be reached at 212-408-1203 or via regular mail at 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023.

**Q** I have a problem interpreting the power of the Holy Spirit, as described in Acts 10.38. What is the function and purpose of the Holy Spirit?

(M.S.W., Colorado)

**A** (The following information is derived from *The HarperCollins Bible Dictionary*, edited by Paul J. Achtemeier, Harper-SanFrancisco, 1996, pp. 432-33):

The Holy Spirit is the mysterious power or presence of God in nature or with individuals, inspiring or empowering them with qualities they would not otherwise possess. In the Old Testament, there are three areas of importance identified with the Holy Spirit: as agent of creation, a source of inspiration and power and as God's presence in a covenant community.

In the New Testament there is a more diverse range of meaning. The Holy Spirit comes to represent both the presence and the activity of God and the continuing presence of Jesus in the Church. The Holy Spirit makes Christians one in Christ and empowers them, not only for the mission of the Church, but also for the moral and ethical life. The Spirit gives Christians the ability to understand God's will and to live together in love. ■

## TRUSTEES

### Heralding a Faith Revolution

**W**hen Dr. R. Lamar Vest, an American Bible Society trustee for the past nine years, appeared at an October press conference at Bible House in New York City, he did more than speak to a small group of reporters. Instead he was heralding a faith revolution, comparable in scope to the impact the Gutenberg Bible had on Christians of its day.

Like that first printed Bible, which opened up the Scriptures on the page for the first time to average people, the plan by Visual Bible to produce a video version of all the biblical books can inspire the faith of a new generation, says Dr. Vest. [A story on the Visual Bible project can be found on page 22.]

The Visual Bible project, which aims to provide a literal video translation of ABS Scriptures, is "as important as the creation of the Gutenberg Press. It is that kind of major breakthrough," says Dr. Vest.

Dedication to the Bible cause has been a central focus of Dr. Vest's life. Besides his work on the ABS board of trustees, Dr. Vest is also the presiding bishop of the Church of God. The Cleveland, Tenn., based denomination claims 5 million members in 160 countries.

Before being named presiding bishop, he was a pastor, leader of his denomination's media ministry and president of Lee University in Cleveland.

In his ministry work, Dr. Vest travels extensively around the world. Wherever he goes, he hears about the impact of the American Bible Society.

On a recent visit to Russia, he spoke with believers who told him about the impact the Word of God had on their lives.

"They were almost in tears as they said thank you," he says.

He's discovered that "ABS has a fantastic reputation around the world." The new video initiative, says Dr. Vest, can only serve to enhance that. ■



Dr. R. Lamar Vest

# WHY THE HEBREW BIBLE IS ALSO FOR CHRISTIANS

What Christians call the Old Testament — also referred to as the Hebrew Bible — is a huge repository of truth about God, reflecting centuries of experience with God in the life and history of God's people, Israel. All that is revealed by this one and same God in the New Testament builds on and flows from the witness of the Old Testament. No Christian can fully compre-

► *Coronation of King David. English Psalter, c. 1225. The Pierpont Morgan Library, N.Y. (Art Resources, N.Y.)*

By David G. Burke



hend the New Testament without knowing the Old.

The early Christians proclaimed Jesus to be the long-expected *Christos* (Greek for the Hebrew term Messiah). They proclaimed Jesus (whose very name means “Yahweh saves”), to be the One sent by God to extend and carry forth God’s love and salvation to the whole world. They saw this foreshadowed by Old Testament prophets like Isaiah, Jonah and Zephaniah.

They collected together, during the early centuries A.D., the authentic gospels, the writings of Paul and other apostles witnessing to this “new” stage of God’s self-revealing in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. They added these to what were already their Scriptures — the books of the Old Testament.

They rejected the approach of Marcion (Second Century A.D.). He sought to deny linkage, reject the Old Testament, and even tried to delete those parts of the New Testament that contained Jewish associations. He didn’t get very far.

Marcion’s approach was deemed heretical. The early Christians continued to read the Old Testament and pray the Psalms in their worship and daily life because they knew they would encounter God in these books in profound ways.

Indeed, this is a very important reason for the relevance of the Old Testament Scriptures for Christians. The Old Testament Scriptures were the only Scriptures of the followers of Jesus and of the early Apostolic Church.

The scope of what became the New Testament gradually took shape between the Second and Fourth centuries A.D. The early Christians continued to use the Old Testament Scriptures to ground

their proclamation about God’s love in Christ and to defend their beliefs.

It is of utmost significance that they did not see the New Testament as something which replaced the Old Testament, but saw it as a new “fifth” part of the whole revelation of God, the whole Bible.

The early Christians had always used the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. A slight rearrangement of the order of the Old Testament books yielded a Greek Bible (Septuagint) in which the “flow” progressed from Torah, to History, to Wisdom, to Prophets, and then to the New Testament

(to which the Prophets were seen to lead).


As the Scriptures of the early Christians, the Old Testament books were understood to be fully the Word of God. Those books served as norms and guides for the life of God’s people. God had communicated his love and promises, Torah and teaching, and demonstrated his grace and glory and faithfulness in the lives of people over and over again.

For many of the early church’s theologians and teachers, the dominant approach to understanding the significance of the Old Testament books for Christians was in stressing the vital linkage between

the Old Testament and the New. Without the witness of the Old Testament to the centrality of God’s gracious love and promises and faithfulness, we cannot see in the New Testament by itself the overarching pattern or progression of how God had prepared for the coming of Messiah over the centuries.

Another important aspect of linkage between the Old Testament and the New is that both proclaim faith in the One God — Yahweh, the God of Israel, who is also the Father proclaimed by Jesus.

God is one (Deuteronomy 6.4), and in the great



THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES  
WERE THE ONLY SCRIPTURES OF  
THE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS AND  
OF THE EARLY APOSTOLIC CHURCH.



mystery of God's oneness, both Jews and Christians share experience and worship of the same God. For Christians, knowing the Old Testament well is an important part of our faith heritage, providing knowledge of the shared history and experience of our gracious and loving God.

There are a number of very important themes that emerge in the Old Testament and carry continuity into the New. Some of these are:

- the oneness of God (as in Hebrews 1.1, the New Testament frequently claims that the same God spoke anew in Jesus);
- the loyalty and faithfulness of God (who covenants with his people, and who is just in judgment and will fulfill promises);
- the Spirit of God (God's presence and power experienced in events, guiding prophets or sages or leaders);
- the Word of God (the idea that God speaks through human language, or actions, as the New Testament saw Jesus as the living Word);
- the kingdom of God (the conviction that God, who created everything, rules over everything and everyone; this belief was severely tested by self-interested kings, but it revived again in Jesus' preaching which itself drew on the older prophetic vision of God's universal reign), and,
- God's salvation extended to the world (the prophetic vision of God's universal love for all people, of being a light to the nations, is at the center of the proclamation of both Jesus and the early church, indicated in the passage, "God so loved the world..." (John 3.16).

Christians today need always remember that the Old Testament books were the only Scriptures of the First Century Apostolic Church, to which eventually the New Testament was joined. We cannot afford, for our spiritual growth and development, to overlook what God has to tell us in the books of the Old Testament. ■

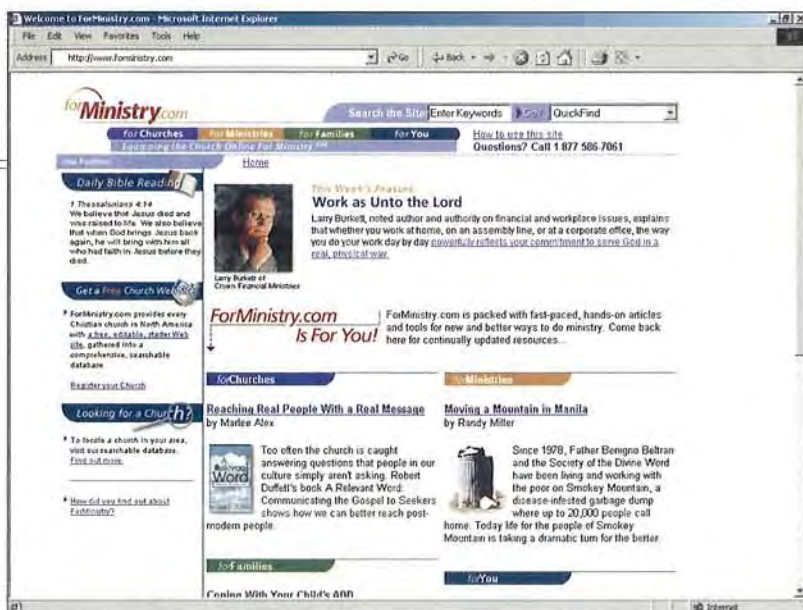
*David Burke, associate vice president for Scripture publications for the American Bible Society, has a doctorate in near Eastern languages and literature from the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.*



▲ Marc Chagall,  
*The Sacrifice of  
Isaac*, 1960-65.  
(Art Resources,  
N.Y.)

by Peter Feuerherd

# FORMINISTRY.COM



## Offers Cy

titled *Houses of Worship.com*. That site provided space for churches to develop their own Web sites, a service particularly valuable for busy pastors who lack technical skill, or for those congregations which don't have access to or expertise about cyberspace.

*ForMinistry.com* does the same thing, and more, for some 150 different Christian organizations, notes Mr. Thyberg. Each day *ForMinistry.com* provides assistance for those seeking a church in their community and also provides articles that support ministry efforts. A typical day's menu includes biblical reflections, an article on how Christians can apply their beliefs to the world of work and how parents can best cope with the travails of raising a child with autism. Another article focuses on how Catholics and Pentecostals can come to a better understanding of their different Christian traditions.

Content is provided by a host of Christian publications, including *Christianity Today*, *National Catholic Reporter* and *St. Anthony Messenger*, as well as ministry organizations and educational institutions including Regent College, Christian Management Association, and World Vision, among others.

It's a heady mix with one goal in mind: bringing together disparate Christians under the banner of the American Bible Society's focus on spreading the Good News. The biblical connections are not always obvious and never forced. Still, articles on issues as

In the noisy bells and whistles world of the Internet, there is at least one space where browsers can find spiritual solace and quiet comfort.

At *ForMinistry.com*, visitors will not find ads. They won't find pitches for money. Nor will they find political rancor, hate speech or lewdness.

What they will find, at a Web site sponsored by the American Bible Society, is information about churches in their area, biblical wisdom and articles offering how they can better contribute to the life of their churches, families and the wider society. Page visitors number some 2 million every month.

"We're getting real good feedback," says Chris Thyberg, the Pittsburgh-based executive producer for the site, which was officially launched last summer. The site is the offspring of a previous effort

# OM

## ber Spiritual Haven

disparate as finances — what do the Gospels say about riches? — and mentoring — including a section on the relationship between biblical women Ruth and Naomi — illustrate the content's Scriptural basis.

Another article encourages readers to consider that *You Can Change the World Through Prayer*.

But nothing on the Web site is intended to promote discord over doctrinal issues that have long divided Christians. The emphasis is on unity, says Mr. Thyberg, a member of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension in Pittsburgh. He formerly worked in an academic computing setting at Carnegie-Mellon University and Penn State before joining the *Houses of Worship* project two years ago.

"We seek to be inclusive and not put up barriers that would make people feel excluded," he says. The site is for churches of all denominations: Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox and independent congregations.

That inclusiveness happens in an atmosphere imbued with ABS' low-pressure, non-profit style. Pastors and church leaders, even the most cyberphobic, receive assistance in pulling together their Web sites. They are charged nothing. And there are no annoying banner advertising headlines or information gathered to be sold to entrepreneurs.

"It's important that we represent ABS, a non-profit, trusted, known entity," says Mr. Thyberg, citing one important reason for the Web site's popularity.

The site was promoted this fall with an advertising campaign featuring radio spots in major markets. The appeal was designed to reach Web browsers seeking out faith and family-friendly material.

One goal Web site organizers have is that church leaders — transcending denominations, racial and economic status — will find out information about effective programs that will improve their ministries, thereby creating community across denominational, ethnic, and economic lines.

And, as would be expected with an ABS project, there is a strong focus on the Scriptures. Not only are visitors asked to read the Bible, articles on the site encourage reflection and action on gospel values.

For example, one recent article offered suggestions on how American middle-class families can live more simply by finding ways to identify with the poor in many countries. *ForMinistry.com*, emphasizes Mr. Thyberg, is not simply another way-station in the massively growing cyberworld. It has a particularly divine, if non-denominational, mission.

"We're looking to let the Word of God speak for itself online in all its transforming power," he says. ■

***ForMinistry.com can be accessed directly  
or via [www.americanbible.org](http://www.americanbible.org)***

# JESUS GIVES A BRAND

THE CHILDREN PROUDLY marched in under the bright Florida sun, their procession like an Olympics closing ceremony. Some held signs with Scripture passages. Others carried banners with their church's names.

The Rev. R. V. Brown, chaplain for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, led the way, carrying a torch. Following him was Kingsley, the lion star of the *Kingsley's Meadow* children's videos, produced by the American Bible Society.

The 600-plus children had gathered for the closing ceremony of *KidsGames*, a weeklong program that combines Scripture and sports. The children from different churches had played and prayed together, joining in a united witness.

After marching into Tinker Field in Orlando, the children lined up for the final relay race. At the start, the 5-year-olds tore off, relaying to 6-year-olds, who tapped 7-year-olds, who sped off — all the way to 12-year-olds, who sprinted to the finish line while the crowd cheered wildly. The relay had a twist: Some groups had a three-legged race; others had to skip rope before running.

Before the race, Rev. Brown's preaching was more fiery than Orlando's torrid sun. He urged his young listeners to pass the torch of faith. "To pass that torch on, you must believe Jesus Christ is the son of God!" he proclaimed.

The young athletes had memorized a Bible verse a day dur-

ing the week of *KidsGames*, and Rev. Brown told them to press on. "You ought to learn two verses a week, so that by the end of the year, you've got enough verses inside to fight Satan with."

*KidsGames* gave the children plenty of ammunition. First, the American Bible Society provided the 600-plus participants with a *Contemporary English Version* Bible specifically printed for *KidsGames*.

The Bible had quite an impact. Richard Outlaw, a trustee of Lighthouse Church of the Nazarene in Orlando, who shepherded children to the *KidsGames*, said: "The kids are reading, and they love what they see in it." The *KidsGames CEV Bible* helped them comprehend verses they didn't understand before, Mr. Outlaw said, adding "They're sharing it with other friends."

Diane Whitley, who brought two sons and two of their friends to *KidsGames*, marveled at the impact the Bible had. John Ilgen, her sons' friend, had not read the Bible before, and, "He hasn't put it down," she said. John said he likes to read about the apostle Peter, and the Book of Revelation, because it explains "what's going to happen at the end of the world."

Mrs. Whitley's son Brandon said the Bible teaches about life: "It talks about people who had bad problems. We sometimes have problems, and it solves them for us."

*KidsGames* draws children into the Bible by using sports as both an example and a means of teaching lessons from Scripture.

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
THOMAS D. SULLIVAN



▲ Davyd Hepburn, left, speaks with the Rev. R.V. Brown. ► *KidsGames* trading cards.



► Girl runs through obstacle at Northland.



# NEW START

## *Children Learn Scripture Through Sport at KidsGames*

At Northland, a church in Orlando, Scott Plum led a Bible class for a group of young children. The two dozen children belonged to teams of six or so. He reviewed what the youngsters had learned.

Mr. Plum asked for a volunteer to recite Proverbs 3.5-6:

*With all your heart  
you must trust the Lord and  
not your own judgment.  
Always let him lead you,  
and he will clear the road  
for you to follow.*

One youngster gets it right on the first try. The children and supervising adults applaud.

Another verse, and another correct answer. The children who knew their Bible verses then shoot baskets at a miniature hoop to score points for their team.

Outdoors, the children run across Northland's playing field, racing around small obstacles and testing their throwing skills, getting points for their teams and laughing during their friendly competition.

Later in the day, children gather in the Orlando's Orla Vista neighborhood for *KidsGames*. A setting sun illuminates cottony clouds as the youngsters learn about teamwork.

The children form a circle and pass a ball across it, squatting down after they catch it. But if one of them drops the ball, they

must start again. *KidsGames* teaches children that they're members of a team, and they need to be ready to start over. They learn to chant: "If defeated don't lose heart! Jesus brings a brand new start!"

*KidsGames* also offered role models for the children. Along with the Bibles, the American Bible Society printed trading cards with sports heroes, such as St. Louis Rams quarterback Kurt Warner, and their favorite Scripture verses. Children snapped up the cards.

Karen Hollis, a mother of two children at *KidsGames*, liked how the cards showed "how many Christians there are in the sports world and how they are being an influence and a witness."

The future for the children at *KidsGames* looks better for their encounter with the Word. And the games look to have a very bright future. Georgia Bruton, director of U.S. missions and Children's Outreach and Discipleship at Northland, was the director of *KidsGames* in Orlando. She said all the organizers are "thrilled" with what's happened. So she's looking forward to holding the games in two years.

Davyd Hepburn, who runs the sports program at the American Bible Society, said "I feel very encouraged" by what the *KidsGames* achieved in Orlando. In this pilot program — the first time *KidsGames* have been held in the United States — children enjoyed the games in various places. Mr. Hepburn sees this as very promising for future *KidsGames* programs. ■



● Calvin White, center, with grandsons Naki, left, and Kmali.  
● Richard Outlaw, center, celebrates with children at Orlando's Tinker Field.



# Preaching the Gospel to All People

*Pavel Popilin, information officer for the Bible Society in Russia, recently traveled to Kabardino-Balkariya, a republic in the North Caucasus, which is home to thousands of Chechen refugees who have fled a long war between the Russian military and secessionist rebels, many of whom are Muslims. Here is a short extract from his report. (The Bible Society of Russia's outreach to refugee children is also described on page 27):*

**“W**e were struck by the dreadful living conditions of the refugees. The buildings they have been moved into are virtually unfit for human habitation. . . . Chechen refugees are constantly threatened with eviction. Nobody seems to be responsible for the people they have given refuge to. . . . It is difficult for Chechens to find jobs.

“The Nal’chik Evangelical Christian Brotherhood has taken several Chechen families under its wing, bringing them food and clothing, helping them to find work. More importantly, however, they are surrounding these people with their love and concern, helping them to find confidence in the future and sowing hope and faith. As a result, some of the Chechen refugees have become Christians. It is not, however, safe for Chechens to confess Christianity among their own people, and so they keep their faith a secret.”

*Since the start of military action in the North Caucasus in 1995, the Bible Society in Russia has sent tens of thousands of Scriptures to the region. These have been distributed in Chechnya among civilians, Russian and Chechen soldiers on opposing sides, and within refugee camps in neighboring republics. ■*



Your December gift will bring Bibles to people in Russia. To find out more about joining the Bible-a-Month Club, fill out the reply form below, or write:

American Bible Society  
Bible-a-Month Club  
1865 Broadway  
New York, NY  
10023-7505

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New York, NY 10023-7505

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12200REC

By Patricia Sinclair

# Beyond 77 T

The Apostle Peter may have posed the most difficult question of all time: “How many times should I forgive someone who does something wrong to me? Is seven times enough?”

Jesus answered, “Not just seven times but seventy-seven times!” (Matthew 18.21, *CEV*).

Increasingly so, we see this divine edict of forgiveness spilling over into every arena of social life. It is no longer a solution proffered solely by the religious community but one that is increasingly appreciated by the secular community as well.

Dr. Robert Enright, educational psychologist at the University of Wisconsin, has taken a lead role in the social scientific study of forgiveness. Taking a bold step into uncharted waters, since 1985 Dr. Enright and his team at the International Forgiveness Institute have conducted numerous studies to prove that there are positive psychological outcomes associated with forgiveness. Recognizing that the Bible has the oldest known written record on forgiveness, Dr. Enright uses it as primary source material to conduct his studies.

“Forgiveness can bring people together,” wrote Dr. Enright in an excerpt from his work published in *Christianity Today*. “It can heal their wounds, and alleviate the bitterness and resentment caused by wrongdoing. It may also play a valuable role in reconciling warring parties and restoring harmony between people.”

Those who have had great harm imposed on them — the abused wife, the sexually abused child, those who have been forcibly robbed of loved ones, or victims of rape and incest — have their own stories to tell. All have experienced first-hand intense mental and emo-

tional trauma. Some have already wrestled with and grasped the essential qualities of forgiveness. For example:

Patricia, a woman in the Midwest, instead of nursing her granddaughter in her arms, is now nursing a broken heart. Patricia’s seven-month-old granddaughter drowned while in the custody of a relative.

“The four months that the family member spent in jail is not enough to erase my pain,” says Patricia. “I break out into tears because it is so painful.” For Patricia, who is still seething with anger, the forgiveness that Jesus asks for will be slow in coming. The ascent to 77 will be a steep one.

Gary, of Brooklyn, N.Y., is still filled with pain and unforgiveness at the 62-year-old man who stabbed his 23-year-old brother Mark during a “silly argument.”

Shouting over the din of a Brooklyn-bound subway train, he says, “It makes no sense! Mark did not deserve to die. He was so young.”

There are no answers for these questions. Gary’s mother in particular finds it difficult to make sense out of the violence that took Gary’s brother.

“My mother called my brother’s name yesterday,” he says. “She fainted three times when she was informed of Mark’s death and still has not gotten over his death.” How can forgiveness take place in situations such as these?

Charles Cucchiara, the director of the Blanton-Peale Services, a Christian-centered counseling service in New York, says, “to forgive or not is not a feeling. It is a decision.”

Mr. Cucchiara, a social worker, suggests that “the

# imes

path to forgiveness is a process which begins with the acknowledgement of anger and resentment.” He cautions that admitting anger is not a negative. It is a feeling, not a judgement. “We run into problems,” says Mr. Cucchiara, “when anger kidnaps our emotions and we become prisoners. The emotional and psychological effect can be extremely damaging.

“Dredging the soul and letting go of bitterness,” says Father James P. Lloyd, “will allow for the peace that Jesus promised if we are to follow God’s law. Drawing upon 52 years of experience as a psychologist and as a Roman Catholic priest, Father Lloyd strongly affirms that forgiveness promotes a general sense of well being and even physical healing in individuals as well.

Even victims of incest demonstrated positive emotional results after completing a 20-step-interpersonal forgiveness model developed by the International Forgiveness Institute. They need to complete four distinct phases: uncovering, decision, work and the outcome/deepening phase. At the end of these stages — each one can take years of difficult reflection — the forgiver will discover the paradox of forgiveness.

“As we give to others the gifts of mercy, generosity, and moral love, we ourselves are healed,” says Father Lloyd.

Jesus had a remedy for these intolerable situations only now being rediscovered by modern researchers and psychologists. His unique blend of compassion, mercy and foresight is all wrapped in the answer he gave to the Apostle Peter so many years ago: Beyond 77 times. ■



▲ Rembrandt,  
*The Return of  
the Prodigal  
Son*, 1781. (Art  
Resources, N.Y.)



## A Prayer for a New Century

The editors of the American Bible Society *Record* in December 1900 got it right on two points.

First, they saw that they were soon to embark on a new century (they recognized, technically speaking, that the 20th century wasn't beginning until January 1, 1901, a point which purists again argued, this time about the dawn of the 21st century throughout 2000).

And they prophesized that the new century wasn't going to be an easy one.

"World movements sweep on. Nations are in commotion. Civilizations are in conflict. The coming century will be, in many ways, a decisive century," they noted.

Endorsing a January 1901 Week of Prayer by the Evangelical Alliance for the United States, the *Record* editors noted that the world had some reason for optimism as the new century dawned.

"On the one hand, there are unwonted tokens of the coming of God's kingdom. Light is everywhere breaking forth. In realms material, intellectual, and spiritual, there is onward movement. Old ignorances and superstitions and tyrannies are breaking up. The rights and duties of the individual, the office and welfare of society, the mission of the Church, the largeness of the kingdom itself, are better and better understood," they noted.

So much for the good they saw. There was also strong reason for gloom, they added.

They cited a "perilous unrest," and a "vast questioning of truths and faiths. There is haughty self-assertion. There is a disposition to count this present world of controlling moment. The sense of the Word's inspired supremacy, of sin's fatal demerit, of God's intimate grace in Christ, of love's atoning sacrifice, of eternity's decision awards, is far too weak."

The tone of the language may sound archaic, a bit too flowery for modern ears. Yet a hundred years later, *Record* readers today can see similar reasons for optimism and pessimism in their own world, very much like those cited by the editors at the dawn of what they rightly perceived to be a precipitous century. ■



UBS book display at Vatican exhibit.

## Rome Exhibit traces Bible's impact on culture

In a groundbreaking cooperative venture with the Vatican Library, the United Bible Societies (UBS) opened a major exhibition in Rome this summer which traced both the history of the printed Bible and its impact on the culture and people of the world.

Titled *The Impact of the Word on the World*, the exhibit — which ran through November — traced the history of the Bible from the oral tradition to today's CD-ROM and touch-screen formats. A part of Rome's millennium celebration of the birth of Jesus, it was aimed largely at the millions of pilgrims and tourists who visited the city during the Year of Jubilee proclaimed by Pope John Paul II.

Another part of the joint exhibition was mounted at the Vatican Museum. Titled *Gospels and People*, it detailed God's revelation from oral tradition to the invention of printing.

The UBS exhibit, housed in the *Palazzo dei Dioscuri*, encompassed five color-coded rooms and picked up the Bible story with the invention of the printing press. While focusing on the impact of the Bible on printing technology and cultural areas such as literature and advertising, the exhibition also displayed rare Bibles, including Latin Bibles from 1462, the first Bible in Italian (1471), and a 1550 edition of Martin Luther's translation into German.

The Rev. Fergus Macdonald, UBS general secretary, said the exhibit was a fruit of a 1968 agreement that opened the door to UBS-Vatican biblical translation work. "We greatly appreciate our relationship with the Roman Catholic Church and the Catholic Biblical Federation," he said. ■



# “Go to the people of all nations and make them my disciples”

Jesus Christ

At the American Bible Society, we take Jesus' Great Commission seriously. In fact, over the past 30 years, in cooperation with the United Bible Societies (UBS), we have distributed over 14 billion Bibles and Scripture Portions.

Yet, there are still thousands who have yet to hear of God's love for them.

Won't you help us in our effort to complete Jesus' Great Commission?

Remember the American Bible Society in your Will. To learn more, complete the following.

- Please send me a copy of the ABS Will planning guide, “A Legacy of Hope.”
- I am considering including ABS in my Will.
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RECDEC00

# JUDGE RULES IN FAVOR OF BIBLICAL ABSOLUTES

JUDGE ALEX HOWARD, a senior judge on the U.S. District Court in Mobile, Ala., has sat through scores of trials and sentenced his share of convicts since being appointed to the bench by President Ronald Reagan in 1986.

In such a job, he's become something of an expert in observing moral depravity in modern America.

The first lesson he's learned is one of humility.

"I learned from a judge many years ago, who said that it was important to remember that 'there for the grace of God go I,'" Judge Howard, a member of Dauphine Way United Methodist Church, told the *Record*. That lesson, he emphasizes, is a warning to judges not to be too haughty, even when it comes to sentencing miscreants guilty of the most vile crimes.

The second lesson he's learned is about the need for relying on God.

Ironically enough, he sees the moral breakdown of society evidenced in his courtroom — most of his cases, as is true with many federal courts, involve the drug trade — as caused in large measure by judicial rulings which took formal prayer out of public schools and other public institutions.

"I see the moral decline in this country," says Judge Howard. "The whole system seems to be that there are no moral absolutes. But from my reading of the Scriptures there are absolutes."

Judge Howard not only reads the Scriptures, he is a champion of the Bible cause. He is a generous donor to the American Bible Society, ever since a beloved aunt told him about the work of ABS when he was a young man. He has nurtured an interest in how the Bible can best be distributed to those who



Judge Alex Howard

need it around the world, with a particular interest in Eastern Europe.

While pursuing his religious interests, Judge Howard, 76, built a distinguished legal career. A World War II veteran, he is a graduate of Auburn University and Vanderbilt University Law School. Before being named to the bench, Judge Howard worked in civil law for many years. He is married and has two children and five grandchildren.

Despite a busy career, he always maintained an interest in the worldwide Bible cause.

"I got particularly interested in the old Soviet Union," he says. "For many years I prayed that the hold of communism over Eastern Europe would break." Its collapse, he says, can be attributed to a quiet Christian revival movement, aided by the support of Christians who smuggled Bibles into the former Soviet Union.

The need for Bibles in Eastern Europe continues. He hosted a Russian Orthodox priest a few years ago who told him of the need in his small auto factory town south of Moscow. The judge wrote to ABS president Eugene Habecker, and 10,000 Russian-language Bibles were sent to the priest to meet the need for Scriptures.

It's all part of the judge's effort, through his work on the bench and via ABS, to provide moral absolutes to a world in need, whether it be in a federal court in Alabama or among Christians struggling a world away. ■

*More information about planned giving programs sponsored by the American Bible Society can be obtained by calling the Major & Planned Gift Programs at 1-800-820-6227.*

# BIBLE IN THE NEWS

## *Ballplayers look to Bible for inspiration*

■ Two of the hardest hitters in major league baseball routinely go to the Bible for inspiration, according to *Sports Illustrated*.

Mike Sweeney, the Kansas City Royals' All-Star first baseman, was described in a recent issue as "seemingly too good to be true ... Sweeney isn't just putting up MVP-like numbers but is also doing so quietly, with an aw-shucks humility."

Mr. Sweeney attributed a change in his personal attitude to a religious vision that occurred after his baseball career had apparently stagnated. While praying in the back of a church on Ash Wednesday in 1999, he pictured Jesus helping him to ride a tandem bicycle.

"I was on the back, pedaling my heart out, realizing the Lord will steer me if I agree to follow," he recalled for *Sports Illustrated*.

Gary Sheffield of the Los Angeles Dodgers, who had developed a reputation for troublesome behavior in his early career with the Milwaukee Brewers and Florida Marlins, said his life was transformed after he met gospel singer and committed Christian DeLeon Richards.

"I had won a World Series ring. I was financially secure, I had done everything I'd wanted," he told *Sports Illustrated*, "but I wasn't happy."

He prayed to God one morning to find a soul mate. That very day he met Miss Richards.

They have since married. They tithe to two churches, one in Los Angeles and the other in Mr. Sheffield's native Tampa.

"We were going over the Scripture about doing something you never thought you would do. I never thought I'd be giving away ten percent of my money," he said.

## *Atheists see harsh climate*

■ While Christians may complain about creeping secularism, it isn't easy being an atheist in American soci-

ety, says Ellen Johnson, president of American Atheists, in an interview with the *New York Times*.

"These are hard days for atheists in America," says the *Times*. "States are posting the Ten Commandments in courthouses, students are praying around flagpoles and at football games, and Capitol Hill is hosting Bible studies."

Mrs. Johnson, whose organization is based in Cranford, N.J., is the philosophical heir to Madalyn Murray O'Hair, who disappeared in 1995 under mysterious circumstances.

Mrs. Johnson picketed outside both major party conventions this summer, decrying efforts to publicly fund social service programs operated by religious groups.

## *Christians cite differing biblical views*

■ The *Forth Worth Star-Telegram* notes that Christians are citing the Bible to buttress both sides in the capital punishment debate.

The issue has split denominational leadership and people in the pews, the Texas daily reports.

Dr. Richard Land, president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, argues that the death penalty is sanctioned in both the Old and New Testaments as a means for civic authority to protect its citizens.

"I have the right to expect that if you kill my wife, the government will exact justice, not revenge, justice," says Dr. Land.

But the Rev. Ken Huggins, pastor of Elkins Lake Baptist Church in Huntsville, Texas, the community where the state houses its Death Row, says that executing prisoners is contrary to gospel values.

"I'm not sure Jesus is real thrilled about putting a final note on anybody's life," Rev. Huggins says. "I think the Jesus ethic is, 'Always look for redemption.'"

Similar debates about the biblical ethics of capital punishment are taking place among Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists and Orthodox Jews. ■

# update

## NATIONAL

### ■ TENNESSEE

The American Bible Society (ABS) has entered into an alliance with Visual Bible International Inc. (VBII) to produce, distribute and market

visual formats for the *Good News Bible* and the *Contemporary English Version Bible*, both ABS products.

Visual Bible, based in Nashville with its financial headquarters in Toronto, plans to produce high-quality versions of the 66 books of the Bible for television, cable and home video. Founded by Canadian businessman John Hamilton, VBII has already filmed the *Gospel According to Matthew* and the *Acts of the Apostles* on a set the company constructed in Morocco. The set will be used for the other biblical productions. Each book of the Bible will be filmed, word for word, in its entirety.

The two videos already produced by the company have sold 560,000 units. They feature prominent Hollywood stars, including the late Richard Kiley, James Brolin, Jennifer O'Neal and Bruce Marchiano.

The roots of the effort date back to 1991, when a group of New Zealand business people conceived of a project to film an exact translation series based on the Scriptures.

As part of VBII's agreement with ABS, Mr. Hamilton agreed to donate two percent of sales revenue from the project to Opportunity 21, a five-year fund-raising effort designed to generate \$90 million in support of Scripture distribution efforts in more than 70 countries.

Dr. R. Lamar Vest [see trustee profile on page 5], a member of the ABS board of trustees, commented at a news conference announcing the agreement that it will provide support for the ABS mission to provide the Bible to every person in a language and form each can understand.

"We stand convinced that the new generation of Bible work must include presenting the Word of God in innovative ways that include sights and sounds, as well as the conventional printed format," Dr. Vest said.

### ■ NEW YORK

A limited edition letterpress *New Revised Standard Version* lectern Bible will be on display at the Gallery of the American Bible Society through Jan. 5, 2001.

Lectern Bibles are most frequently used in readings during religious services. This new edition, according to Arion Press of San Francisco, its publisher, "is intended to take its place in the tradition of grand Bibles, as a statement of typographic excellence at the end of the 20th century." This new edition may be the last folio Bible to use letterpress printing from metal type, a technology which has largely been phased out due to technological developments in printing.



◆ Kingsley, the star of the children's video Bible series produced by the American Bible Society, visits a shelter in Springfield, Mo.

## ■ UNITED KINGDOM

The United Bible Societies, based in Reading, England, has launched its *Opportunity 21* Web site, providing a global audience with information about the most extensive Scripture distribution program in history.

*Opportunity 21* is a Scripture mission initiative comprising more than 375 projects in more than 75 countries. The Web site is accessible at [www.opportunity21.org](http://www.opportunity21.org).

Through the Web site, people can not only learn about the projects but can make direct donations to the many areas of need.

*Opportunity 21* includes a \$90 million fundraising campaign over the next four years. Support has been provided by the American Bible Society and the Tennessee-based Maclellan Foundation.

The Rev. William Jefferson, *Opportunity 21* global coordinator, explained that the new Web site "will allow people throughout the world to discover what *Opportunity 21* represents, and at the same time allow them to connect with the mission of United Bible Societies on a national, regional or global level."

## ■ AUSTRALIA

Athletes not only reached towards the gold during the last Olympics in Sydney, but they also jumped at the opportunity to receive the Scriptures, thanks to the Bible Society in Australia and a group called *Quest Australia: More Than the Gold*.

With the cooperation of the New South Wales government, Bible distribution was allowed on the grounds of the Olympic sites. Tens of thousands of athletes and fans were provided with Bibles and other Scripture materials through the efforts of *Quest Australia*, an



umbrella group representing a wide array of Christian organizations in the country.

The distribution campaign was a step forward for Christian outreach at major international sporting events, said Davyd Hepburn, United Bible Societies Sports Outreach consultant.

"In the past, the Christian community did their own thing at the Olympics and other major sporting events," he explained. "But this time, the Sydney Olympic Committee organizing the Games has worked openly and directly with Christian organizations through *Quest*."

## ■ INDONESIA

The first complete Bible in any West Papuan language was published this year.

Efforts at translation began with the Rev. Stan Dale, a missionary who was killed by West Papuan warriors in the 1960s before he could complete the New Testament. The biblical translation was completed by a team led by a Dutch missionary in 1996 through the support of United Bible Societies and the Indonesian Bible Society.

▲ The Rev. Sandor Endre of the Reformed Church wades through floodwaters in a street in Vamosujfalu, Hungary. Rev. Endre, who is also the village mayor, supervised the evacuation of the village during a recent flood. The Hungarian Bible Society distributed more than 1,000 Bibles in the village to bring comfort and strength to those affected by the catastrophe. (Photo by the Hungarian Bible Society.)

MEMORIALIZE A LOVED ONE BY HELPING TO PROVIDE BIBLES TO PEOPLE WHO DON'T YET HAVE ONE

William Dale Allen, Jr. <i>Given by: Mr. &amp; Mrs. Ray Koenig</i>	My Mother, Hazel Cannon <i>Given by: Vivian Saucerman</i>	My Husband, Ernest E. Fender <i>Given by: Carol A. Fender</i>	Mr. Arnold Krieg <i>Given by: Mr. &amp; Mrs. Edward Kolodziej</i>	Roy Sigman Price <i>Given by: Ruth B. Starnes</i>
Clarence A. Amling <i>Given by: Marilyn Amling</i>	My Son-in-Law, Bruce E. Carlson <i>Given by: Russell Johnson</i>	My Husband, John J. Fletcher <i>Given by: Margaret L. Fletcher</i>	Janet Kuehlthau <i>Given by: Ronald D. Sears</i>	Dr. Dale C. Recker <i>Given by: Katherine H. Recker</i>
My Husband, James L. Applegate <i>Given by: Phyllis Applegate</i>	My Sister, Elizabeth Casey <i>Given by: Lois N. Martin</i>		Dr. Bryant M. Kirkland <i>Given by: Paul A. Steiner</i>	Charles Reeson & Nina Fiese <i>Given by: Dorothy L. Fork</i>
Our Parents, James & Mary Argabright Hobart & Hazel Craig <i>Given by: Don &amp; Delora Craig</i>	In Memory of Alfred M. and Mabel M. Cook <i>Given by: The Estate of Mabel M. Cook</i>	My Nephew, Craig Fresvik <i>Given by: Elsie Berkman</i>	My Sister, Lucille E. Knapp <i>Given by: Margaret J. Hartman</i>	Mary Reichert <i>Given by: Shirley Banfenecht</i>
Mr. & Mrs. Salvatore Azzara <i>Given by: Candice Azzara</i>	Dr. T. James Crawford <i>Given by: Frank &amp; Carol Zeller</i>	My Parents, Rev. & Mrs. A. H. Gallmeier <i>Given by: Ruth Gallmeier</i>	Barbara Kostrey <i>Given by: John Kostrey</i>	Hilma Richards <i>Given by: Ruby Lee Williams</i>
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Mary Leonard and Evan Frederic Bailey <i>Given by: John H &amp; Gertrude H. Shanley</i>	My Husband, Rev. Ellis Davis, My Sister-in-Law, Ethel Johnson <i>Given by: Frona Davis</i>	My Parents, Carolyn A. & Rodney F. Glascock <i>Given by: Patricia C. Glascock</i>	Helen A. MacPherson <i>Given by: The Estate of Helen A. MacPherson</i>	John Roduner <i>Given by: Earl &amp; Donna Dormaier</i>
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Virginia Pulis Bezuyen <i>Given by: John L. Pulis</i>	Nicholas John Duncan <i>Given by: Donna J. Duncan</i>	Mr. & Mrs. M. Oleksiak Mr. L. F. Grucza <i>Given by: Lou A. Grucza</i>	Nellie Meerman <i>Given by: Dirk &amp; Jennifer Kraai</i>	Carolyn B. Schirmer <i>Given by: Shirley B. Crickenberger</i>
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Bailey Bratton <i>Given by: Troy and Gena Spears</i>	My Parents, Rev. & Mrs. Ellsworth (Jennie) Dykstra <i>Given by: Lois Burns</i>	Sarah Hardin & J. D. Hardin <i>Given by: Mrs. Stephen G. Loy</i>	My Mother, Wanda Mikelski <i>Given by: Mr. &amp; Mrs. Benjamin Mikelski</i>	My Mother, Katherine Schwartz <i>Given by: Mr. &amp; Mrs. Larry Ivey</i>
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Corey, Kelly, Jordan and Taylor Brown <i>Given by: Jason &amp; Kerrie Ann Brown</i>	My Grandmother, Lily Violet Edwards <i>Given by: Sharon E. Palmer</i>	My Sister, Ruby Hodges <i>Given by: Myrtle H. Traggis</i>	Caroline L. Nees <i>Given by: Walter J. Nees</i>	My Wife, Daisy C. Shevy <i>Given by: Allen E. Shevy</i>
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My Brother-in-Law, Bob Buscher <i>Given by: Bob &amp; Dorie Kyllingstad</i>	In Memory of my parents, Rev. Reinhold and Mrs. Ida Fehlberg <i>Given by: the Trust Estate of Jessie W. Fehlberg</i>	T. Lynn Johnson Memorial Fund <i>Given by: First Christian Church</i>	Richard Y. Patterson <i>Given by: Elizabeth Patterson</i>	My Parents, Agnes & Godfrey Straube, My Brother, Richard Straube <i>Given by: Mildred Harms</i>
		Dr. Bryant M. Kirkland <i>Given by: Rev. Carol C. Cruikshank</i>	Dorsey Pickens <i>Given by: Gloria &amp; Mike Croft</i>	My Son, Gary Lee Underwood <i>Given by: Ann Underwood</i>
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Memorials of \$500 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.

# to the editor

*In this issue we begin a new Record feature. We plan to publish a selected group of letters from our readers. Letters should be less than 300 words and focused on articles that have appeared in the Record. We reserve the right to edit them for clarity or space considerations. You can send your letters to: **Editor, American Bible Society Record, 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023-7505.** You can also reach us via e-mail at [absrecord@americanbible.org](mailto:absrecord@americanbible.org)*

## **Greetings from Greece**

Thank you so much for the good job you do at the *Record*. I find it a big encouragement. I don't think Americans realize how easily Christian encouragement and support can be found. I have certainly come to treasure even the smallest contact living here ...

I am always encouraged when I read of work being done in other countries. Keep up the good work and may God bless your every step.

*Jennifer K. Liolios  
Kalambaka, Greece*

## **A treasured partnership**

I am writing to inform you how I treasure partnership with this organization that works for the Lord Jesus Christ.

As I read the *Record* and letters each month from Dr. Eugene Habecker, American Bible Society president, I am encouraged more and more in working with you in the love of Jesus in placing his Word around the world.

*Kimberly L. Boyd  
Machipomgo, Va.*

## **Uplifting reading**

Just wanted to let you know that the August reading on God's mercy and kindness [see page 26 in this issue] is so uplifting and enriching to me.

So far this is the best reading in all the 15 months I've used your guide. Its well-coordinated daily readings, plus the guidance of the Holy Spirit, ushered me into a new dimension of God's nature and love.

*Dr. Medarlo B. Rivera  
General Secretary  
Philippine Bible Society*

## **Thoughts on the Holy Land**

The April/May *Record* story on the Israel pilgrimage sponsored by the American Bible Society reminds me of a visit I had more than a decade ago. My favorite places were not the shrines but the Sea of Galilee, the beach at Caesarea, the rocky cliff at Caesarea Philippi.

Looking back I regret that the tour allowed no real contact with the "living stones" — the Christian community — now dwindling in numbers ...

So ever since I've been on a mission to remind pastors, churches and now the American Bible Society that however much we U.S. pilgrims like to walk where Jesus walked, I think we do real grief to the Spirit of Jesus by ignoring our brothers and sisters in Christ in Israel and in the area under the Palestinian Authority ...

To retrace the life of Jesus surely must mean more than what happened in Jesus' time, for if indeed He is risen, as we believe, then it is what is happening to his followers today that is of paramount importance.

*Dr. S. Thomas Nicolls  
Chaplain/Professor Emeritus  
Hiram College  
Hiram, Ohio*

## **Kudos for Dr. Ben Carson article**

Thank you for the insightful article on Dr. Ben Carson [August/September *Record*].

I dusted off my study material on the book of Proverbs and delved back into God's wisdom. What a refreshing it brought to my soul.

*Constance Gbolston  
Birmingham, Alabama*



# quiet time

*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

### *Growing in Faith and Following Jesus*

- 1 Luke 2.21-40
- 2 Luke 2.41-52
- 3 Luke 3.1-20
- 4 Luke 3.21-38
- 5 Luke 4.1-15

### EPIPHANY

- 6 Matthew 2.1-12

### SUNDAY

- 7 Matthew 2.13-23
- 8 Luke 4.16-30
- 9 Luke 4.31-44
- 10 Luke 5.1-16
- 11 Luke 5.17-39
- 12 Luke 6.1-19
- 13 Luke 6.20-49

### SUNDAY

- 14 Luke 7.1-17
- 15 Luke 7.18-35
- 16 Luke 7.36-50
- 17 Luke 9.1-17

### WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY BEGINS

- 18 Luke 9.18-36
- 19 Luke 9.37-62
- 20 Luke 10.1-20

### ECUMENICAL SUNDAY

- 21 John 17.1-26
- 22 Luke 8.1-21
- 23 Luke 8.22-39
- 24 Luke 8.40-56
- 25 Acts 9.1-25
- 26 Acts 9.26-43
- 27 Acts 10.1-33

### SUNDAY

- 28 Acts 10.34-48
- 29 Luke 11.14-32
- 30 Luke 11.33-54
- 31 Luke 13.22-35

*The Octave for Christian Unity is January 18-25, 2001*

## FEBRUARY

### *Growing in Faith and Sharing God's Love*

- 1 Luke 10.21-42
- 2 Luke 15.1-10
- 3 Luke 15.11-32

### SUNDAY

- 4 Leviticus 19.1-18
- 5 1 John 1.1-10
- 6 1 John 2.1-17
- 7 1 John 2.18-29
- 8 1 John 3.1-10
- 9 1 John 3.11-24
- 10 1 John 4.1-21

### SUNDAY

- 11 1 John 5.1-21
- 12 2 John
- 13 3 John
- 14 1 Corinthians 13.1-13
- 15 Galatians 5.2-15
- 16 Ephesians 1.1-14
- 17 Ephesians 1.15-23

### SUNDAY

- 18 Ephesians 2.1-10
- 19 Ephesians 2.11-22
- 20 Ephesians 3.1-21
- 21 Colossians 1.1-23
- 22 Colossians 1.24—2.5
- 23 Colossians 2.6-23
- 24 Colossians 3.1-17

### SUNDAY

- 25 Romans 13.8-14
- 26 John 15.1-17
- 27 Deuteronomy 6.1-19

### ASH WEDNESDAY

- 28 Psalm 51

*Orthodox Lent begins on Monday, February 26, 2001*

## PLEASE PRAY

**RUSSIA** – Reaching the people of Siberia is one of the most difficult Bible challenges imaginable. People of different groups are scattered over huge distances. Pray for the Millennium Project that will allow the Bible Society of Russia to distribute 105,000 New Testaments and Children's Portions in this difficult-to-reach region.

**NORWAY** – Praise God for the encouraging reception of the *Lectio Divina Bible* study program among young people. Also give thanks for the participation of Norwegian actors and theatre directors in the production of a dramatized New Testament.

**GREENLAND** – Under the guidance of the Danish Bible Society, the Bible is being translated into modern Greenlandic and it is hoped to have this translation ready soon. This will be the first translation of the complete Bible into Greenlandic.

**ESTONIA** – Give thanks for the Revised Estonian Bible, the first new edition since the Second World War. Pray that it will encourage Scripture reading in this country. Ask God to bless other translations into Estonian sign language and Estonian Braille.

*(The above prayer requests are edited excerpts from the United Bible Societies Prayer Booklet 2000, which in December is focusing on the needs of Bible Societies in the Nordic countries and Eastern Europe.)*

# YOUNG REFUGEES INTRODUCED TO GOD'S WORD

THOUSANDS OF CHECHEN REFUGEE CHILDREN in the North Caucasus received Scriptures this summer through a distribution project organized by the Bible Society in Russia (BSR). Some 5,000 children's Scriptures were provided to young people attending summer camps in the region.

Organized by the federal government, the summer camps gave the Chechen children a much-needed holiday and provided them with health care.

Pavel Popilin, BSR information officer, visited the camps and noted that they provided an opportunity to spread the gospel.

"Most of the children we met at the camp had lost parents, relatives or friends," said Mr. Popilin. "They have had too much sadness and suffering in recent years." Chechnya has been the site of a bitter war between secessionist rebels, many of them Muslims, and the Russian military.

All of the children wanted a copy of the Scriptures but some of them could not read. Mr. Popilin devised a Russian-language test to find out who the best students were, and then arranged for those who were good at reading to help others to read their new Scriptures.

"We very much wanted all of them to learn about the Lord," he said. "Even if they do not eventually become disciples of Christ, perhaps they will not be against him and his followers."

About 10,000 children attended the camps; about half received Scriptures. All had the chance to hear from Christian volunteers who brought sports gear, musical instruments and books.

"But most important of all, they brought smiles and human kindness, which have been in such short supply at home in recent times," said Mr. Popilin. "The children



▲ Young Chechens show off the Scriptures they received from the Bible Society in Russia. (Photo by Pavel Popilin.)

could ramble along the mountain paths without the fear of stepping on a mine, admire the snow-capped peaks and enjoy the silence and pure air."

The hope is that the camping program and the Scripture distribution effort will have a long-term impact.

"Then possibly a new generation will grow up in Chechnya who will not see Christians as their enemies. There are a lot of prejudices that divide us but these can be quietly overcome by human contact. And it is better to do this in childhood when hearts are not filled with bitterness and harsh anger," said Mr. Popilin. ■



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# CRUSADE OF LIGHT 2001

*Your word is a lamp to my  
feet and a light to my path.*

PSALM 119.105 CEV

**T**his year we celebrate the first year of the new millennium — *the coming of Light*. The American Bible Society's *Crusade of Light* will provide for a yearlong worldwide festival of Scripture sharing through translation, publication, distribution, teaching, and aiding victims of natural disasters.

The *Crusade of Light* will mobilize millions of people to join in sharing the light of God's Word so others can walk in the brightness of God's presence.

Your support for this *Crusade* will provide New Testaments to street children in Burundi, publish Bibles for patients in Haitian hospitals, build Bible houses in Morocco, provide reader portions for children in Cambodia, fund new Bible translations in China and, in thousands of others ways, light up the lives of millions of people living in darkness. No region of the planet will be untouched by the light of this *Crusade*.

Join us in this *Crusade* to share the light of God's Word. Keep an eye on your mailbox for more details.

*For more information call us toll-free at 1-866-89-LIGHT (895-4448) or e-mail us at [crusade-of-light@americanbible.org](mailto:crusade-of-light@americanbible.org)*



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