

A M E R I C A N B I B L E S O C I E T Y

# RECORD

October | November 1998



OPEN WINDOWS IN  
**CHINA**

HOLDING FAST IN FAITH

## A Practical Approach to Living

**You Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens with everyone else who belongs to the family of God. You are like a building with the apostles and prophets as the foundation and with Christ as the most important stone. (Eph. 2.19-20, CEV)**

People long for security—for something solid—a belief with which they can orient and anchor their lives. We also long to be accepted—to be in community.

In this issue of the *Record*, we have four reports about belief and belonging. Two are about families who, at great risk, stayed faithful to their community of faith and to their beliefs. In France, a family of believers struggled to preserve both their Huguenot heritage and their Bible. Their actions showed that they valued their faith more than life. Another reports about a Chinese mother and daughter whose love for God's Word helped them hold their belief community together through a time of intense religious oppression.

Two other reports are about how the American Bible Society partners with others to provide the hope of God's Word to those searching for belief and community. Scripture offers to everyone the possibility of belonging to the family of God—of becoming members of God's household.


For truck drivers, who often spend long stretches of time on the road, a family away from home is a welcome refuge. ABS, through its volunteers, partners with Transport for Christ and other ministries to provide the Scripture resources that can help build such a family of caring and nurturing—and Scripture provides a life anchor for those always on the move.



Preparation for a new ABS initiative, 1999: *The Year of the Bible*, has already brought many different faith communities together around their

mutual commitment to sharing God's Word. In cities and towns all over the country, people will become reacquainted with Christ, the cornerstone of our faith, by committing just five minutes a day to reading the Bible. Central to the 1999: *The Year of the Bible* program is an easy-to-read *Contemporary English Version (CEV)* or Spanish New Testament with a one-year, five-minutes-a-day reading schedule enclosed.

I am grateful to the many volunteers, organizations, and differing church traditions that are joining with us in promoting this New Testament distribution and reading initiative.

For anyone who wants to make more sense out of life and find a practical guidebook for living, there is no better source than the Bible. It has the last Word about our desires for belief and belonging. 

*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.

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# RECORD

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**ON THE COVER:** Gou Qing Nei has been listening through the window to a Bible class, filled to overflowing, in Tai Yung City, China. Like Lan Xin, the woman featured in our story, she remained faithful during lean times, and now, like millions of Chinese, is free to feast on God's Word.

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Broadway, New York, NY 10023-7505.  
Telephone: (212) 408-8710. Reach ABS on  
the web at [www.americanbible.org](http://www.americanbible.org)

## Caring for Body and Soul: My ABS Beginnings

**C**hristopher W. Severance adds a powerful nutritional boost to every packet of food distributed by *Food for Families* in West Orange County, Florida. Says Chris, "I believe everyone needs food for the soul as well as food for the body." That's why he puts an ABS seasonal Scripture Portion in each packet of free food given out during holiday seasons, three or four times a year, to approximately 500 needy families in his area.

"I can do nothing to gain favor with God apart from the sacrifice that Jesus gave on the cross," says Chris. "My volunteer work with ABS is done in

gratitude to Jesus for what He has done for me. I feel honored to spread His Word."

Chris first found out about the American Bible Society through a flyer that was mailed to his house. He and his mother, Linda, attended an ABS Information Conference in Jacksonville, Florida, in September 1996. Linda said, "I thought I was just going along to keep him company but that isn't how it ended up. After listening to the presentations, I got all fired up too, and signed up as a Local Church Volunteer."

For the past year and a half Chris has helped with prison ministry in the Lake Correctional Institution, three county jails in Asocial, Seminole, and Orange Counties, and the Central Florida Reception Center. He received grants from ABS

to distribute between 8,000 to 10,000 Bibles to inmates in these facilities.

In early 1998, a destructive tornado hit Chris' community. As with his involvement in food distribution, Chris's response was double-barreled. To minister to people's spirits, he provided ABS Scriptures for distribution by the Christian Service Center and the Salvation Army. But he also pitched in to help people move out of their damaged homes and into shelter areas. He helped one 93-year-old resident who showed his gratitude by giving Chris a box of very old books. In the collection he discovered a German-language Bible dated 1877, which he donated to the ABS Scripture collection.

Chris' love for sharing the gospel led him to take lay speaker training at his local church, First United Methodist Church in Winter Garden. Because of this spirit, he has served ABS as a National Speaker, Scripture Sharer, Scripture Resource Volunteer, and as a Local Volunteer Coordinator. In these varied roles, Chris has had many opportunities to share God's Word: person-to-person, from the platform, or by just dropping off a Scripture postcard. And he is able to encourage and equip others to do the same.

How does he manage to stay so involved? Chris sums it up by simply saying, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me."

*As an ABS Volunteer, do you have a story to tell? Send your story to:*

**Jennifer Ware**  
**Volunteer Ministries**  
**American Bible Society**  
**1865 Broadway**  
**New York, NY 10023-7505** 📧



*Christopher W. Severance has played a number of supporting roles for ABS, including Scripture Sharer, Local Volunteer Coordinator, and National Speaker.*

## VOLUNTEER AWARD OF MERIT

**T**helma McPherson is an “itinerant” ABS Scripture Sharer. Since 1940 Thelma has taken her ministry to Port Jervis, NY; Princeton, NJ; Saverna Park, MD; Alexandria, VA; and, finally, Truth or Consequences, NM, where she has lived since 1964.

Thelma attributes this long track record of commitment to her love for sharing God’s Word and her belief in the power of the ABS mission. Another dimension of her commitment is the Bible-a-Month Club, of which Thelma has



THELMA McPHERSON

been a member since the program began more than 30 years ago. She includes her six children, thirteen grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren in her distribution efforts. That effort has paid off since

her family has become avid supporters of the *Contemporary English Version*.

Thelma now heartily supports the *Year of the Bible* program, in which an entire community pledges to read the Bible within a year. This year she successfully promoted the program in Truth or Consequences, where the town commissioners signed a proclamation naming 1998 the Year of the Bible. This generated some controversy, but most feedback has been positive and Thelma reports that “the program is gaining steady momentum.”

Congratulations, Thelma, on receiving the Volunteer Award of Merit. And thank you for your unwavering faith and commitment to the Bible cause. 📖

## Moved by a Mission

**“**I am very excited about the almost-two-centuries-old mission of the Bible Society to provide copies of Scripture for every man, woman, and child on this planet who wants a copy,” says Dr. Richard L. Jeske, a member of the American Bible Society Board of Trustees.

Serving on the Board’s Translations Subcommittee since 1989 and on its Development Committee since 1996, Dr. Jeske has developed a deep appreciation of how quickly ABS applies its resources to a changing world. With the opening up of Eastern Europe, Dr. Jeske said, the Society’s Board and personnel have shown a great willingness to address the crying need for Scriptures there, and an ability to fulfill that need.

Dr. Jeske, a member of the Board since 1989, serves as Pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church in San Jose, California, of the Evangelical



DR. RICHARD L. JESKE

Lutheran Church in America, as well as Ecumenical Pastor at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, and at St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church in Saratoga, California. Dr. Jeske earned a doctorate in New Testament Theology from the University of Heidelberg, Germany, as well as Masters degrees in Divinity and Theology from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri.

As a member of the Translation Subcommittee, Dr. Jeske plays a role in the direction of the translations of various Scripture products for the Society, a task that gladdens him. “In my work with the Translation Subcommittee,” he says, “I find it gratifying that constant efforts are made to assure modern readers that our translations are accurate, first of all, and are understandable to them.”

The American Bible Society is grateful and honored to receive the counsel and insight of Dr. Jeske in pursuing its mission of sharing God’s Word. 📖

# OPEN WINDOWS IN CHINA

**I**n China, the transition has not been as rapid or wrenching, but, like former areas of the Soviet Union, this huge country is being swept by dramatic change. Because of new economic freedoms, China is emerging as a financial force in Asia. The return of Hong Kong to Chinese control ended the last vestiges of colonialism, further



enhancing China's political and economic standing.

But there is another kind of change that, while much less publicized, is for many people even more dramatic. Like areas of the former Soviet empire, there is a spiritual awakening in China. According to *Newsweek* magazine, "Chinese Christianity—official and unofficial—is growing rapidly as people search for spiritual meaning in a post-Marxist society."

Even by official accounts, Christianity among the Chinese people is undergoing explosive growth. Churches are being reopened or built at a rate of 600 annually, with a total of 37,000 churches and "meeting places" officially opened since 1979. The number of registered believers has grown by at least ten-fold since Western missionaries were forced out of

China as "spiritual aggressors" by Mao Zedong in 1949. According to Chinese government sources, at that time there were fewer than one million baptized Christians in all of China. Today there are 10 to 15 million in registered churches and uncounted millions more who gather unofficially in homes. This means the need for Bibles is enormous and growing.

For Lan Xin from Shenyang, Liaoning Province, the new religious freedom in China is almost like heaven on earth. Several Bibles, displayed openly on her bookshelf, are evidence that she practices her faith without the fear and secrecy of a few years ago. One of her Bibles, very old and worn—even losing some pages—is one she rescued from those dark

BASED ON A STORY FROM THE MAGAZINE *TIAN FENG* • PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID SINGER



days. "I could never bear to part with it," says Lan. "Every time my eyes fall on it I am reminded of its troubled history and those terrible years."

Although religious repression began after the Communist takeover, its intensity didn't flower until the late '60s and early '70s. Lan remembers, "A new movement [the Cultural Revolution] came which was going to sweep away the 'cow demons and snake spirits', and smash the 'four olds' to establish the 'four new.'" But according to those in the movement, the Bible belonged to the "olds" and had to be smashed. In addition, individual Christians suffered all sorts of persecutions and they were denounced.

Believers stood by as their hymns, devotional literature and even their Bibles were brought out and burned. "If you didn't want your Bibles burnt you had to hide them or bury them."

Under this repression, the church grew in strength and numbers. In the spring of 1967, Lan remembers a gang of people ransacked a fellow believer's house searching for Bibles. Frustrated that they had found nothing inside, Lan watched as they began tapping the exterior walls. One man started to dig where Lan knew Bibles were buried. "I was so worried I bit my bottom lip and drew blood," she says. "I kept

**LEFT: STANDING ROOM ONLY OUTSIDE A CHURCH IN NANJING, WHERE WOMEN SHARE IN THE SERVICE THROUGH OPEN WINDOWS. ABOVE: EVEN IN RURAL AREAS CONGREGATIONS FILL RE-OPENED CHURCHES TO OVERFLOWING.**

praying that God would protect that family."

They didn't find any Bibles, but the incident sparked fear in the Christian community. Some people decided it was safer to burn their Bibles secretly. "At one point," says Lan, "our relatives sent their Bibles to us with instructions that we add our Bibles and burn the lot immediately."

Though Lan was only a teenager, she was troubled to see grown people with an ardent love for God frightened into giving up their Bibles. "Even an evangelist, who had introduced my mother to the Gospel, reacted in this way," she says.

"But my mother had different ideas," says Lan. "For her, the Bible was more precious than life itself. She could never burn her Bible, and she inspired me with her single-mindedness: whatever happened we had to preserve our Bible and other Christian literature. There would be no burnings in our house."

From early childhood Lan remembers that while everyone else slept, her mother would be up reading her Bible well into the night. Often when Lan awoke in the morning, her mother would again be reading.

She says, "I could only wonder at the contents of this mysterious book. When I was old enough to read I finished my first book in one sitting and, for the first time, tasted the



**Bible distribution in rural areas of China remains a challenge, often accomplished the old-fashioned way. Here a workman loads his rickshaw with cases of Bibles from the latest press run at Amity Printing Company in Nanjing. The Bibles will be distributed to remote countryside churches.**

Bible's sweetness for myself. I now understood why my mother ardently studied the Bible every day."

During the purges it became much more difficult to read or even find a Bible. Eventually it was decided to send all the family Bibles to a believer living in the countryside who could bury them in the family garden.

Then one night there was a knock at the door; their believer friend had come to return the Bibles, worried that he would be punished if he was found with them. Then another believer, under the strain of public accusation, exposed the Lan family. Local officials began to harass the Xin family and pressured them to confess and give up their Bibles. Pressure intensified when relatives realized the Xins had not burned the family Bibles. Lan explained, "If we burned the books then all the trouble would disappear. But we could not bring ourselves to destroy the book that we loved."

Lan and her mother decided to bury the books among the bean plants growing under their windows. "We wrapped each Bible carefully in plastic," she said, "and put them underneath the roots of the plants, replacing the earth

so that nothing seemed to have been disturbed."

They now felt the Bibles were safe, until one evening, the Neighborhood Street Committee called a mandatory meeting and carried out a scathing attack against religious believers. "All reactionary things have to be hit, otherwise they won't fall down," said the leader. "Those who are believers here should make themselves known otherwise we will drag it out of them by force..."

After the meeting, her mother said to Lan, "Maybe we had better find a place for those books away from the house." The next evening, Lan dug up the Bibles, put them in a sack with a trowel, and set off into the night like a thief. She once again buried the Bibles and the other Christian literature in tall grass alongside the railroad tracks. Only after she finished was Lan aware of how tired, sweaty, and frightened she was.

Eventually, the political climate changed enough for the Xins to dig up their Bibles. By 1987, with the founding of the Amity Printing Company in Nanjing, the printing of God's Word in China became a sustained reality. "When I heard this news," says Lan, "I was so excited I could not sleep for several nights. Our family income was only 100 yuan (US \$12) a month—life was not easy—but, without any reservation, I put 100 yuan into a collection for printing these Bibles."

With the support of the American Bible Society and the fellowship of United Bible Societies, Amity has printed more than 18 million Bibles. But in a country of 1.2 billion people and a rapidly growing church, the need is still very great.

In addition, the general loss of faith in the anti-religious ideology represented by the Cultural Revolution has left the Chinese people in a spiritual vacuum, looking for something new to believe in. Through the Amity Printing Company, ABS is helping to fill that void.

Lan Xin beams a broad smile and says, "Today, when I go into the church bookstore, I see different versions of the Bible and devotional literature spread out for purchase, I get an indescribable feeling of happiness. God is truly great." ■



# SO THAT ALL WILL KNOW

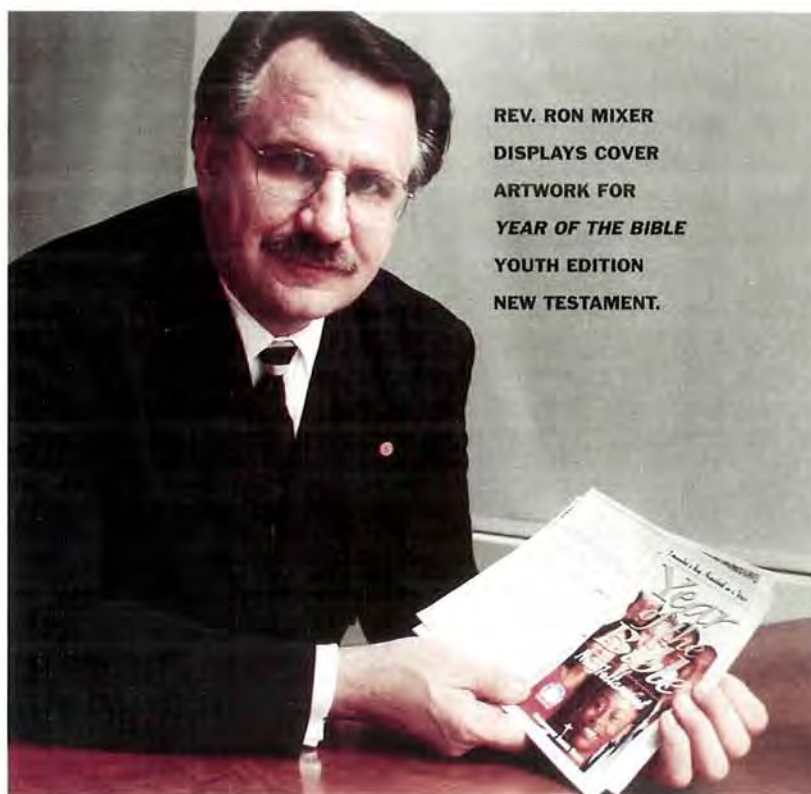
**ABS  
LAUNCHES  
1999: YEAR  
OF THE  
BIBLE**

**F**or *The Tonight Show*, comedian Jay Leno held impromptu street interviews with passersby about their knowledge of the world's best-selling book. He stops two women and asks them if they can name one of the Ten Commandments. Embarrassed, one guesses, "Freedom of speech?" Leno asks another passerby, "Who was taller, David or Goliath?" Their response, "David who?" He bewilders several others with similar questions about basic Bible knowledge. All these people claim to own Bibles, but confess to Leno that they seldom read them.

At first, the tape is amusing. After all, Leno is fishing for laughs. That's his business. But his Bible quiz also points out the biblical illiteracy of most Americans. For those people who love and revere God's Word, Leno's humorous interviews make for tragic comedy—an issue that weighed heavily on Barney Fields. As a devout Christian, he wanted to do something about the Biblical illiteracy in his community of El Paso, Texas. After much prayer, an inspired Barney got a vision—a plan to get all of El Paso to read God's Word.

*Year of the Bible* was brilliant in its simplicity. Barney calculated that, reading just five minutes a day, the entire New Testament could be finished in one year.

To promote his Bible-reading campaign, Barney went to disparate segments of the Christian community in this Texas border town, and chal-



**REV. RON MIXER  
DISPLAYS COVER  
ARTWORK FOR  
YEAR OF THE BIBLE  
YOUTH EDITION  
NEW TESTAMENT.**

lenged them to come together for a common goal—the reading of God's Word. Then, with their backing, he went to local radio, television, and newspapers, and asked them to promote, broadcast, or publish a one-year Bible-reading schedule.

As reported in the April-May 1997 *Record*, Barney then turned to the American Bible Society and ABS Program Manager Ron Mixer to provide easy-to-understand *Contemporary English Version* New Testaments (CEV). Eventually



more than 65,000 CEV and Spanish New Testaments were distributed throughout El Paso.

*Year of the Bible*, El Paso, had a galvanizing impact, bringing together 58 churches traditionally divided by ethnic and confessional differences. Each day's reading was published in the *El Paso Times* and read on local radio. Church attendance increased city-wide. One El Paso pastor explained, "We are reaching people who never took Christ or church seriously before." For one year, the people of El Paso were all reading from the same page of Scripture.

**N**ow ABS Program Manager Ron Mixer is taking Barney Field's vision on the road, enlisting communities to launch their own 1999: *Year of the Bible* program. ABS also has trained volunteers ready to go out and present the 1999: *Year of the Bible* program, and has prepared eight thousand Pastor Kits. The kits outline everything from steering and media committee responsibilities to how to organize prayer groups and a budget, in both Spanish and English—in short, all the necessary ingredients for duplicating the El Paso program's success.

A pilot program, sponsored by ABS Volunteer Ministries, offered a grant of six CEV New Testaments to each ABS

Volunteer who enlisted five other people to commit to the five-minute-a-day readings. Through this pilot program, 75,000 commitment cards were signed and *Promise Edition* New Testaments were distributed in just three months. An additional one million special edition New Testaments, which include the one-year, five-minute-a-day reading program, are being published in several versions, including the *Versión Popular* with Catholic Imprimatur, in preparation for 1999: *Year of the Bible*.

Dozens of denominations and ministries have already joined the 1999: *Year of the Bible* crusade, including the AME Zion Church, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Campus Crusade for Christ International, and Promise Keepers. Churches in communities such as San Antonio, Montgomery, Detroit, and Jacksonville will participate as well.

"The 1999: *Year of the Bible* program is a great way to reacquaint our contemporary culture with the Bible," says Ron Mixer. Dr. Thomas Trask, General Superintendent of the Assemblies of God, says, "We want to stand alongside the American Bible Society and proclaim 1999 as the Year of the Bible."

For more information on how to enlist ABS and its resources in promoting the *Year of the Bible*, call Rev. Ron Mixer at 1-888-3-BIBLE-5 (1-888-324-2535). ■

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To discover how ABS Gift Annuities can fit into your plans, complete and return the form at left or call us toll-free at **1-800-820-6227**.

# Rolling with the Good News

**Truckers  
Rally to  
Share  
Their  
Faith**

**A** heavy-metal rumble rattles window panes as 221 eighteen-wheelers roll into Lebanon, Pennsylvania, sunlight dancing off their chromed bumpers, exhaust stacks, and massive grilles. They wear their highly-polished colors proudly, mechanized prairie schooners gathering from all around the U.S.

The drivers who wrestle these powerful behemoths into town have come to praise the Lord, to draw strength and support in Christian camaraderie, and to show off their colorful rigs. This was the 17th annual truck rally of Transport for Christ, an interconfessional Christian ministry aimed at helping truckers along the way.

Fluffy clouds float across a blue canopy, as a stiff breeze tugs at balloons tethered to the now-silent rigs, lined up for review. Between 2,500 and 3,000 men, women, and children have come for a time of family festivity and renewal. Truckers may have a hard-edged image, but these men and women are neighborly, eager to greet newcomers and old friends alike.

Clowns amuse and amaze the young, and everyone feasts on a picnic-style dinner. There is a miniature train to ride and a pedal tractor pull



**DAVID F. BABICK  
RIDES HIGH AS AN  
ABS SCRIPTURE  
RESOURCE VOLUNTEER.  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
RICHARD LORD.**

for children. The central event, however, is the parade of purring trucks, each categorized and judged by vintage. A purple-painted rig belonging to George Derks, with "Sing Praises to His Name" inscribed along its broad hood, takes top honors in the late-model category.

Transport for Christ operates 26 chapels for truckers around the world, 23 in the United States (including two mobile chapels), one in Canada, and two in Russia. The American Bible Society works closely with Transport for Christ, providing Bibles and Scripture Portions to those who make their living moving goods across America and around the world.

David F. Babick, a Scripture Resource Volunteer for ABS, is one of the people who makes sure that truckers have access to the Word. Wearing an ABS Volunteer T-shirt, David shared his joy in distributing Bibles at the Transport for Christ rally. He said that ABS provides tools that make spreading the Word easi-

**DORIS HIGH SHARES  
SCRIPTURES AT THE  
RALLY.**



er. When people complain that the Bible is too difficult, David offers them ABS's *Contemporary English Version* or *Today's English Version*.

Sylvia J. Jones, National Coordinator of the ABS Truckers Ministry, explains that the truckers we depend on to move the goods we use are largely isolated from the people they serve: "They're a society operating separate from our society. We don't impact their lives very much, and we don't think they impact ours, but without them we have nothing. Many feel we don't care about them and that God, if He exists, doesn't care about them either."

Truckers are often away from home for long periods of time—sometimes as long as 2 or 3 months at a stretch, she says, and then, "They're home maybe 2-3 days at the end of that run, so often they have no real time to spend with their families or go to church." Sylvia adds, "While many older truckers were affiliated with a church before they started out on the road, the younger ones don't know about God."

Because of an ignorance of the Lord and His Word—or the difficulty in getting to know Him—Sylvia stresses how important it is to get the Word out to truckers where they are. "We saw the need to get Scriptures into their environments, which is the truck terminals, the truck stops."

David adds that offering Scriptures to truckers at truck stops strengthens them spiritually and counters the ever-present temptations that lurk in the lonely, empty, off-the-road places—temptations such as drugs, prostitutes, and pornography. Having a chapel at a truck stop helps, too, David says, because "good and evil don't mix...if you have the presence of a chapel, it tends to discourage other activities that are not so good."

Doris J. High, Northeast Region Office Manager of Transport for Christ, says her group aims "to help the drivers find a good church." But while on the road, truckers can find spiritual comfort at their truck stop chapels. Truckers tell Doris that these chapels are like oases at truck stops. Doris says, "Sometimes they're just stressed out, they need to talk to the chaplain, they can come into the chapels to pray."

In a hard world, trucker ministries like Transport for Christ, offer the solace of fellowship and spiritual refreshment through the Word of God.

John Rissler, a trucker from California, finds the truth of this in his life. "It gives you encouragement when you get in a bad spot. And you know there's somebody always looking out for you, watching out for you."

When asked if he feels he's an example, John says he isn't sure how he'd answer that, then adds, "I'm just trying to be out here living life the way it should be." ■

## FOR THE RECORD

100 YEARS AGO

### Translating the Unwritten Word

**T**he January 1898 *Record* recounted the labors of the Rev. James Evans, a Methodist missionary who, 60 years before, found it nearly impossible to teach the Native Americans to read the Bible. He created a syllabic alphabet to convey God's Word into their unwritten tongue. To print these Scriptures, he assembled a makeshift, but workable press using lead from tea boxes to hand-carve type, chimney soot to make ink, and thin layers of birch bark to make paper. Evans' syllabic alphabet proved so effective that it was adopted by missionaries of other denominations.

50 YEARS AGO

### A General Wages Spiritual Warfare

**"C**ONTRIBUTION OF AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY OF INESTIMABLE VALUE TO SPIRITUAL REHABILITATION OF JAPAN. ...URGE THAT...PLANS BE GREATLY EXPANDED." The March 1948 *Record* printed General Douglas MacArthur's telegraphed plea to ABS to continue publication and shipping of Bibles to Japan. Following the establishment of freedom of religion, the Japanese people have shown a growing interest in Christian principles, wrote Gen. MacArthur, and he urged the ABS to keep printing and sending the Scriptures until the Japan Bible Society could meet "THE EXTRAORDINARY DEMAND NOW EXISTING." The *Record* stated that between the end of World War II and March, 1948, the ABS sent 1,456,000 Japanese Testaments and 675,000 Japanese Bibles to Japan. In the month of February 1948, 150,000 Japanese Bibles were shipped to Japan in response to MacArthur's plea. ■



*Bibles sell like hotcakes on the streets of Tokyo, 1948.*

# Preserving the "Bread of Life"

## *A piece of translation history*

**James Charbonnier displays the singed edges of his family Bible that was baked in a loaf of bread over three centuries ago.**

**T**here wasn't much time. The winded messenger gasped for air as he haltingly forced out the news: the king's soldiers were marching toward the Charbonniers' farm in search of the forbidden book!

The book was a printed French Bible. In 16th-century France, owning a French-language Bible was illegal. Violators often paid with their lives.

The invention of the printing press only 50 years earlier was bringing Bibles, printed in the common language, within reach of ordinary people. To the French king, however, a Bible in the hands of commoners, and the literacy it would breed, was seen as a threat to the monarchy. He banned it, and enlisted the Duke of Savoy and his troops to ferret out copies of the holy contraband. Harsh justice was meted out to anyone found with a French Scripture.

To the Charbonnier family, their Bible, printed in 1561, was more precious than life itself. They were French Huguenots (people who walk at night), Bible-reading Christians forced to meet in secret, under cover of night, to worship and study the Scriptures.

They hastily devised a plan to save their sacred book. Like most French peasants, they baked fresh bread daily. And each day the final loaf, made of the trailings left from the other loaves, was huge—big enough to conceal a large Bible. Carefully wrapping their Bible in a towel, they laid it in a bread pan, covered it with a mound of moist dough and baked it.

The aromatic loaf was taken from the oven just as the troops arrived. After a thorough search of the farm, the troops left empty-handed.


Fearing further harassment, the family chose



to flee with their "baked Bible" to safety in Switzerland.

The beautiful, mountainous nation became home to generations of Charbonniers until, in 1902, James Charbonnier emigrated to America with the cherished family Bible tucked safely in his steamer trunk.

Nearly 100 years later, his son, also named James, came to the ABS Bible House in New York City to donate the Charbonnier family Bible to the Society's Library, its edges visibly singed from baking three centuries earlier. "I considered giving it to other libraries or museums," he explained, "but no one else seemed to appreciate the risks my family took to preserve this Bible as much as ABS. I think it will have a prominent place here at Bible House and will be seen and appreciated by many generations to come."

*Ed. Note:* If you plan to be in New York City and would like to see the Charbonniers' Bible or any of the tens of thousands of other rare Scriptures in the ABS collection, contact Dr. Liana Lupas at (212) 408-1204. 

**NATIONAL NEWS**

■ **NEW YORK**

The Testament came in a bag with a Slinky toy. The bag was a "Freshman Survival Kit" for freshmen at local colleges and universities. That's how Campus Crusade for Christ got the attention of college freshmen, distributing 1,300 Survival Kits at New York University, Cooper Union and other schools.



**It's in the bag: members of Campus Crusade for Christ put "Freshman Survival Kits" together.**

These survival kits included a special imprint copy of the New Testament from ABS, a copy of Josh McDowell's book, *More Than a Carpenter*, a video about alcoholism, a Christian music CD, and a Slinky toy. As of last year, ABS and Campus Crusade had partnered to distribute 75,000 survival kits to college freshmen at schools around the country; this year, their goal is to pass out 200,000 kits.

These packages have had a real spiritual impact. Last year, Kim, a student at a Delaware college, gave a kit to a freshman who had known little about Christianity. The enrollee received Jesus Christ, reads her New Testament, and, Kim says, is "on fire for God."

■ **TEXAS**

Aided by a grant of \$8,013 from the American Bible Society, the Kingwood First Baptist Church near Houston chose to witness to the surrounding community by distributing copies of the *Contemporary English Version* New Testament. The church members distributed 17,000 copies of the CEV to nearby homes and apartments.

Church seniors stuffed plastic bags with the Scriptures and reply postcards, which were then given to younger volunteers who went house to house, hanging the Testaments on doorknobs. With the help of ABS, Kingwood First Baptist Church advertised the Scripture initiative on the radio and in local newspapers.

In one case, a Bible had an immediate impact: "Early on, we saw evidence of the Lord's work with this program," said Charles Porter, a member of the Kingwood congregation. "One couple received the New Testament on Saturday morning, stayed up late that night reading it, and were in church on Sunday morning."

Pastor Dearing L. Garner was especially pleased with the *Contemporary English Version*. He said that while many people who received the Testaments may already own one, they don't own the CEV. And, he says, "If they'll just pick it up and read it, they're not going to be able to put it down after one paragraph." Pastor Garner sees the distribution as a beginning. Those CEV Testaments, he said, are "good seed, and will bring a harvest."



**Reaching out at an early age, a church member hangs a CEV Testament on a neighbor's door.**



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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

■ KENYA

The Rev. Henry Kathii and his staff at Bible House were hard at work when a terrorist blast struck the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, two blocks away. The terrorist attack claimed the lives of more than 245 persons. "It was a very, very bad experience. The whole town was shaking," Dr. Kathii said.

Despite limited resources, the Bible Society of Kenya decided to provide materials for three church-based counseling centers that aid those traumatized by the bombing. "Many people have come up to give various kinds of donations towards the disaster," said Dr. Kathii.

The Society will give 5,000 Scripture Portions, based on ABS titles, specifically selected to address the pain of the blast victims. Five different Portions will be distributed, Dr. Kathii explained, each for people facing different sorts of difficulties. For example, one will be for families under stress, while another will be aimed at substance abuse. Dr. Kathii says, "We realized that when there's trauma, substance abuse goes

up immediately," so he and his colleagues chose a Portion directed towards that problem.

■ ZAMBIA

"Today is a milestone in the modern history of this school," said D.K. Mawpe, headmaster of the Kawama Primary School. He welcomed visitors from the Bible Society of Zambia who brought New Testaments in the Bemba language.

"The children could not contain their excitement on receiving the books, and were eager to read that day's lesson from the Gospel of Matthew," Mawpe said. The headmaster added that this edition was much more modern and easy to read than the old Bemba-language Scriptures.

These Testaments will be a great help to the children, who like all other primary-school students in Zambia, receive two periods of Bible-based religious education a week.

Before the Testaments arrived, the students could only sit and listen to teachers, who read the Scriptures to them. And listen they did. They repeated the main points of the lesson over and over in order to grasp the meaning of the stories.

When the Testaments were distributed to the eager students, headmaster Mawpe told them that they must read it every day and follow its teaching carefully.

Bible Society workers did not have enough Testaments to give one to each student at the school, and were besieged by children who begged for their own copies. ☛



Students at Kawama Primary School in Zambia eagerly peruse their Bemba New Testaments.



## Charity Finds Her Way Out

**C**harity, a young Zambian woman, was pregnant with her third child when she discovered she was HIV-positive. When her husband found out he threw her out of their house, so she went back to her parents' home.

She said, "I would sit alone, crying for hours, and asking myself why it had to be me in this terrible situation.... I felt as though I had been locked in...the prison of disease, and there was no way out."

Her family now "just tolerated me," and her "so-called friends" shunned her. She was "terribly lonely." But Charity's family had a Bible which one day she picked up and began to read,

all the while, she says, "crying to God to help me in my loneliness."

Christ answered her prayer. Charity came into contact with people in the Jesus Cares Ministry in Lusaka, and she says, "Without these people I would have been lost."

Her friends at the Jesus Cares Ministry gave Charity a Bible provided by the Bible Society—one that she could keep. They showed her passages in Scripture that would comfort and guide her. "God's Word spoke to me in my HIV prison," she says, "and showed me that there was a way out."

Your gift to the Bible-a-Month Club will help others like Charity know God's love. 📖

*Your October gift will aid believers in China, and a November gift will provide Bibles for people in Sudan, Chad, and Uganda.*

*To find out more about joining the Bible-a-Month Club, fill out the reply form below, or write:*

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

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For as little as \$4 a month, you can extend your reach to these nations by providing desperately-needed Bibles to the other half of the world.

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Join the Bible-a-Month Club today! Simply fill out the coupon below. Or call toll free 1-800-32-BIBLE (1-800-322-4253) for more information.

**M**ore than 3 BILLION people have yet to own a Bible. Over one-half of the people in Russia do not have a Bible. The number of believers in China who have never had a Bible of their own is absolutely staggering—and growing every day. And the demand in Africa is *double what we have been able to meet.*

*Mail this coupon along with your tax-deductible gift in the envelope included in the ABS Record. Or mail to:*

**American Bible Society  
1865 Broadway  
New York, NY 10023-7505**

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City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**922600RO**





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


# PLEASE PRAY

**Iran** — While there are promising signs of change in Iran, the Christian community continues to face restrictions and hardships. A number of pastors have left the country in the past year, and their congregations are without leadership. Iranians are forbidden to print Scriptures or import Bibles. Please pray that the Christians will be strengthened in their trials.

**Students** — As they start the school year, let us pray that students can learn of God and His Word, and their studies will lead to true wisdom. Pray, too, that collegians who received the CEV New Testaments in "Survival Kits" distributed by the Campus Crusade for Christ will draw hope and guidance from the Word.

**Truckers** — The men and women who move most all our goods need the encouragement of God's Word. Please ask the Lord that He may draw volunteers to the ABS truckers ministry, and He will reveal Himself to more drivers through that ministry.

**Dominican Republic** — Please give thanks for the production of the "Strength Through Suffering" Portion, which is distributed among terminally ill patients and their families. Ask God to give the United Bible Societies renewed creativity in fundraising and in reaching young people with the gospel there and around the world.

**Farmers** — During and after their harvests, farmers will rejoice and be grateful for the earth's bounty. Those who face poor harvests, such as in drought-stricken Texas and Idaho, will require help and encouragement. Pray that farmers will turn to God's Word in good times and in bad. 

**NOVEMBER 1998**

SUNDAY

- 1 Psalm 90
- 2 Psalm 91
- 3 Psalm 92
- 4 Psalm 93
- 5 Psalm 95
- 6 Psalm 96
- 7 Psalm 97

SUNDAY

- 8 Psalm 98
- 9 Psalm 99
- 10 Psalm 100
- 11 1 Chronicles 15.1-29
- 12 1 Chronicles 16.1-36
- 13 Genesis 14.1-24
- 14 Hebrews 7.1-28

SUNDAY

- 15 Numbers 28.1-31
- 16 Deuteronomy 7.1-26
- 17 Deuteronomy 8.1-20
- 18 Deuteronomy 10.1-22
- 19 Deuteronomy 11.1-32
- 20 Deuteronomy 14.22-29
- 21 Deuteronomy 15.1-18

BIBLE SUNDAY

- 22 2 Corinthians 8.1-15
- 23 2 Corinthians 9.1-15
- 24 Psalm 50
- 25 Psalm 138

THANKSGIVING DAY

- 26 Psalm 145
- 27 Psalm 146
- 28 Luke 17.11-37

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

- 29 Matthew 24.29-51
- 30 Isaiah 12.1-6

**DECEMBER 1998**

- 1 Matthew 25.1-13
- 2 Matthew 25.14-30
- 3 Matthew 25.31-46
- 4 Zechariah 9.9-17
- 5 Zechariah 10.1-12

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

- 6 Matthew 3.1-12
- 7 Malachi 3.1-18
- 8 Malachi 4.1-6
- 9 Matthew 11.1-19
- 10 Matthew 11.20-30
- 11 Psalm 72
- 12 Isaiah 11.1-16

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

- 13 Isaiah 35.1-10
- 14 Romans 1.1-17
- 15 Romans 3.21-31
- 16 Romans 4.1-12
- 17 Romans 4.13-25
- 18 Romans 5.1-11
- 19 Romans 5.12-21

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

- 20 Isaiah 7.10-25
- 21 Zephaniah 3.1-20
- 22 Psalm 24
- 23 Isaiah 9.1-7
- 24 Luke 2.1-20

CHRISTMAS DAY

- 25 John 1.1-18
- 26 John 1.19-34

SUNDAY

- 27 Matthew 1.1-25
- 28 John 8.31-59
- 29 John 10.1-21
- 30 John 10.22-42
- 31 Hebrews 6.1-20

NATIONAL BIBLE WEEK IS NOVEMBER 22-28, 1998

# I N M E M O R I A M

M E M O R I A L I Z E A L O V E D O N E B Y H E L P I N G T O P R O V I D E

B I B L E S T O P E O P L E W H O D O N ' T Y E T H A V E O N E

LILAH B. ANDERSON  
Given by: Mr. Carl R. Anderson

MY BELOVED HUSBAND,  
GEORGE L. BAILEY, SR.  
Given by: The Estate of Florence  
E. Bailey

FRANCES "LADY" BARRINGER  
Given by: Miss Ruby Matejka

MRS. JOHN L. BARRINGER, SR.  
Given by: Miss Nina Gillespie

MY HUSBAND,  
CLYDE M. BEHYMER  
Given by: Mrs. Frances D.  
Behymer

J. MERCER BERRY  
Given by: Mr. & Mrs. Lawson  
Thigpen & Girls

VIRGINIA PULIS BEZUYEN  
Given by: Mr. John L. Pulis

ROBERT BLEICK  
Given by: St. Paul Lutheran  
Church

SOPHIE BOELTER  
Given by: The Boelter Family

ALICE MAE BROWNLEE  
Given by: Nina Gillespie & Ruby  
Matejka

MY WIFE,  
TERESA ANN BUCHBINDER  
Given by: Mr. William Buchbinder

MY WIFE,  
GESIENE BUNGAY  
Given by: Mr. Alfred E. Bungay

CHARLOTTE F. BURNS  
Given by: Family & Friends

CHARLOTTE BURNS  
Given by: Mrs. Francis E. Paul

JULIA & WILLIAM BURY  
Given by: The Estate of  
Magdalena B. Kuhlmann

DR. JAMES L. CAMPBELL AND  
JOHN GASQUE  
Given by: Mrs. Mary Clare  
Mattheus

MY HUSBANDS, P. A. CASWELL  
AND MICHAEL; MY PARENTS,  
IDA & EMIL NELSON; MY  
SISTERS, EDYTHE, FLORENCE,  
EDNA & LILLIAN; MY  
BROTHERS, HERBERT & MELVIN  
NELSON; MY NIECE, GLORYA  
Given by: Mrs. Penne Caswell

MY GRANDMOTHER,  
MRS. THEO CLICK  
Given by: Mr. Mike Mallick

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Given by: Miss Mary Felts

DR. VERNON H. COUGHLAN  
AND MRS. IRENE B. COUGHLAN  
Given by: The Estate of Irene B.  
Coughlan

PAULINE COXON  
Given by: Gordon & Marian  
Mackensen

MY DAUGHTER, VIRGINIA A.  
DAIGLE AND MY WIFE,  
LOUISE M. ROSENBROCK  
Given by: Mr. Kenneth A.  
Rosenbrock

CAROLINE DANNER  
Given by: Chaplain Service  
VA Hospital

MY HUSBAND,  
THE REV. W. ELLIS DAVIS  
Given by: Mrs. Frona Davis

MY SON, DEVAN  
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Okrzynski

DIANA, PRINCESS OF WALES  
Given by: Mr. Robert R. May

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THE REV. EDWARD W. DIEHL  
Given by: Mrs. Helen Diehl

VERNON DUNCAN AND  
MILDRED SUTTON  
Given by: Mr. & Mrs. J. L.  
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ANDY DYAK  
Given by: Mrs. Diane Jacobs  
Bryant

MY PARENTS,  
LEAH & GEORGE ECKROTH  
Given by: Mrs. Betty J. Haas

MY MOTHER,  
BESSIE ELSBERRY  
Given by: Mrs. A. N. Bountis

MY BELOVED MOTHER,  
MRS. LILLY ENO  
Given by: The Estate of Lilly Eno

MY BROTHER,  
JAMES M. FORTUNE  
Given by: Mrs. Thebna Lutz

FREDERIC ALLEN GRANT  
Given by: Mr. & Mrs. Anderson

MY PARENTS,  
MR. & MRS. WILLIAM GROBE;  
MY BROTHERS,  
WILLIAM & HERBERT GROBE;  
MY HUSBAND,  
MR. CARL R. RUDOLF  
Given by: Mrs. Lee H. Rudolf

MY HUSBAND, RAYMOND J.  
HAAS AND MY PARENTS,  
WILLIAM & GERTRUDE  
MOREHOUSE  
Given by: Mrs. Irene M. Haas

ARTHUR S. HEIGES  
Given by: Ms. Virginia Hammond

ADA HEINECKE  
Given by: The Rev. K.  
Devagnanam

MY FATHER,  
ELMER HENRIKSEN  
Given by: Mrs. Candace Muehl

OUR FATHER, ROBERT C. HILL  
Given by: Mr. & Mrs. Robert L.  
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Given by: Mrs. Barbara J. Hogue

RUTH R. HOPKINS  
Given by: Miss Anne Apelian

MABEL HOYLER  
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Vance & Sallee Dick, Eleanor  
Lillo & Family, Anita & Jack  
Dierkes & Family, Muriel & John  
Niehausa and Donald & Shiela  
McLean

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THEODORE W. LEWIS  
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RICHARD & RYANN MARSH  
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Young, Sr.

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L. McCune

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McDowell

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Given by: Mrs. Charles F. Miller,  
Bruce & Kristin

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Given by: Devany Austin

ORVILLE MOORE  
Given by: The Rev. & Mrs.  
Howard H. Schaar

WILMA BOCHE MORENINGS  
Given by: Family & Friends

WILMA BOCHE MORENINGS  
Given by: Richard & Dania  
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Beckman

MOTHER TERESA  
Given by: Mrs. Gloria M. Croft

OSCAR NEESE AND  
ASTON PRICE  
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MR. & MRS. GEORGE SCHREUR  
Given by: Mrs. Donald Uken

OUR AUNT,  
SHIRLEY SEMMELHAACK  
Given by: Mr. & Mrs. Mark I.  
Cover

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ELIZABETH SIEMENS  
Given by: John & Gladys Reimer

MY UNCLE, JAMES SMITH  
Mr. Robert F. Smith

LT. COL. (RET.) WILLIAM H.  
SMITH, JR.  
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Given by: Mrs. Dorothy Steitz

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Given by: Mrs. Mary Irma  
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RAYMOND E. STOKELY  
Given by: Mrs. Raymond E.  
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JOHN WIEDER  
Given by: Miss Tillie Wieder

JOHNNY LARUE WILLIAMS  
Given by: Mrs. Paula Grainger

MARY E. WINTERS  
Given by: Family & Friends

MY MOTHER, MARY L. YOUNG  
Given by: Ms. Jameela Lares

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