

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

RECORD

MARCH/APRIL 2005

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RUBBER MEETS
THE ROAD**

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OF A MARRIAGE**

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2004

A YEAR IN REVIEW

[see center insert]

Good News for Everyone

FROM THE PRESIDENT

RECORD

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The mission of the American Bible Society is to make the Bible available to every person in a language and format each can understand and afford, so that all people may experience its life-changing message. 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 publication in the United States. It is published six times per year, and is sent to as many of our supporters as budget allows, including anyone contributing \$20 or more in a year to the Society. Postage is paid at New York, N.Y., and additional mailing offices. Other publications are encouraged to reprint the text of any *Record* articles, but prior written permission must be obtained from the *American Bible Society Record* to reproduce any images. Publications reprinting the text of *Record* articles must include a credit line. Please send a copy of the issue to the *Record* at 1865 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023. (ISSN 0006-801)

Good News for Everyone

God purposefully chose what the world considers nonsense in order to shame the wise, and he chose what the world considers weak to shame the powerful.

1 CORINTHIANS 1.27 (GNT)

The miracle of Easter is both wonderful and astounding — the ultimate “and they lived happily ever after”; it’s the end of the beginning of unbelievably good news. Yet many people have difficulty juxtaposing the Easter promise with all the troubles of this present world. For instance, we wrestle with the problem of evil; why does God, who is good, allow it?

On the other hand, we hold very dearly to our independence and freedom. Genesis relates how, at the first opportunity, as we set out on our own, everything came undone. We tend to be blind or at least to minimize our part in shattering the Garden’s intended bliss.

From Scripture, though, we learn how God has been working to urge us out of the abyss *we* chose to enter, an abyss we sometimes seem stubbornly reluctant to leave.

While the Bible offers *good news for everyone*, it first sets the scene — helps us understand that, unlike the way our trouble began, we can’t get out of this mess on our own, and especially not on our own terms. The apostle Paul minces no words when he writes, “There is no one who is righteous, no one who is wise or who worships God . . . not even one.” (Romans 3.10-12 GNT) It is God pursuing us — that is good news. And more good news, we’re all on equal footing. As Paul wrote, from God’s vantage, none of us has anything to bring to the table apart from ourselves.

That’s all God requires, which is Good News. The Bible’s message of hope, its offer of freedom from self-imprisonment, is available to everyone. And Jesus implores us to share this Good News.

At the American Bible Society we are taking risks, trying to break through stereotypes and clichés to gain a fresh hearing in communities that, until now, have shunned traditional avenues of outreach. We’re finding ways to provide the Bible’s Good News, for some, for the very first time, presenting its timeless message in relevant ways.

We are also leading the way with our colleagues in the worldwide fellowship of the United Bible Societies, developing more strategic ways to share the Good News in other countries — and through partnering with other Christian organizations and structuring programs around niches of need and potential resources.

This is also Good News; will you help us share it with everyone?



Eugene B. Habecker

RECORD

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

MARCH/APRIL 2005
VOLUME 150, NUMBER 2

ON THE COVER:
The Good News
brings joy to
millions.

(Photograph by
David Singer)



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EXPLORE OUR NEW WEB SITE
AT WWW.AMERICANBIBLE.ORG



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PLEASE PRAY

ALBANIA — Praise God for blessing the hard work of so many on the interconfessional New Testament, which the interconfessional Bible Society of Albania hopes to publish by the end of 2005.

GREECE — Pray that the Bible Society's relationship with the churches in Greece would be productive in working together to spread the Good News.

MACEDONIA — Praise God that Macedonia is now experiencing some political stability, but please pray for spiritual and social peace while the Bible Society continues to work on the updated translation of the Bible.

ROMANIA — Thank God for the continued growth in Scripture distribution. Please pray for the completion of the interconfessional Bible translation.


RUSSIAN FEDERATION — Please pray for the completion of the translation of the full Bible into contemporary Russian.

TURKEY — Praise God for the printing of the Kurdish New Testament and the completion of an original Turkish Children's Bible.

UZBEKISTAN — Thank God for the ongoing work of translating the Old Testament into Uzbek; some Books have already been launched. ■

HELP FOR TSUNAMI VICTIMS

Please pray for the Bible Society of Thailand as they print booklets titled *Is There Any Hope for My Future?* to give to hurting people in that country. Continue to pray for the people in the other affected countries — those still searching for missing loved ones and who are struggling to rebuild their communities.

 Visit www.americanbible.org for updates on these countries or to make a donation to our **Hope Fund**.



We encourage you to send your letters to: Editor, American Bible Society Record, 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023-7505. Telephone: 212-408-8754.
Note: For questions for the American Bible Society not related to the Record, please call 212-408-1200. www.americanbible.org

爲國禱告
外族人侵
玷污了你的聖
使耶路撒冷成
們把你僕人的
拿你子民的
沒了耶路撒



B Y P E T E R F E U E R H E R D

In Matthew 28, Jesus tells his followers to go forth and make disciples of all nations.

At Grace Baptist Church in Glendora, Calif., that admonition is not just another sermon topic. Under the direction of its pastor, the Rev. Gene Wood, the church has found a highly effective means for making disciples in a faraway nation.

By partnering with the American Bible Society, Grace has been bringing Bibles to people in remote regions of China. Congregants have sponsored the purchase of Bible vans that regularly traverse the Chinese countryside. And they get personally involved: Rev. Wood and dozens of church members travel to China to share in the joy evoked by the Bibles they help to provide.

The church in China is experiencing rapid growth, and with this growth has come a tremendous need for Bibles,

The Amity Printing Company in China, right, has produced more than 34 million Chinese Bibles since 1987.

especially in remote areas. Rev. Wood recognizes that life is complicated in today's China. It's a massive country — with a population of more than 1.3 billion — undergoing wrenching changes. While wanting the fruits of capitalism, China's experience with colonialism has made its political leaders wary of outside religious influences, particularly Christianity.

"There are a lot of political issues going on in China. It's not for us to decide. But what we are sure of is the Bible is a good thing," says Rev. Wood. So *Grace for China*, the organization that developed out of this partnership, has decided to work openly and legally.

China's new but uneven prosperity has been a boon for its cities, while the countryside, where much of the population still lives, stagnates. *Grace for China* directs its Bible work to rural villages.

It is estimated that 7 percent of the population is

Where the Rubber Meets



PHOTOS COURTESY GRACE FOR CHINA



DAVID SINGER



DAVID SINGER


the Road
of Need
Reaching Rural China

Christian. Grace Church has decided it can best help this group by working through organizations such as the China Christian Council (C.C.C.) and the United Bible Societies (UBS), two organizations that work in partnership with the American Bible Society.

They've been able to make an impact, contributing \$315,000, which the American Bible Society has matched. Now, 40 vans distribute tens of thousands of Bibles annually. (*Grace for China* paid for four of them.) Over the past two years, *Grace for China* has also sponsored free distribution of 120,390 Bibles in these areas. Kua Wee Seng, United Bible Societies' representative to China, has been instrumental in guiding the organization's efforts to ensure that their donation dollars go as far as possible.

Grace for China has a three-pronged mission approach: "legal, open and always Bible-oriented," says Rev. Wood, who has been to China more than a dozen times since his church got involved in this project. He's joined by 40 pilgrims from his church and elsewhere in the United States.

For each three-day visit, they fly from Beijing to various distribution sites. (On one outing last spring, the vans were used to deliver 20,000 Bibles to just one site.) They return to



The church in China is experiencing rapid growth, and with this growth has come a tremendous need for Bibles.

Nanjing to visit the Amity Printing Company, where the Bibles are produced. The press has printed more than 34 million Chinese Bibles since its founding, in part, by the American Bible Society, in 1987.

Even though China bans proselytizing by foreigners, by working with the C.C.C. leadership, Rev. Wood is able to see the Word of God taken to places where it otherwise might not be possible. Many rural villages don't have Christian churches. What they do have are called "preaching points," where, in some places, up to 1,000 people gather for worship. In one rural province, he notes, half the Christians did not have Bibles until a van arrived.

The payoff for Rev. Wood and his companions comes when they see the end result of their work.

"We've seen people fall down and weep. There is nothing like the joy on their faces," he says about the Bible distribution scenes he has witnessed.

And, while the Chinese who receive Bibles have been affected, so have their American visitors, notes Rev. Wood.

"It really changed their world perspective. They have a

PHOTO COURTESY ASIA OPPORTUNITY

Some 8,000 Christians traveled to Jianzhuang, China, to receive Scriptures that had been delivered by a Bible van.

more complete view of what God is doing in China today," he says. "They comprehend the value of a Bible," he adds, noting that visitors become aware that there are millions of Christians in the world today who cannot afford or don't have access to the Scriptures.

Wee Seng says, "On one trip, when we arrived at the first village, Jianzhuang, we were amazed to see 8,000 people gathered, eagerly waiting for their Bibles. When Christians from the surrounding villages heard of the Bible distribution, they walked or rode trucks to Jianzhuang, fearing there would be no Bibles left by the time the van reached their villages." Grace Church is one of many faithful partners working with the American Bible Society to fulfill the Great Commission. Taking the gospel to every corner of the planet has been at the center of the Bible Society's mission for nearly 200 years.

To expedite global ministry and efficiency, the American Bible Society helped organize the United Bible Societies, a fellowship of 141 national Bible Societies, in 1946. Through this fellowship, the American Bible Society contributed more than \$16 million in 2004, extending its Bible outreach to more than 200 countries and territories.

For example, the American Bible Society helped provide for the printing of 25 million children's Bibles in 100 languages in India, the publication of the New Testament in contemporary Russian and the creation of videos for ministry to AIDS victims in eight countries in Africa. In total, the American Bible Society and its partners distributed more than 431 million Scriptures worldwide.

In addition to the funding of ongoing programs, the American Bible Society spearheaded worldwide UBS outreach through a special four-year project called *Opportunity 21* that supported 400 projects in 85 countries. ■

F To learn how you can participate in the hundreds of international outreach, translation and distribution programs supported by the American Bible Society, visit www.americanbible.org or call 1-866-895-4448.



A YEAR OF ACHIEVEMENT



Lamar Vest
Chairman

I'm pleased to say that this past year has been a year of great visibility for the American Bible Society and the Bible cause. We are moving in new directions with vigor and enthusiasm. We do have good news for everyone!

As Chairman of the Board, I stand behind our mission to encourage people to read the Bible and to be changed by the experience. This is true throughout the work of the Bible Society, and there are several examples I can point to over this past year.

We contributed to the public discussion of the Mel Gibson film *The Passion of the Christ*. Because of our unique expertise, the Bible Society brought biblical perspective to the dialogue. Millions were reached with the American Bible Society message that God's Word is the authentic source for *The Passion*.

Our goal of winning the hearts and minds of urban youth includes our *Elementz of Life*[™] program, which reaches at-risk youth (see related story on page 8).

Another youth-related effort intended to inform those who work with youth is our series of research surveys of American teens. One question asked this past year particularly interested me. Teens were asked whether or not they believe that their prayers are answered. (A startling 92 percent said they believed in answered prayers.)

One of the stellar assets of the Bible Society is the scholarly work carried out by the Eugene A. Nida Institute for Biblical Scholarship. The Bible Society collaborated in the work of Scripture translation by the Yup'ik and Inupiat peoples of Alaska, the Lakota Sioux of South Dakota, the Hutterite community in Pennsylvania, the Gullah people of South Carolina and the Choctaw Nation of Mississippi.

An important change took place with regard to *The Gallery at the American Bible Society*, as the Board of Trustees approved an exciting plan to enhance its educational outreach by having it become an independent museum, but with continuing close ties to the American Bible Society. The *Museum of Biblical Art (MoBiA)* will open in May of 2005.

Our development staff enabled double-digit growth in each of the two primary gift categories of outright gifts (12.5 percent) and deferred gifts (88 percent). Combining results, the Bible Society experienced an overall growth in income of 49 percent.

Internationally we extend our outreach through the United Bible Societies, a fellowship of 141 national Bible Societies. In 2003, with substantial support from the American Bible Society, the United Bible Societies were able to distribute 431 million Scriptures.

As you can tell from this brief overview, it has been a very good year for the advancement of the gospel. But the need is still great. Millions have never read the Bible in their language of origin. As we continue to seize opportunities to provide the Scriptures at home and around the world, we are grateful for your generosity, which has permitted us to do our part in saving souls.

With your prayers and financial support, we look forward to doing much more ministry in the year ahead.



Gang Busting For God



The first time Jorge Roque walked into his uncle's church in Kansas, his gang-styled garb flashed at the congregation like a neon sign. But they saw past his shaved head, hooded sweatshirt, pants cut off at the knees where they were met by long Converse socks; they embraced the young man behind the flashy façade as one of their own. "That's what caught my attention," he says. "I saw Christ in the people."

At age 14, Jorge had already joined the Two-Six Nation gang in Chicago's Little Village community, a "little city within a city," for Mexican Americans. His father and mother worked hard to provide a good home for Jorge, his two younger brothers and his sister.

But Jorge, like many kids, sought validation on the streets. "My role models," he says, "were the guys that were gangbanging, making money on the streets, driving nice cars, being around women."

SECOND FAMILY — DANGEROUS INFLUENCE

Two-Six gang members (named for a popular street in Little Village) provided the attention and support he felt he could not ask of his hardworking parents. "The gang became like my second family. We talked about everything." Soon after entering his freshman year in high school, Jorge was expelled for throwing a rival gang member out a second-story window.

But a dream and a brush with death soon changed the

From left:
Enrique Ramos,
Cobra gang,
Jorge Roque and
Jose "Chief"
Velez, also with
the Cobras.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID SINGER

*A Young
Man's Journey
and Mission*

B Y F R A N C I N E L A N G E

direction of Jorge's life. One Friday night, after dreaming about her son in a coffin, Jorge's mom begged him not to go out, to no avail. Hours later, walking alone in the early morning, Jorge saw a car full of rivals passing by and he began heaving bricks at them. A chase ensued and Jorge ended up trapped against a fence. The car owner put a gun to his head while someone else yelled, "Kill him, kill him!" The gunman took a closer look at Jorge and laughed. "You're just a baby." They released the terrified teen, who ran home crying.

Fearing for his safety, Jorge's mother persuaded him to visit his uncle in Kansas. Surrounded by wheat fields and cattle, not concrete and traffic, in the farming town of Liberal, the would-be gangster experienced a severe culture shock. Under his bachelor uncle's strict supervision, Jorge learned to cook,

do laundry and vacuum. "It was like a boot camp," he says.

Back home, his family only attended church on major holidays. In Kansas, his uncle took him to church twice a week.

REBORN IN KANSAS FOR RENEWAL IN CHICAGO

In church to celebrate New Year's eve, the 16-year-old made his way to the altar and began weeping. His prayer for forgiveness, for the people he'd beaten, lasted five hours. As Jorge prayed, "Come into my life, Jesus, I need you," peace and joy settled on him, and he felt God restoring him from inside out.


Five months later, Jorge returned to Chicago, eager to share his faith with his family and gang. Presenting himself before the Two-Six leadership, Jorge told them, "I want to drop my



flags" (quit the gang) — to walk away from its protection and validation. But would the gang let him go — trust him with his inside knowledge of their history, their crimes and connections? Finally, they agreed he could be "blessed out," meaning he could leave the gang without repercussions.

Having recruited nearly 50 of his childhood friends into the Two-Six Nation, Jorge would now try to get them out. He began inviting gang members to church.

Eventually the director of the Juvenile Justice Ministry at Metro Chicago Youth for Christ (YFC), Gordon McLean, enlisted Jorge for outreach events and the YFC jail ministry. Because of the strength he drew from God's Word, Jorge always traveled with cases of Bibles to give away — Bibles YFC got from the American Bible Society. The *Contemporary English Version* made the Scriptures accessible to the young people he worked with.



In 2003, 258 (43.7 percent) of the 654 murders committed in Chicago were gang related.

— Chicago Police Department 2003 Annual Report

Now married, with a son and daughter, a full-time day job at Jiffy Lube and the part-time position with YFC, Jorge nevertheless yearned for greater involvement in ministry. One day he received a call from the YMCA.

Kenny Ruiz, the executive director of the Y's Street Intervention Program, asked Jorge to join his team as an outreach worker, promoting him to program coordinator a year later. Kenny handpicks those he discerns to have a similar heart — using Christ to extract young men and women from the gang life. As part of the program, Jorge gives out the Bible Society's new *Elementz of Life™ 4 the Streets* magazine, which he says connects the Bible with life on the streets. "The gospel is in . . . every page of that magazine, sliced in throughout. It talks to their level," he explains, referring to the stories of the life and faith struggles written by other young people.

OTHER EXAMPLES OF DOMESTIC SCRIPTURE MINISTRY

■ ELEMENTZ OF LIFE™

The *Elementz* program reaches youth not engaged in a traditional church experience — to free them from at-risk behavior and to integrate them into the larger church community.

Partnering with churches and other faith-based and community organizations, the Bible Society provides adolescents with Scripture resources meant to channel their aspirations with "elements" such as the magazine, a hip-hop CD and dynamic outreach events in urban communities across the United States.

■ CORRECTIONAL PROGRAM

The Bible Society's Correctional Program serves both Protestant and Catholic chaplains by making free Scriptures available to inmates in a translation of their choosing.

Bible Society staff started working with the New York City Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) to provide Scriptures and volunteers for the city's 18 juvenile detention centers. Through this partnership, a Bible is provided for every bed and library within the DJJ, totaling more than 51,000 Bibles and New Testaments.

■ URBAN YOUTH STRATEGIES

In 2004, the American Bible Society's Urban Youth Strategies initiative researched the complex characteristics defining and shaping urban culture, and provided grants to churches and parachurch ministries to bolster their Bible teaching and expand their Scripture resources. Urban Youth Strategies also introduced *Assessment, Consultation, Training and Support (ACTS)*, a curriculum that helps youth leaders achieve greater effectiveness.

■ DIGITAL MINISTRY

ForMinistry, our Internet service to churches, equips more than 25,000 churches with their own Web site using *ForMinistry.com's* free Web Builder, a user-friendly software program developed for church staff.

■ HISPANIC OUTREACH

We are reaching out to meet the spiritual needs of our rapidly growing Hispanic community. As part of this outreach, we sponsored "Encuentros con la Biblia" (Encounter with the Bible) workshops for Catholics in Miami and West Palm Beach this past year. We are also providing a wide range of popular Spanish language Scriptures. ■

Visit www.americanbible.org to learn more about our Scripture-sharing programs.

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

— Habakkuk 2:14 (NKJV)

Good News for Everyone

THESE ARE EXCITING TIMES for the American Bible Society. We have set out to recapture the spirit of our founders, inspired as they were by the vision of Habakkuk to fill the earth with "the knowledge of the glory of the Lord."

We have launched a three-tiered strategy: first, we advocate in every way we can so that people may embrace God's Word — that they read and study the Scriptures. We make the case that Jesus Christ is God's provision for restoring our spiritual brokenness. Our revised mission statement reflects this belief in the power of God's Word.

Second, we provide Scriptures and other ministry resources tailored to helping churches and other ministries connect people with the transforming power and person of Jesus Christ.

Third, we are committed to partnering with other ministries intent on sharing the Good News, including those who focus on urban youth.

Through the fellowship of 141 United Bible Societies (UBS), we have begun a two-way partnership, providing churches in ethnic communities with inexpensive Scriptures available in more than 100 languages. At the same time, we have begun to encourage believers in these communities to support Bible Society work in their country of origin through the American Bible Society.

But our most important partners in Scripture outreach are all of you who pray for and dedicate your financial resources for sharing the Good News. To you we feel a special obligation; we honor your faithful stewardship by guaranteeing that all your financial



DAVID SINGER

MISSION STATEMENT: The mission of the American Bible Society is to make the Bible available to every person in a language and format each can understand and afford, so that all people may experience its life-changing message.

support — every dollar — will be used to carry out the ministry for which it was given. We ensure that no contributions given for ministry will be used to cover administration, fundraising or other infrastructure expenses.

For those of you interested in supporting specific areas of Scripture ministry, we provide designated giving opportunities: the *Faith Fund* encompasses evangelistic outreach, the *Hope Fund* represents ministry to people in crisis and the *Good News Fund* provides for Scripture translation. Such designated giving allows us to report back to you on progress made and new opportunities in your area of interest. You can see more about these funds on our Web site at www.americanbible.org.

I thank all who have faithfully committed to join with us in this faith-sharing adventure.

IN SERVICE TO CHRIST,

Eugene B. Habecker, President



AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

“So that all people may experience
its life-changing message . . .”



WE THANK YOU FOR SHARING, FOR CARING, FOR GIVING, FOR PRAYING.
THERE ARE PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD — MEN, WOMEN AND
CHILDREN, ONCE LOST AND WITHOUT HOPE — WHO THANK YOU.

Xie from Nanjing, China, thanks you for **providing** the paper on which her Bible is printed. Fiala from Napochise, Mexico, thanks you for **partnering** with *Faith Comes By Hearing* to provide her God's Word in the language of her heart. Tyrone Robinson, an inmate at Rikers Island in New York City, thanks you for **advocating** for Jesus Christ through *4 the Streets* magazine. Tierra Alexander thanks you for **partnering** with *Feed The Children* to **provide** her a Bible as well as food for her family, and Lakshmi of India thanks you for **providing** a Bible and new hope in the midst of her poverty.

We thank you for helping to bring about this spirit of life-giving gratitude. In doing our part, we promise to honor your commitment to share God's Word; we at the American Bible Society share your passion to make a difference in saving people's lives — to weep with those who weep. We promise to advocate for Jesus Christ as God's provision for restoring our brokenness. We promise to partner with you in helping all churches and other ministries connect people with the transforming power and person of Jesus Christ through the Word.

You are our most important partners in Scripture outreach. To you we owe a faithful obligation . . . every dollar you give will be used to carry out our global Scripture program.



We have found ways to make your partnership with us more satisfying and spiritually rewarding. At our Web site www.americanbible.org you can subscribe to our uplifting *A Word From Home* e-mail devotionals. Our Web site also features stories of the many ways your support has made a difference — how lives have been transformed by connecting with Jesus; these are stories of people forever grateful for your commitment and generous support for the Bible cause.

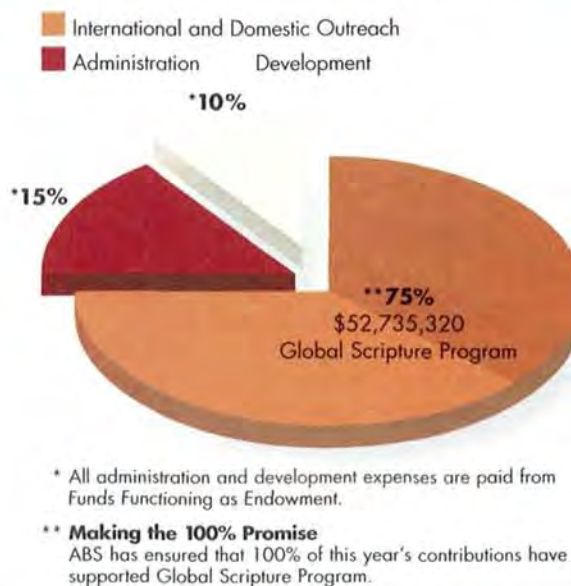


AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

SUPPORT FOR GLOBAL SCRIPTURE PROGRAM



OPERATING EXPENSES 2004



WORLD DISTRIBUTION OF SCRIPTURES BY BIBLE SOCIETIES

January – December 2003 (the most current year for which data is available)

	Bibles	Testaments	Portions	New Reader (NR) Portions	Selections	NR Selections
Africa	2,926,996	540,247	1,306,494	1,175,132	7,468,076	598,281
Americas	8,234,874	5,106,420	5,502,887	5,354,194	251,018,783	25,636,140
Asia – Pacific	8,000,438	5,811,500	5,378,306	6,119,438	77,366,011	3,139,548
Europe – Middle East	2,244,068	2,985,949	3,262,759	528,676	1,812,417	223,657
TOTAL (Jan. – Dec. 2003)	21,406,376	14,444,116	15,450,446	13,177,440	337,665,287	29,597,626

WORLD TRANSLATIONS

Some part of the Bible is being translated for the first time in more than 500 languages. In many of the rest, where older Bible versions already exist, new translations are being prepared in clear, modern language that is easily understandable to today's readers.

These numbers list the translation projects in which national Bible Societies were involved during 2003.

Region	Total Projects	Unique Language	Catholic Involvement	Orthodox Involvement	First Translation	New Translation
Africa Interregional	1	1	0	0	1	0
Africa – Anglophone	90	82	31	0	52	24
Africa – Francophone	56	55	9	0	43	8
Africa – Southern	30	30	11	0	14	10
Americas Interregional	2	2	0	0	0	2
Americas –						
Caribbean and North America	25	24	2	0	23	3
Americas – Central	15	13	1	0	6	2
Americas – South	22	14	2	0	13	0
Asia – Pacific	300	225	19	0	144	51
Europe – Middle East	95	72	12	38	36	41
WORLD TOTALS	636	518	87	38	332	141

Source: World Translation Project Report for 2003 (the most current year for which data is available)

Good News for Everyone

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“Gripped” by the Love of God in Nanjing

Since 1987, the Amity Printing Company has printed 34 million Bibles for the people of China. Established by Chinese Christians in Nanjing, as a joint venture between the American Bible Society and the Amity Foundation, the company came into being to meet the needs of the growing Christian community in the world's most populous country.

Some of the workers have become Christians while working at Amity Press, through the friendships they've developed there. Xie Yanqing had been working at Amity Press for 18 years. At one point, she and her family encountered many misfortunes. A friend talked to her about Jesus and the Christian faith. "I felt a special tug at my heart that made me want to become a child of God." She went to church the next day, and felt "gripped" by the love of God through the passionate singing of the hymns. Now she's "compelled . . . to tell others about Jesus."

After hearing the gospel, another worker, Chen Chun, became a Christian in 1994. She became so interested in the Bible that she enrolled in a three-year Bible study correspondence course. One day, in 2000, she was struck by a verse from the prophet Ezekiel: "So my sheep wandered over the high hills and the mountains. They were scattered over the face of the earth, and no one looked for them or tried to find them." (Ezekiel 34.6 GNT) Reflecting on this, she felt moved to commit her life to God as a preacher, eventually leaving the company. "The Bible is the Word of God, a guide for my life, a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. I want to depend on the Word of God for my life every day," she said.

Another worker, Lu Qian, and her husband (whom she'd met at Amity Press) became Christians after a manager shared the salvation story with them. "After my conversion," she said, "whenever I faced any work stress or difficulties, conflicts with others or relationship problems, I would turn to the Lord for comfort and strength."



Your April gift will help support Bible work in Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Macedonia, Moldova, Poland, Romania and Ukraine. Your May gift will support the printing of Bibles in China. To find out more about joining the Bible-a-Month Club, fill out the reply form below or write to:

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

 www.americanbible.org
Bible-a-Month@americanbible.org

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Ministry of a Marriage

A theme of love and service

B Y D A V I D S I N G E R

It was 1948 in China and the Communists were closing in, recalls Charlotte Tan, then recently graduated from Hsiang Ya Medical College. Looking back, she sees how a spiritual revival sweeping through churches in the region prepared Christians there for the hardships that lay just ahead, much as her own conversion prepared her.

During the war with Japan, which had ended three years earlier, many items at medical school had been in short supply. For example, she and her fellow students had to carry their chairs from class to class and had to take turns sharing the few cadavers they had. She recalls one evening, about midnight, under the faint glow of an oil lamp (there was no electricity), as she studied the intricacies of anatomy on a cadaver, a sudden revelation came: "Anyone who has studied this marvelous complexity cannot be an atheist."

In the days that followed, the lively hymn singing of a small group of Christian students drew her in — Charlotte began attending their worship sessions.

After some weeks a student raised the topic, "Why do we believe in God?" Recalling her "revelation" about God that night in the lab, she says, "I just caught fire." She would do schoolwork until two in the morning and then, consumed by her newfound faith, get up again at four and climb to a mountaintop for prayer. On Sundays she and other students walked two hours each way to attend church.

When the war with Japan ended and the Communists renewed their advance, many of her friends fled to other countries. Charlotte, separated from her family by the war, had nowhere to go and no money to get there. She even resorted to selling her own blood to help pay for school. Then a truck owner, who found her alone in the girl's dorm, offered her a ride to the coast. Because the truck was packed with

Charlotte Tan



DAVID SINGER



DAVID SINGER

passengers and livestock, Charlotte rode between two servants on the cab roof all the way to Chongqing city, a 13-day journey in freezing winter temperatures. Along the way they barely averted a collision with another truck. The truck owner saw Charlotte's faith as the protection that had saved them and, as thanks, gave her a small gold cross. She later sold it to help provide airfare out of the country.

In Chongqing she jokingly asked a relative leaving for the United States to find her a job when they got there. A short time later the requisite "sponsor" letter arrived, inviting Dr. Charlotte Tan to come and intern at St. Barnabas Hospital in Newark, N.J. In a short time she became chief

Even though they were apart for much of their early marriage, Moses and Charlotte shared a sense of togetherness through their respective ministries.

resident, moved on to Children's Hospital in Philadelphia and then to Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City to begin a 45-year career doing research, patient care and teaching in pediatric oncology.

Soon after arriving in New York, Charlotte began attending the Chinese Christian Fellowship (CCF). There she met one of the CCF founders, the gentle, generous Moses Hsu (who took that name because when he was an infant, his father hid him and his mother on a boat during the war with Japan). Moses, too, was on fire for Jesus. Unlike Charlotte, who had grown up without God, he was raised in a Christian home in China. Yet, like her, Moses had recently come to America.

After earning a graduate degree in journalism at the University of Missouri, Moses joined a team at Drew University in New Jersey, translating 33 Christian classics into Chinese, works by giants such as John Wesley and St. Augustine.

Over the next few years he and Charlotte would alternate leadership roles in the CCF. She says, "We would argue. Moses' friends would tell me, 'Your eyes are on top of your head,' by

which they meant I was very proud." By 1959 her romance with Moses had matured and he proposed marriage.

Two years after their wedding, and only four months after the birth of their daughter Alicia, Moses was invited to Hong Kong as Chinese editor for a major Christian publisher. Thus began several years of a long-distance relationship. During this time Moses went on to Taiwan to found *The Christian Tribune*, an interdenominational newspaper that fostered greater unity among churches there and, at Tainan Theological Seminary, where he pioneered a course in mass media. For most of that time, Charlotte remained at Sloan-Kettering.

Finally, in 1971, 10-year-old Alicia wrote her father, "When we meet in heaven one day, do you think we will recognize each other?" Her question prompted Moses to return home.

A month later, the American Bible Society asked Moses to take on work for which the Lord had been preparing him all his life. The most recent Chinese Bible translation was by now 60 years old. Moses, overwhelmed by the responsibility of such a work, nevertheless teamed up with Dr. I. Jin Loh to translate *Today's Chinese Version (TCV)*. Providentially, within two years of finishing the 14-year project, the American Bible Society helped found the Amity Printing Company in Nanjing, China, to print Chinese Bibles, including the *TCV*. (More than two million copies of the *TCV* have been published since its launch in 1985.)

Even though they were apart for much of their early mar-

riage, Moses and Charlotte shared a sense of togetherness through their respective ministries, he as a Christian journalist, teacher and editor, she as a praying, witnessing doctor. But since his death in 2002, even in her new loneliness, Charlotte draws renewed strength in her daily walk with the Lord. She is especially grateful that Moses' witness lives on through his Bible and literature translation work and the many students he had mentored.

Though now retired, Charlotte continues to fuel her passion for Jesus, praying with and counseling former cancer patients — finding creative ways to give away her faith. And to give to the American Bible Society — to support the publication and distribution of *Today's Chinese Version* Bibles, gratified that the fruit of her husband's work is bearing witness to Christ in the country from which she and Moses came. ■

You can obtain more information about planned giving programs sponsored by the American Bible Society by calling the Planned Gift Programs Department at 1-800-820-6227.

Why the Bible Matters

The Scriptures say, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and set aside the understanding of the scholars." 1 Corinthians 1.19 (GNT)

How can the Bible, much of it ancient writings taken from oral tradition and collected over a period of several thousand years, be of much value in the 21st century? Some assert that much of what the Bible addresses can better be known through scientific discovery. But, even in the realm of academics, there is an occasional flicker of humility.

In an interview with Charlie Rose last year, Dr. Paul Nurse, a 2001 Nobel laureate in biology, said, "When we come to certain questions, science has some trouble . . . Science has a real problem with the origin of the universe . . . How did matter come out of nothing?" Dr. Nurse went on to suggest that neither does science serve us well in the areas of ethics and morals.

Morality remains a murky realm if we don't begin with what is a biblical premise: real morality grows out of our kinship to God.

Since the beginning of history people have shown that they have a spiritual or religious impulse. (For example, the earliest evidence of human habitation includes burial rituals that presume an afterlife.) And while many different religious traditions have made a contribution to the human moral and social fabric — contributions that have helped make civilization more civilized — the Bible cuts through these traditions and narrows the field to one unique and comprehensive faith, a faith that makes sense of and anticipates our religious impulse. The apostle Paul confirms our instinctive moral sense (and obligation) when he writes, "The Gentiles [non-Jews] do not have the Law; but whenever they do by instinct what the Law



commands, they are their own law. . . ." (Romans 2.14a GNT)

The Bible lays out our divine conception: "Then God said, 'And now we will make human beings; they will be like us and resemble us.'" (Genesis 1.26a GNT) Although we may never fully understand all the ways we resemble God,

Scripture is built around this family relationship and responsibility to God and to others.

From this one sentence in Genesis we learn that God was never alone in the universe; there is even relationship within God — the Trinitarian implication that God is love from within. And, as his image bearers, this has profound implications for us as persons — that apart from knowing God and our relatedness, divorced from our kinship with God, we become unintelligible to ourselves.

The Psalmist wrote, "What are human beings that you think of them; mere mortals, that you care for them? Yet you made them inferior only to yourself; you crowned them with glory and honor. You appointed them rulers over everything you made; you placed them over all creation . . ." (Psalm 8.4-6 GNT) This prescribes to us awesome possibilities and responsibilities. How can we fully and freely function not knowing our place in God's created order?

In the end, the Bible makes sense of our inner struggles — of our awareness of inner conflicts — of our ability to look inside and reflect. (Science is at a total loss to explain or accommodate self-aware introspection or consciousness.) Scripture makes sense of the inherent paradoxes of life — the hypocrisies of our knowing good and doing evil.

And then finally, there is the Good News — how God, out of love, has provided for our salvation and has given us Easter and a way home.

As created beings, we can never fully know the mind of God. But God, out of love for us, has revealed to us essentials of his character and ours, and our unique connection with divinity. Without the Bible, we would forever drift through the cosmos, lost and alone. ■

ADVOCACY

BY DAVID SINGER

PROVIDER

BY FRANCINE LANGE

Scripture Resources

Recognizing that churches and individuals require different tools to share and experience the living Word, the American Bible Society — in keeping with our mission to provide those Scriptural tools to every person in a format each can understand — offers a wide selection to help reach communities, countries and the world with good news.

Associate Pastor Jim Kroonblaw found a practical way to equip his church to serve a growing foreign-born population in his Rochester, Minn., community. He used the American Bible Society's *Mission: Literacy* Scripture-based program to help three generations of Sudanese refugees in his congregation learn to read English.

"We found it very effective for every age level, children, parents and grandparents," he said. "I think there's tremendous need to reach people who speak a different primary language and have never heard the gospel before."

Last year, the *Mission: Literacy* curriculum, developed to help children gain better reading skills while learning from God's Word, added an English Language Learner component to its curriculum to help churches better reach the growing U.S. immigrant population.

AMERICANBIBLE.ORG — GOD'S WORD AND WORK ONLINE

Last year, in response to the increasing number of Christians using the Internet for outreach as well as their own spiritual education and growth, we improved our Web site www.americanbible.org.

"This site contains a wealth of biblical resources as well as stories about how God's Word is changing peoples' lives around the world," said Allison Younger, the Bible Society's communications manager and webmaster. Resources range from e-mail-delivered daily Scripture

Using the Bible Society's *Mission: Literacy* booklets, Joy Wrinkle from Trinity Lutheran Church in Rochester, Minn., coaches 6-year-old Atong Dut.

readings, in-depth Bible libraries and free online Web site building tools, to compelling stories about people who have come to faith, the continuing ministry needs at home and worldwide and surveys of American teens that gauge changes in spiritual perceptions and attitudes.

Bibles.com and **biblias.com** (serving the Latino community), also on our Web site, aim to be a "one-stop shop" for Scripture-based Bible Society resources and popular products from other domestic and international sources.

BIBLE SUNDAY

Every November, we sponsor *Bible Sunday* to encourage congregations to celebrate and support worldwide Bible outreach. We offer a full array of program materials, including activity sheets for children, sermon helps for pastors and devotional guides that encourage congregations to live in faith, sharing God's Word.

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

The American Bible Society Library continues to serve as a reference and research facility for staff and visitors. The staff is playing a key role in the Bible Society's digitization initiative to make available to the public the Library's catalog of Scriptures, archival historical essays and 7,500 images from the Bible Society's historical photograph collection.

METRON PRESS®

In 2002, we established Metron Press to develop Scripture materials targeted to today's media-focused youth. Metron's graphic-novel adaptations of biblical content preserve the integrity of God's Word while presenting its message in a youth-friendly format. Its first publication, *Samson: Judge of Israel*, is modeled on the superhero comics popular among young adults. A second novel, *Testament*, for the college-age audience, uses Old Testament Bible stories to present such themes as repentance and reliance on God for strength. ■



ALLEN BRISSON-SMITH

Greetings from Prison

Scripture Cards for New York Inmates

Seeing Nathaniel Smith in his small, cramped office in the Catholic Charities building in Brooklyn, you'd never imagine all that he's able to accomplish. He wears many ministry hats, on the job and outside the office.

Nathaniel ships boxes with American Bible Society Scripture greeting cards to the 70 New York state prisons just prior to Thanksgiving for inmates to use in their holiday correspondence with friends and family.

Catholic Charities covers the cost of postage, about \$600 a year, but the relationships Nathaniel has forged all over the state are priceless — verified by the notes of gratitude received from prison chaplains.

Nathaniel came to Catholic Charities four years ago, to serve as coordinator for their Restorative Justice/Prison Ministry, after a 20-year career as a corrections officer at Riker's Island. Soft spoken and shy, his time in corrections exposed him to "a lot of people, new people every day — not the top echelon of society." His years in the system, combined with his lifelong faith, gave him a passion to advocate for prisoners' rights and to facilitate their reentry to society.

He stays connected with inmate needs by leading a weekly Bible study at the Metropolitan Detention Center, a federal prison in downtown Brooklyn. Currently they are studying Matthew. He says, "It's exciting — these people really get into the Bible study each week and ask a lot of questions." He works

through the Brooklyn district attorney's office to arrange for community service assignments for defendants receiving alternative sentencing. Nathaniel also carves out time from his personal life — with his wife and two sons — to meet special needs: he recently drove a handicapped father to an upstate prison to visit his incarcerated son.

A year ago, Nathaniel was featured in an article about his card ministry for *The Tablet*, a Catholic newspaper, that caught the attention of Bible Society Donor Relationship Correspondent Carmen Feliciano. She called to offer him more greeting cards for the inmates' use. Each card contains an encouraging portion of Scripture, such as "Let your constant love comfort me, as you have promised . . ." from Psalm 119:76a (GNT). Each time an inmate writes a card, he or she also gets to read a message of hope from God's Word that they then get to share with others. Through his card ministry to inmates, a group many people have dismissed as unreachable, Nathaniel joins with the Bible Society in heeding Jesus' words from Matthew 25:40b: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (KJV) ■

Nathaniel Smith



The American Bible Society's Correctional Program makes free Scriptures available to inmates in English and Spanish, through Protestant and Catholic correctional chaplains nationwide.

LIZ SMITH

PARTNERSHIP

WORLD
PARTNERS
page 18

BY LIZ SMITH



A lively Bible study group in Zambia uses materials supplied by Samaritan's Purse and the American Bible Society.

Bible Society Partnerships Around the World

"Titus is my partner, who works with me to serve you." 2 Corinthians 8.23a (CEV)

The American Bible Society has also developed affiliations with like-minded organizations (including the following) over the years to multiply the effectiveness of Bible work worldwide.

The **Military Ministry** distributes specially designed New Testaments with Psalms and Proverbs to military personnel in the United States and abroad. In 2004, more than 57,000 military Bibles were shipped to chaplains.

Faith Comes By Hearing (FCBH) works closely with national Bible Societies in needy countries to distribute Scripture audiocassette "listening programs" to churches in poor communities, many of which cannot afford Bibles and whose members cannot read. **FCBH** receives many accounts of people who have received the God of Life after hearing the gospel transmitted over the loudspeaker.

Samaritan's Purse and the Bible Society have aligned to get the New Testament into the hands of displaced or dis-

advantaged children in countries in Central and South America, Africa and India.

Feed The Children and the Bible Society have partnered over the past three Christmases to strengthen the impact of the distribution of nutritional and spiritual food to needy families in Harlem, N.Y., and remote rural locations across the country.

Mission Year and the Bible Society have joined forces in a "live your faith" program to place young people in urban neighborhoods and provide Bible study materials that draw from youth culture to help participants minister to and share their faith with their neighbors.

Youth Sports Festivals organizes Olympic-style activities for which the American Bible Society provides children's Scripture materials. ■

Learn more about our Bible work around the world by visiting www.americانبible.org.

quiet time

We hope you will use this guide in your daily study of the Bible. Please write to tell us how you use it.

APRIL

*Rooted in Christ and
Rejoicing in Hope*

- 1 Hebrews 6.13-7.10
- 2 Hebrews 7.11-28

SUNDAY

- 3 1 Corinthians 15.1-11
- 4 1 Corinthians 15.12-34
- 5 1 Corinthians 15.35-58
- 6 1 Peter 1.1-12
- 7 1 Peter 1.13-25
- 8 1 Peter 2.1-17
- 9 1 Peter 3.8-22

SUNDAY

- 10 Romans 5.1-11
- 11 Romans 5.12-21
- 12 Romans 6.1-14
- 13 Romans 6.15-23
- 14 Romans 15.1-13
- 15 John 11.1-16
- 16 John 11.17-44

SUNDAY

- 17 John 12.23-50
- 18 Revelation 1.1-20
- 19 Revelation 4.1-11
- 20 Revelation 5.1-14
- 21 Revelation 7.9-17
- 22 Jeremiah 29.1-14
- 23 Lamentations 3.1-33

SUNDAY

- *24 Isaiah 25.1-12
- 25 Isaiah 35.1-10
- 26 Isaiah 51.1-16
- 27 Isaiah 52.1-15
- 28 Isaiah 53.1-12
- 29 Isaiah 54.1-17
- 30 Isaiah 66.1-16

** Orthodox Christians will observe Holy Week
April 24-30, 2005.*

MAY

*Rooted in Christ and
Renewed by the Holy Spirit*

- ** 1 John 14.1-14
- 2 John 14.15-31
- 3 John 16.4b-15
- 4 John 16.16-33

**ASCENSION DAY
(WESTERN CHURCHES)
NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER**

- *** 5 Acts 1.1-11
- 6 Acts 1.12-26
- 7 Romans 8.1-17

SUNDAY

- 8 Romans 8.18-39
- 9 Ezekiel 36.1-15
- 10 Ezekiel 36.16-38

- 11 Ezekiel 37.1-14
- 12 Ezekiel 37.15-28
- 13 Ezekiel 39.11-29
- 14 Joel 2.28-3.8

**PENTECOST SUNDAY
(WESTERN CHURCHES)**

- **** 15 Acts 2.1-21
- 16 Acts 2.22-47
- 17 Acts 3.1-10
- 18 Acts 3.11-26
- 19 Acts 4.1-22
- 20 Acts 5.12-42
- 21 Acts 8.4-25

SUNDAY

- 22 Acts 8.26-40
- 23 Acts 12.1-19
- 24 Acts 13.1-12
- 25 Acts 13.13-37
- 26 Acts 13.38-52
- 27 Acts 20.17-38
- 28 Acts 28.16-30

SUNDAY

- 29 1 Corinthians 12.1-11
- 30 1 Corinthians 12.12-31
- 31 Galatians 5.16-6.10

*** Orthodox Christians will celebrate Easter
on May 1, 2005.*

**** Orthodox Christians will observe Ascension
Day on June 2, 2005.*

***** Orthodox Christians will celebrate Pentecost
Sunday on June 12, 2005.*

IN MEMORIAM

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

Memorials of \$500 or more for one individual or family unit will be published in the American Bible Society Record. For further details about the memorial program, please write to:

Donor Relations, American Bible Society, 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023-7505.

My beloved sister, **Louise Doris Bechlein**
*Given by: the Trust of her beloved brother,
Harry E. Bechlein*

My father, **Myrle Bly**
Given by: Ronald P. Bly

My mother and my husband,
Almeda M. Ham and George W. Kelley
Given by: Helen P. Kelley

My aunt and my cousin,
Alma E. Haney and Aleene F. Haney
Given by: Warren E. Becker

Orville Horn and Jack Byrd
Given by: Mr. and Mrs. Stan Napper

Our mother, **Bertha M. Richter**
Given by: the Estate of Bertha M. Richter

**Aubrey Robinson, Allen P. Matthew
and The Rev. C. E. "Coach" Wilson**
Given by: Keith P. Robinson

My husband, **Hans Schafft**
Given by: Mrs. Lillian R. Schafft

Aunt Frances and Uncle Howard Stang
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2005
YEAR OF THE
GOSPEL

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