

GOD'S WORD WHERE NEEDED MOST

Record

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AMERICAN
BIBLE
SOCIETY

The God of New Beginnings



Dear Friends,

Autumn is upon us, bringing about many new beginnings in our lives. Students have returned to the classroom. Families are preparing for Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas. And we are all slowly setting our sights towards the swiftly approaching New Year.

The fall has brought about significant changes for my own family as well. Rita and I recently settled into our new home in Center City Philadelphia. Moving boxes are finally empty, pictures finally hang on the wall and we are finally beginning to explore this amazing city through walks in the crisp autumn air.

This fresh start has reminded me yet again that our God is a God of new beginnings. As he tells us in Revelation 21.5, “I make all things new!” This verse has been especially near to my heart as American Bible Society begins our third century of ministry in a new home. As a staff, we feel so blessed to be settled into our new offices in historic Philadelphia. Thank you for all of your prayers and encouragement during this exciting time of transition for our American Bible Society family.

And while settling into a new home, office or school year often feels like a momentous change, it doesn't hold a candle to the new beginnings that God is authoring through the power of his Word. As you'll see in the pages of this magazine, the Bible is making all things new in the lives of men and women across our nation and around the world.

Some of my favorite testimonies come from the U.S. Armed Forces, where troops are transformed after engaging with Scripture for the first time. Beyond our borders, God's Word is bringing a fresh start to hurting people in Swaziland through Bible-based Trauma Healing. And in Zambia, we're witnessing a revolutionary new dawn for Scripture translation; two of the fastest New Testament translations ever are accelerating the rate at which we get Bibles into the hands of waiting people around the world.

All of these incredible changes are only possible because of your faithful partnership to help spread God's Word to every corner of the globe. Friends, thank you for your continued support. I hope you'll read through the Christmas Gift Catalog in this issue and consider the exciting ways you can share the Bible where needed most this holiday season.

And as you begin a new season in your own life, cling to this incredible truth with me: the God of new beginnings is also the faithful God who never changes. He exhorts us in Isaiah 43.19, “Watch for the new thing I am going to do.” Let us watch expectantly as we labor for his glory.

Serving Together,

Roy Peterson

President & CEO, American Bible Society

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Record

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

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When Seeing is Believing



The Filipino translation team reviews a picture Bible story before recording a sign language translation.

In May 2014, more than 40 Christians gathered in a large room in Bangkok, Thailand. Their goal? To translate the Bible for one of the largest unreached people groups in Southeast Asia: the deaf.

Deaf communities represent one of the largest unreached populations in the world. Just 10 percent of the world's unique sign languages have translated Scripture Portions available, and less than 2 percent of all deaf people have engaged with God's Word.

That's why Philippine Bible Society, one of the Bible Societies represented at the Bangkok workshop, works with groups like The Philippine Deaf Sign Language Association. Together they are working to transform the Filipino deaf community by translating the Bible into sign language and media formats they use every day.

At the workshop, deaf Filipinos learned best practices for recording sign language translations—from editing video footage to incorporating storybook Bible pictures into the syntax of their translation. They hope to have an initial round of Bible stories translated on video by 2016.

According to conference attendees, there is growing support for deaf translations in Asia. General Secretary of Thailand Bible Society Dr. Sereek Lorgunpai explained that he was impressed at how deaf Christians are working together, even though sign languages throughout the world are very different from one another.

Thanks to this group of translators and American Bible Society's financial partners, millions of deaf believers around the world are seeing God's Word come to life in their heart language.

You can share God's Word with those who need it most!
Visit ABSRecord.com/Translation.

National Update



Scripture Reaches Global Families

The eighth World Meeting of Families will be held in Philadelphia from September 22-27. This international gathering of Catholic families is scheduled to draw more than 300,000 visitors each day and nearly 2 million visitors for the weekend visit of Pope Francis; more than 150 countries have projected attendees. As a result, the meeting represents a significant opportunity to share God's Word with a global audience.

In addition to running a pre-event media campaign championing the power of family and hosting a booth to promote the new "Build Your Bible" app, American Bible

Society is providing registered attendees with a multilingual version of Luke's Gospel in their conference backpacks; it will feature translations in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, French, Italian and Portuguese. More than half a million Bible portions will also be delivered to countries around the world. "We are sending God's Word into regions of the world that are hungry for evangelism," says Alicia DeFrange, Manager of Catholic Ministry Programs for American Bible Society.

Please pray that the World Meeting of Families will be used to share God's Word with millions around the world.

State of the Bible 2015: God's Word For All

This spring, American Bible Society and Barna Group released results from their 2015 State of the Bible survey. The annual survey takes the pulse of American beliefs and behaviors surrounding the Bible. This year's survey reveals the disparity between Americans' understanding of Scripture availability and the reality of Bible access around the world.

According to the survey, 98 percent of Americans support the freedom to own and read the Bible. But 7 out of 10 people have no idea that over 4,000 of the world's languages still do not have a completed Bible translation. These statistics highlight the privilege of owning a Bible in America. They also demonstrate the importance of increased Bible translation work so that all nations can experience the transformative power of God's Word.

Read the full State of the Bible report at ABS.US/StateOfTheBible.

7 out of 10 **Most Americans (72%) believe that the Bible is available in all languages.**

Over 4,000 of the world's languages still do not have a completed Bible translation.

**26%** have no Scripture translation started (**1,859 languages**)
31% have Scripture translations in progress (**2,195 languages**)



Network TV Spurs Bible Reading

The NBC miniseries, “A.D.: The Bible Continues,” a dramatic retelling of the book of Acts, reached 9.5 million viewers during its 12-episode run this year. American Bible Society ran a series of blog posts based around each episode from the miniseries. The blog and corresponding social media campaign reached more than 72,000 individuals during the show’s run this year.

The recent study, “Millennials and the Bible,” revealed that 24 percent of 18-30 year olds who increased Bible reading last year attributed the increase to Bible-based TV shows like this one.

To read the blogs, visit ABS.US/ADBible.



New Bible App Reaches Youth on their Turf

An interactive Bible app called “Build Your Bible” recently launched for Google (Android) and Apple (iOS) devices. The app enables youth to engage portions of Scripture through a Bible knowledge game.

The game lets players leverage their Facebook pages and relevant Bible passages to answer tough questions correctly. Right answers help players earn coins, with which they “purchase” books of the Bible in a digital library. As a result, youth grow in their knowledge of God’s Word. Developed through a partnership between American Bible Society and the Ramón Pané Foundation, the app is free and available for download today.

You can download the app by visiting ABS.US/BuildYourBible.



Reaching Millions in America’s Birthplace

American Bible Society relocated its headquarters to the heart of historic Philadelphia in August. The new home is across the street from landmarks such as Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell.

Philadelphia welcomes 39 million visitors each year, 5 million of which come exclusively for tourist attractions on Independence Mall. Pray with us that God will use this new location to reach the city of Philadelphia, the nation and the globe with his life-changing Word. The new address for American Bible Society is 101 North Independence Mall East FL8, Philadelphia, PA 19106.

International Update



CHINA: Equipping Pastors to Teach God's Word

Ten Chinese seminaries and Bible Schools now have Bibles, Bible commentaries, computers and Bible study software for students to deepen their knowledge of God's Word. In China, where BBC estimates that more Christians attend church than in all of Europe, these training materials are essential to ensure that the growing Chinese church has well-equipped

Bible teachers.

Many pastors who graduate from these schools go on to lead multiple congregations in their regions. Now with support from American Bible Society's financial partners, these teachers and seminarians are prepared to share God's Word with those who long for it in China.



CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC: Healing and Hope for Displaced People

In the last two years, conflicts between Christian and Muslim groups have ravaged the people of the Central African Republic (CAR). Local militias have committed brutal crimes and displaced citizens from their homes. In the wake of these events, 10,000 survivors in CAR are participating in ongoing Bible-based Trauma Healing sessions. These sessions allow displaced people to bring their pain and trauma to God for healing. The sessions recently spread into the capital city of Bangui.

Sylvain Ndjendole, general secretary of Bible Society in the CAR, says he is thankful for the generous partners who make Scripture-based healing available to thousands in his country. "I thank American Bible Society so much for supporting Trauma Healing in Central African Republic," he says. "May God bless the people at American Bible Society so that they can continue to help us with finances and materials for the organization of this program in our country."



EGYPT: Festivals Bring God's Love to Children

Every year, nearly 200,000 young Egyptians engage Scripture at live Kingo Festivals, a children's program led by a costumed lion named Kingo who teaches Bible lessons through singing and storytelling. Bible Society of Egypt hosts these events based around their immensely popular cartoon series, "Kingsley's Meadows."

At the Kingo Festivals, children enjoy drama, games and music, all while interacting with costumed characters from the show. Scripture activity booklets also ensure that Bible engagement continues long after the festivals are over. By supporting this growing project, financial partners from American Bible Society have helped thousands of Egyptian children to embrace God's Word through the lessons of a friendly lion.

CARIBBEAN: Churches Combat Domestic Violence with Scripture

Bible Societies throughout the Caribbean are hosting workshops on domestic violence at local churches. These workshops equip local pastors to provide Bible-based counseling for victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. The program is expected to reach more than 150,000 people in 2015.

Domestic violence has risen significantly in the Caribbean in recent years. While socio-economic and cultural pressures often compel women to accept abusive situations, a study in Eastern Caribbean shows that local churches are among the first places victims turn when they do reach out for help. Through education materials funded by American Bible Society's financial partners, wounded families experience healing by embracing self-esteem and human dignity through the truth of God's Word.



UKRAINE: Bibles Bring Comfort in the Midst of Upheaval

When anti-government protests in the capital city of Kiev turned violent last year, Ukrainian Bible Society distributed Bibles, in addition to medical help, food and water, to citizens affected by the crisis.

Thousands were killed and wounded when police clashed with protesters seeking the removal of President Yanukovich. In response, Bible Society volunteers handed out more than 40,000 Bibles in the streets. Of these Bibles, 10,000 were specifically targeted at youth. Please continue to pray for peace and reconciliation in Ukraine and that God would use these Bibles to heal psychological and spiritual wounds among the people.



WEEPING TURNED TO DANCING

God's Word offers hope in the midst of Swaziland's AIDS epidemic.

BY NICK HEMMING

In the foothills of Swaziland, a small country in Southern Africa, Sophie* shuffled into a cement classroom and found a seat on the dirt floor. As men and women filed into the room, she smiled, flashing an ear-to-ear grin.

But beneath her smile, Sophie carried deep wounds—both emotional and physical. Like more than 380,000 adults in Swaziland, Sophie lives with HIV. Friends and family members abandoned Sophie when she contracted the virus, leaving the young mother feeling rejected and worthless.

In search of peace and acceptance, Sophie

joined a group of Swazi men and women for a Bible-based Trauma Healing session, led by Harriet Hill, director of American Bible Society's Trauma Healing program. For the past 15 years, Hill has facilitated Trauma Healing sessions around the world, serving people who live with abuse, violence and injustice. During these sessions, Hill equips trauma survivors to voice their pain, forgive their oppressors and find hope and healing through God's Word.

In Swaziland, Hill first urged attendees to publicly share their heartache, empowering them to find freedom from emotional suffering. But



Bible-based Trauma Healing enables Swazi people to express long-suppressed grief and hurt. The sessions foster fellowship through sharing, artistic expression and dance.



In Swaziland, more than 380,000 people live with HIV. Trauma Healing sessions provide emotional healing for HIV victims facing slander and rejection from their community.

for these participants in Swaziland, the process directly opposed a long-standing cultural norm of concealing their pain.

“People have to deal with [loss] at such a fast pace,” says Sphiwe Ngwenya, general secretary of Bible Society of Swaziland. “One day they’re burying one person, the next day they’re burying another. There’s no time to sit and address these things, no time to grieve.”

To help attendees voice their hurt—and find time to grieve—Hill encouraged the Swazi participants to draw pictures of brutal assaults, write laments about painful experiences and dance while reading Scripture. In fellowship with others, the Swazi people found space to grieve.

Hill then gathered the group to share the healing power of forgiveness. Drawing from God’s Word, she explained the danger of falling victim to resentment—of refusing to forgive those who judge, reject and discriminate against people who live with HIV.

“Being a slave to bitterness and anger will destroy you,” Hill told the group. “Not being able to forgive those who have hurt you is destructive.

We forgive for our own sake—so we can heal.”

During the final stage of the program, Hill equipped attendees to relinquish their pain by bringing their suffering to Jesus.

“Bringing our pain to the cross is an act of worship,” explains Jane Jelgerhuis, managing director of American Bible Society’s worldwide Trauma Healing ministry. “The cross is the ultimate symbol of Christ’s sacrifice for us and his infinite care for our souls.”

*“We forgive
for our own sake
so we can heal.”*

While walking attendees through this culminating exercise, Hill encouraged participants, including Sophie, to write down their darkest memories. And then, one by one, she invited the



Trauma Healing participants bring their darkest memories to the cross of Jesus for healing. After writing down their emotional wounds, participants burn their pieces of paper in a fire, symbolizing that God has cleansed them of past hurt.

men and women to drop their memories into a small fire that burned beside a large wooden cross at the front of the room.

After marching past her peers, Sophie stood over the fire and tossed her hand-written memories into the pit, watching as her paper wilted in the flames. She thought about her past—how she once contemplated suicide as an escape from her suffering. And then she watched her pain float away in a small stream of smoke.

**Names have been changed to protect the identity of Trauma Healing beneficiaries.*

Now equipped with the life-changing message of God's Word—and experiencing the freedom found in Jesus Christ—Sophie has reason to flash an authentic, ear-to-ear grin.

Nick Hemming is a writer at American Bible Society.

You can help share God's Word with those who need it most! Visit [ABSRecord.com/GiveBibles](https://www.absrecord.com/givebibles).



READING THE BEST BOOK OF ALL

BOOKLOVER AND PARTNER OF AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY SHARES GOD'S WORD WITH THE WORLD. *BY JACK NEWMAN*

When she was a little girl, two things happened to Janice Presbrey that would change her life forever. First, Janice lost her mother to cancer when she was 5 years old.

And then she learned to read.

In the wake of her mother's death, Janice read constantly. She would panic if she left the house without a book in tow. The habit became so consuming that her family intervened. Janice explains, "My father forbade me from reading more than one book per week." Janice obeyed her father's new rule; she simply swapped out her shorter children's books for lengthy pieces of classic literature.

It's no surprise that one of Janice's most poignant childhood memories occurred in a bookstore. It happened while she was wandering through Westminster Arcade in Providence, Rhode Island—the first indoor shopping mall in the United States. While the historic marketplace made Janice feel like she was in ancient Greece or a Charles Dickens novel, it was a Christian bookshop in the sleepiest corner of the mall that really took her breath away.

"It was dream-like," Janice reminisces. "I remember going in there and being dazzled by all the Bibles on shelves . . . all the different languages and colors."

Two older women who ran the bookshop introduced themselves and told the entranced girl about the work of American Bible Society. They explained how they gave funds for Bibles to be sent to nations around the world. Something clicked for Janice as she heard their story: "Bibles are important, and not just in my church," she realized. "The Word needs to be in the world."

Learning about international Bible ministry at the bookshop had a lasting impact on young Janice. "These ladies were an example of what it means to share love," she



Janice learned about American Bible Society at a bookstore in Westminster Arcade, Rhode Island. Photos portray the mall as it appeared in 1958.

says. "It was like they were sitting on a treasure."

Janice says that she'll never forget their motherly dispositions towards a motherless little girl, "It's a very vivid memory for me . . . an emotional memory."

The impact of these two women ultimately inspired Janice to partner financially with American Bible Society. Janice remembers how she first started giving to international Bible work, "American Bible Society is something that lives in the world," she explains. "I wanted to encourage it."

As a member of the Bible-A-Month club, Janice's monthly support helps send Bibles to waiting people around the globe. Now Janice, a retired middle school English teacher, enjoys reading books—especially the Bible—to six grandchildren in her New England home. She also shares her faith through homeless shelters, a soup kitchen and an orphanage.

It's just another way this faithful partner gets God's Word out into the world.

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

You can join the Bible-A-Month club too. Visit ABSRecord.com/BAM.

Photo credits: Laurence E. Tilley via Wikimedia Commons.



PRAY AROUND THE WORLD

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

Ghana

Praise God with Bible Society of Ghana as they celebrate their Golden Jubilee this year; their Bible House opened its doors in 1965. Please also pray that the local economy would grow and that God's Word would spread in Ghana.

Guyana

The small nation of Guyana has the highest suicide rate in the world (almost three times the world average), but almost no mental health professionals to combat the problem. Pray that God's Word will vanquish this growing darkness, especially through the labors of Suriname Bible Society in Guyana and through Bible resources recently produced for women, children, the elderly and prisoners.

Haiti

Pray that Haitian Bible Society will continue to enjoy a broad distribution of Scripture and healthy relationships with local churches. Please also pray that recently elected officials will put a stop to growing violence and crime in Haiti.

Scotland

Praise God that one year ago, 750,000 copies of Luke's Gospel were distributed at the Commonwealth Games. This is the equivalent of 30 percent of all Scottish homes. Pray that the power of these Scripture resources would continue to take root in families across Scotland.

Nepal

Please continue to pray for relief work in Nepal as the country rebuilds from the two devastating earthquakes that struck in early 2015. Pray for General Secretary Tej Jirel as he leads the Nepal Bible Society staff and family through this difficult time.

Guatemala

Please say a prayer for the 2015 elections in Guatemala. Bible Society of Guatemala is praying for leaders who fear God, depart from corruption and support their translation of the Bible into the Achi and Pocomchi languages.

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

QUIET TIME

“Yes, grass withers and flowers fade, but the word of our God endures forever.”

Isaiah 40.8 (Good News Translation)

September 2015

God's Wise Word

- 1 James 1.1-27
- 2 James 2.1-26
- 3 James 3.1-18
- 4 James 4.1-17
- 5 James 5.1-20

- 6 1 Kings 2.1-12
- 7 1 Kings 3.1-15
- 8 1 Kings 3.16-28
- 9 1 Kings 4.20-34
- 10 1 Kings 5.1-18
- 11 1 Kings 6.1-14
- 12 Job 28.1-28

- 13 1 Corinthians 1.1-17
- 14 1 Corinthians 1.18-31
- 15 Proverbs 8.1-36
- 16 Proverbs 9.1-18
- 17 Proverbs 10.1-32
- 18 Proverbs 13.1-25
- 19 Proverbs 14.1-35

- 20 Proverbs 15.1-33
- 21 Proverbs 16.1-33
- 22 Proverbs 18.1-24
- 23 Proverbs 22.1-29
- 24 Proverbs 23.1-35
- 25 Proverbs 24.1-34
- 26 Proverbs 28.1-28

- 27 Proverbs 29.1-27
- 28 Ecclesiastes 3.1-15
- 29 Ecclesiastes 7.1-25
- 30 Ecclesiastes 12.1-14

October 2015

God's Vindicating Word

- 1 Psalm 5
- 2 Psalm 7
- 3 Psalm 17

- World Communion Sunday*
- 4 1 Corinthians 11.17-34
- 5 1 Samuel 3.1-21
- 6 1 Samuel 4.1-22
- 7 1 Samuel 5.1-12
- 8 1 Samuel 6.1-19
- 9 1 Samuel 6.20—7.17
- 10 1 Samuel 8.1-22

- 11 1 Samuel 9.1-27
- 12 1 Samuel 10.1-27
- 13 1 Samuel 11.1-15
- 14 1 Samuel 12.1-25
- 15 1 Samuel 15.1-35
- 16 1 Samuel 16.1-23
- 17 1 Samuel 17.1-40

- 18 1 Samuel 17.41-58
- 19 1 Kings 16.29—17.7
- 20 1 Kings 17.8-24
- 21 1 Kings 18.1-46
- 22 1 Kings 19.1-21
- 23 1 Kings 21.1-29
- 24 2 Kings 5.1-27

- 25 2 Kings 6.1-23
- 26 Daniel 1.1-21
- 27 Daniel 2.1-23
- 28 Daniel 2.24-49
- 29 Daniel 3.1-30
- 30 Daniel 5.1-31
- 31 Daniel 6.1-28

November 2015

God's Joyful Word

- 1 1 Chronicles 13.1-14
- 2 1 Chronicles 14.1-17
- 3 1 Chronicles 15.1-24
- 4 1 Chronicles 15.25—16.7
- 5 1 Chronicles 16.8-43
- 6 1 Chronicles 17.1-27
- 7 Psalm 8

- 8 Psalm 73
- 9 Psalm 75
- 10 Psalm 76
- 11 Psalm 80
- 12 Psalm 81
- 13 Psalm 82
- 14 Psalm 84

- 15 Psalm 87
- 16 Psalm 89
- 17 Psalm 90
- 18 Psalm 91
- 19 Psalm 92
- 20 Psalm 93
- 21 Psalm 95

- 22 Psalm 96
- 23 Psalm 97
- 24 Psalm 98
- 25 Psalm 99

- Thanksgiving Day*
- 26 Psalm 100
- 27 Luke 20.45—21.4
- 28 Luke 21.5-24

- First Sunday of Advent*
- 29 Luke 21.25-38
- 30 Psalm 24

December 2015

God's Redeeming Word

- 1 Philippians 1.1-30
- 2 Philippians 2.1-30
- 3 Philippians 3.1-21
- 4 Philippians 4.1-23
- 5 Isaiah 40.1-31

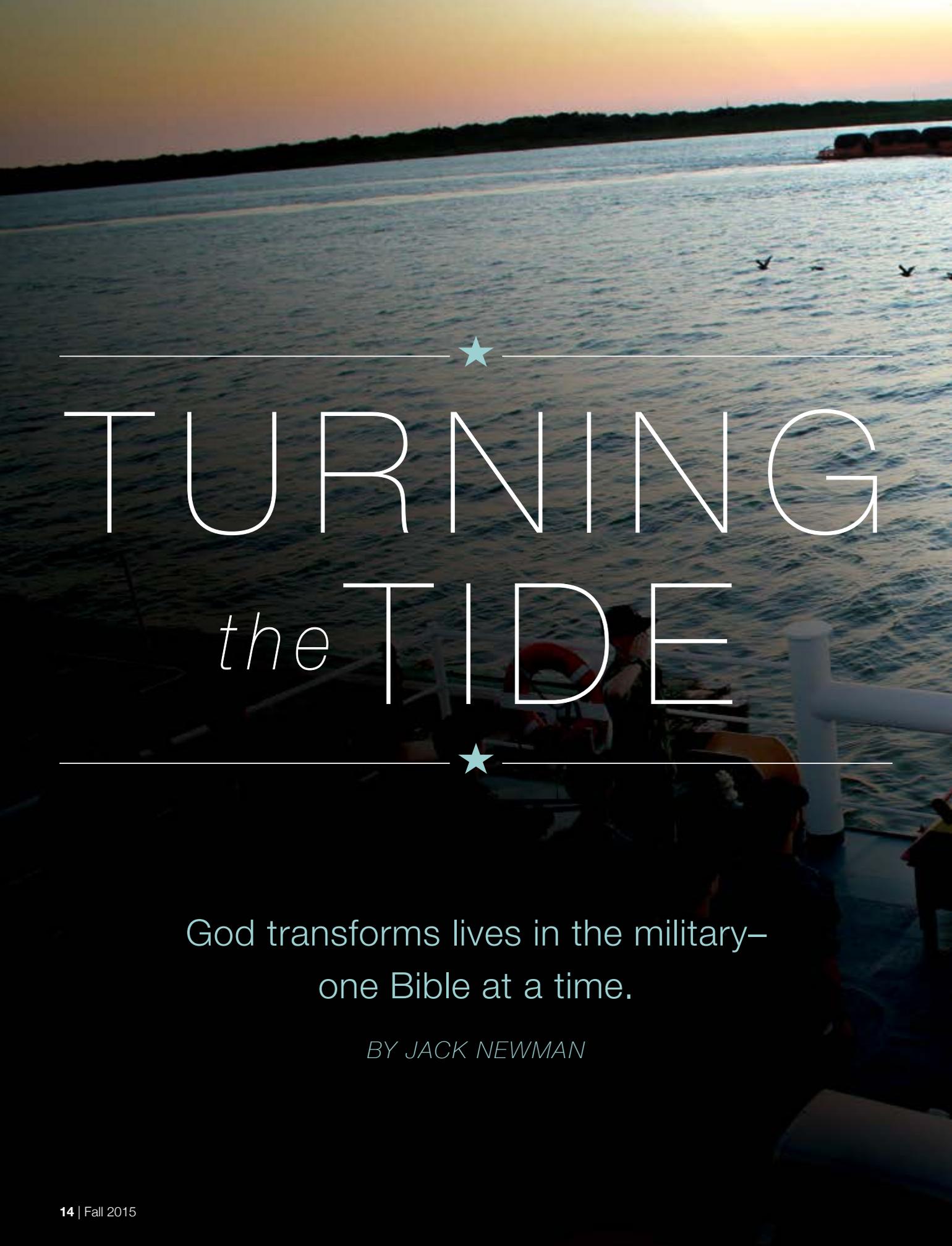
- Second Sunday of Advent*
- 6 Isaiah 41.1-29
- 7 Isaiah 42.1-25
- 8 Isaiah 43.1-28
- 9 Isaiah 44.1-28
- 10 Isaiah 45.1-25
- 11 Isaiah 48.1-22
- 12 Isaiah 49.1-26

- Third Sunday of Advent*
- 13 Jeremiah 23.1-8
- 14 Jeremiah 31.1-22
- 15 Jeremiah 31.23-40
- 16 Jeremiah 33.1-26
- 17 Malachi 1.1-14
- 18 Malachi 2.1-17
- 19 Malachi 3.1-18

- Fourth Sunday of Advent*
- 20 Malachi 4.1-6
- 21 Luke 1.1-25
- 22 Luke 1.26-56
- 23 Luke 1.57-80
- 24 Luke 2.1-20

- Christmas Day*
- 25 John 1.1-18
- 26 John 1.19-34

- 27 Luke 2.21-52
- 28 Luke 3.1-22
- 29 Titus 1.1-16
- 30 Titus 2.1-15
- 31 Titus 3.1-15



TURNING
the TIDE

God transforms lives in the military—
one Bible at a time.

BY JACK NEWMAN



W

hat did I do?”

U.S. Navy Chaplain Anthony Reilly* was nervous, and rightfully so. It wasn't every day that he got summoned into the office of a high-ranking Navy official.

Besides, this particular officer had a reputation that preceded him. Closed-door meetings typically involved heavy doses of screaming and swearing. What had Chaplain Reilly done to deserve this?

As the door shut behind him, Chaplain Reilly braced himself for the worst. But the worst never came. To his amazement, the terrifying Navy officer didn't look so terrifying. He looked weary. The officer took a deep breath and began to unload, not the bout of profanities Chaplain Reilly had been expecting, but the burden from his 34 years of service in the military.

Incredibly, the man who orchestrated Navy operations across half the world had been crippled by grief and guilt. “Ordering others to kill had taken a toll on him,” explains Chaplain Reilly. “It weighed on him very heavily.”

Photo credit: photo contributed.

Chaplain Reilly took a risk at that critical moment: He pulled out his Military Edition Bible from American Bible Society and began to apply the healing balm of God's Word. Using the reading plan in his Bible as a guide, Chaplain Reilly introduced the guilt-stricken officer to Joshua, David and Peter. All of them, explained Chaplain Reilly, were violent and sinful men. And yet, they were chosen as God's disciples—forgiven and called to follow Jesus.

Looking back on that conversation, Chaplain Reilly calls his Military Edition Bible, "a modern day miracle." It proved a uniquely practical weapon for spiritual battle. But while his experience may have felt miraculous, it certainly wasn't unique. On the front lines of the U.S. Military, strategically crafted Scripture resources meet the spiritual needs of service members every day.

"If anyone is considering their own mortality, it is those who are in the military," explains Art Pace, executive director for the Armed Services Ministry of American Bible Society. A retired U.S. Army chaplain himself, Pace knows that when ministering to spiritually vulnerable troops, it isn't enough to toss a Bible at them; you

have to design a Bible *for* them.

"Each of our Bibles has study materials in it . . . they're meant for the military," says Pace. "Everything about it, including its size, is all designed because we're thinking about them."

Even style choices help troops dig into the substance of God's Word. Bible covers bear service-specific colors. And when requested by chaplains, the covers are foil-stamped with unit-specific crests. Pace says that when troops pick it up, they think, "Somebody thought about *me* when they put this Bible together." And Pace sees this thoughtful Bible design paying off, "They pick it up, and it changes their lives."

This life change takes a variety of forms in the daily lives of U.S. troops. In many cases, thoughtfully designed Bibles provide an easy onramp for service members with no prior contact with Scripture.

Mark* is one such sailor who wasn't looking for God when he joined the Navy. "I was raised in a home where we didn't have much spiritual guidance," he says. That changed when he received a camouflage Bible with a reading plan from American Bible Society. "I started going to service and learning more about our Lord and Savior. He has impacted my life so much

by assisting me in daily struggles."

Many troops identify with Mark's triumph over negative behaviors. One recipient rejoices that, "Jesus helped me to stop smoking, drinking and committing adultery, all throughout basic training."

In other cases, military Bibles equip service members who are already following God. Sarah*, a soldier in the National Guard, says, "I came on this deployment already a Christian, but knowing from a previous deployment how difficult it is to remain true and faithful."



*"Jesus helped
me to stop
smoking, drinking
and committing
adultery, all
throughout basic
training."*



Sarah credits the Basic Training Challenge in her Bible—a specialized reading plan for troops—for keeping her focused on the Lord day in and day out. “My goal was to return from the deployment more faithful and closer to God,” she says. “I achieved this goal!”

But Bibles aren’t just a vital resource for troops on deployment. The life-changing power of God’s Word reaches into the home. “It also becomes a cohesive point for marriages . . . able to bring together husbands and wives and children around the central message of God’s Holy Word,” says Pace.

Jeremy* experienced this transformation in his own home. Months after receiving his military Bible from American Bible Society, Jeremy found that damaging trends in his marriage had been totally reversed. “Now my wife and I pray together every night,” he says. “Our lives are more positive.”

And thanks to new digital Bible resources, troops like Jeremy can continue to study God’s Word with their families while on deployment. The online version of the Basic Training Challenge allows service members to discuss the Bible with loved ones back home through online study groups. In this way, troops experience the loving

Photo credit: U.S. Navy photo by Gary Nichols/RELEASED.



Members of the U.S. Armed Forces contemplate their mortality on a regular basis, says Executive Director for the Armed Services Ministry of American Bible Society, Art Pace.



More than 65 percent of U.S. troops identify with a Christian faith tradition. Military chaplains are increasingly desperate for effective Scripture resources to meet the spiritual needs of their troops.

support of their Christian communities during the difficult season of deployment.

Perhaps the most astounding element in all these stories is their sheer contingency; without the faithful partners of American Bible Society, the spiritual fate of these service members might look very different indeed. Effective Bible resources, though desperately needed, are not abounding on the front lines.

“I hear constantly that if it wasn’t for us, they wouldn’t have any resources,” says Annie LoCastro of American Bible Society’s Armed Services Ministry. She helps chaplains

order resources, like Military Challenge Edition Bibles, free of charge. LoCastro understands the vital need met by American Bible Society, “What we do is really making an eternal difference in people’s lives . . . this ministry is extremely effective.”

And this Bible ministry ultimately touched the war-torn heart of Chaplain Reilly’s intimidating Navy officer. Chaplain Reilly fondly remembers the end of their conversation, when he asked the beleaguered officer to respond to God’s Word.

“Take my hand,” said Chaplain Reilly. Tough-guy skepticism flashed across the officer’s face.

“You’re not *holding* my hand, you’re *taking* it,” insisted Chaplain Reilly. The man reluctantly obliged.

“Tell God whatever you want to tell him.”

The officer blew out air. “I feel like I lost ten pounds,” he admitted.

Chaplain Reilly smiled.

“I’m forgiven,” muttered the officer. “That’s incredible.”

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

You can help share God’s Word with U.S. troops today!
Visit ABSRecord.com/Military.

**All names have been changed to protect the identity of military service members.*

IN MEMORIAM

“The Lord is my protector; he is my strong fortress. My God is my protection, and with him I am safe. He protects me like a shield; he defends me and keeps me safe.”

Psalms 18:2 (Good News Translation)

My mother,

Delsie Bessinger

Given by Ms. Virginia Brown

Smith Brookhart

Given by Mr. and Mrs. Jack Herschend

Placido Bueno

Given by Maureen S. Sarver

Margaret Knisley

Given by Ms. Donna Gay Ward

Eulah N. Lane

Given by Pamela Lane

Our parents,

James H. and Lillian M. Mills, Sr.

Nathan L. and Elise G. Lee

Given by Mr. and Mrs. Frederick V. and
Antoinette Lee Mills, Sr.

Ruth Liebe

Given by Eloise F. Kelle

My mother,

Josephine Mueller

Given by Terri Daniel

My mother,

Marjorie Nordwall

Given by Teresa Stover

My husband,

Samuel L. Sharp

Given by Earlene J. Sharp

Richard Leroy Taylor

Given by First Baptist Church

Delmer Wohlgemuth

Given by the Delmer G. Wohlgemuth Trust

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THE BIBLE BREAKING RECORDS IN ZAMBIA

Accelerated projects represent
the new standard of Bible translation

BY JACK NEWMAN

Death is no rare thing in Zambia. Pastor Cyrus Miti has performed countless funerals in his day. But this? This was a first.

During a funeral service in his village, Pastor Miti was reading aloud from John 11, in which Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead, when he distinctly heard a giggle. His eyes darted around the church. Smiles were creeping onto the somber faces of funeral-goers. He heard whispers, chuckles and then outright laughter. Bewildered, Pastor Miti had to ask: What could possibly be so funny at a time like this?

A representative from the congregation stood up and explained. This was the first time their church had heard John 11 read in their native tongue of Nsenga. Hearing the story filtered through foreign dialects for so many years, they had entirely missed

the point; they assumed the story was all about the grieving family of a dead Lazarus.

“But now we understand that it is about Jesus—his power to raise

the dead!” the man exclaimed. The congregation’s unexpected laughter had been unbridled joy; the end of the story was better than they had ever imagined.



A village church listens to New Testament readings in their native tongue of Nsenga.



After waiting for years, Nsenga and Ila speakers finally have Scripture Portions in their heart language.

Revelations like this will become increasingly commonplace for one million people who speak Nsenga or Ila as their heart language, thanks to two Bible translation projects in partner-

including the time it takes to plan a launch celebration.

So what exactly makes these accelerated projects in Zambia the standard of efficient Bible translation work?

is the daily translation work itself. For rapid Bible translation to occur, state-of-the-art technology is a must. Without the financial support of Every Tribe Every Nation, Zambian translators would never be able to afford the multiple laptops, land routers, printers and advanced computer programs that they employ on a daily basis.

But the most revolutionary ingredient for rapid translation has been an total overhaul of the way translators receive feedback on their drafts from indigenous faith groups. In the past, translators would drive hundreds of miles on dirt roads, hand delivering New Testament drafts to local Christian leaders for their input.

And then they waited. If and when feedback arrived back from the faith leaders, their opinions were so contradictory that translators hardly knew which ideas to send to print—a frustrating end to a lengthy process.

“Now we understand that it is about Jesus—his power to raise the dead!”

ship with the Every Tribe Every Nation alliance. And it’s not just the results of these projects that are shattering expectations; the translation process itself has been a record-breaking achievement.

Within the last decade, New Testament translations took an average of eight years to complete. But when the Nsenga and Ila translations launch in July of 2016, both projects will clock in at a blazing three-and-a-half years,

“It does not mean that we cut any corners,” explains Nick Garbidakis, CIO / CTO of American Bible Society. “What it means is that we accelerate by eliminating ‘decelerants.’” Through funding from American Bible Society’s financial partners, subtle obstacles or “decelerants” to efficient translation work have now been eliminated at every phase of the process.

The most obvious of these phases



A young girl reads her very first copy of the Gospel of Mark.

Now translators host Christian leaders at a retreat center for a week-long review workshop. There, the local representatives partake in roundtable negotiations over the biblical text, coming to group decisions on the final translation. “Everybody leaves that workshop saying, ‘I have been heard and I am comfortable with the decision that has been made,’” says Chris Pluger, project coordinator of the Nsenga Bible Translation Project.

While these workshops happen on the back end of a translation project, improvements have also been made on the front end—the daily commute. Nsenga translators used to trek four kilometers on foot from their Eastern Province village of Petauke to an office outside of town. In a multi-year race against the clock, those precious hours stack up.

In response, Every Tribe Every Nation accelerated Bible translation by



After receiving his Nsenga Scripture Portion, one man remarked, “It’s beautiful, isn’t it?”

accelerating the translators, outfitting each team member with a bicycle. Now the team zipped along the paved road between home and office, increasing dedicated translation work each day.

Eventually, the translation office was simply moved from the outskirts of town into the heart of Petauke. The new location provides both efficiency and publicity. Now local pastors like Cyrus Miti can swing by the office every week, picking up the most recent drafts of New Testament books.

In fact, Pastor Miti had only just picked up his copy of John’s Gospel when he preached his unforgettable funeral sermon on Jesus and Lazarus.

Translators say Pastor Miti is unique in his zealous demands for up-to-date drafts every week, but they don’t mind.

After all, he’s just embodying the God-given desire behind accelerated Bible translation work—to spread the life-changing message of God’s Word as fast as possible.

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

You can support accelerated Bible translation around the world!
Visit ABSRecord.com/Translation.

Win-Win Giving

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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



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AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY



Your Christmas Gift Can Help Provide Bibles for American Heroes

With Christmas around the corner, our service members' thoughts are turning to home. And that hurts, because home is a world away. Many wounded warriors, who have already sacrificed so much, lie in hospital beds—perhaps the loneliest place to be at Christmas.

They need just the sort of encouragement God's Word can provide.

Please help give the gift of Scripture to a brave service member or wounded warrior this Christmas season and beyond.

Your gift will let more brothers and sisters on the front lines and wounded warriors who have returned home know that someone cares and that they are not alone.

Honor an American service member or veteran who needs the joy and hope of God's Word this Christmas time and all year long.

- DETACH -



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