

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

RECORD

December 2001 | January 2002

CAMBODIA REBORN



Bringing the Gospel to the former Killing Fields

Choosing Christmas

"Come to me all that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest." —Matthew 11:28 (NAS)

On September 11, 2001, monuments to America's success and security came tumbling down. A flood of emotions and national doubt continue to reverberate. This seemingly impossible tragedy has caused many Americans to rethink in what and whom they find their strength and security.

Bible sales have increased a third. Church attendance is up. For us at the American Bible Society it is a bittersweet opportunity. The Bible Society's Scripture portion *God is Our Shelter and Strength* was revised and rushed into publication following the attacks. More than a million copies were distributed in the midst of our nation's mourning and soul-searching.

A "Prayer for America" service held at Yankee Stadium drew people from many faith traditions: Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Jews and Christians. Some who came had no one in particular to pray to — still they sought to make sense of the tragedy. The Bible Society was there, distributing Scripture Portions.

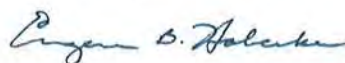
Christians, as well as those of other beliefs, were asking, "Where was God in all of this?" And of course the answer was that He was there grieving with us — grieving at what havoc and death wrong human choices can lead to. God tells us in His Word that this is a fallen world — that all of nature groans under the weight of brokenness and sin.

Asking why God allows tragedies such as this is like asking why God allows moral choice. Moral responsibility is a dimension of our God-likeness — one attribute that differentiates us from the rest of creation and makes us human. And when we go against God's precepts, which only affirm life — what we don't get right — can lead to disaster and death.

Others ask, "Why didn't God intervene?" And that brings me to the hope of Christmas.

God did intervene — intervened for all time when He became one of us, and entered into our time and space in the person of Jesus. While the incarnation doesn't yet prevent or eliminate the consequences of evil, it does provide for our mistakes.

God loves and God forgives. He forgives us for everything just for the asking. Through His Word, God offers us a way out of our otherwise hopeless situation. This is the hope that the American Bible Society wants to share with everyone, everywhere this Christmas season.




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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. 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

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

VOLUME 147, NUMBER 1

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

THE GOSPEL TO FOLLOW OLYMPIC TORCH

THE OLYMPIC TORCH, ON ITS WAY TO THE FEBRUARY 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, is coming to a town near you! And when it does, the American Bible Society, working with local churches and other Christian groups, will use that flame and the excitement it generates as a vehicle to share the light of the Gospel.

According to Davyd Hepburn, manager of sports programs, the American Bible Society will be providing an Interactive CD that will include the New Testament, Psalms and Proverbs. It will also feature testimonies from athletes and Christian musicians and a reading from the Bible.

"We want to encourage young people and adults to read the Scriptures," Mr. Hepburn said from his office in Colorado Springs, Colo. He noted that the Olympic ideals of dedication and selflessness dovetail nicely with Scriptural teachings.

"It's an opportunity for youth to focus on how some of the Olympic values are present in the Scriptures," he said.

As part of the Olympic Torch Relay events, local churches are planning to run sports clinics for children and distribute Scriptures. Other churches will offer hot chocolate and other treats as well as motivational talks on Christian faith featuring local athletes.

A booklet, produced by Dime Publishers, one of the groups teaming with the Bible Society to provide a Christian witness for the Torch Relay, will include testimonies from Winter Olympic athletes.

In the booklet, Canadian bobsledder Sheridan Bap-

tiste notes that just before an important race, his knee collapsed. "That incident made me realize how fragile your physical ability can be," Mr. Baptiste says. "Your physical strength can be taken away from you at any second. That's why I've never put all my trust in my athletic abilities. My trust is in my relationship with God."

Fellow Canadian and speed skater Catriona LeMay Doan cautions that "everyday worries can strangle your trust in God."

Other groups partnering with the American Bible Society include the International Bible Society, *Sports Spectrum Magazine*, the Southern Baptists, the Salvation Army, Athletes in Action and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

The Olympic Torch Relay begins Dec. 4 in Atlanta, the last American site for an Olympics. The flame will travel 13,500 miles through 46 states during a 65-day journey. It will be held by 11,500 torchbearers and will travel the country via automobile, airplane, train, ship, dog sled, skiers, horse-drawn sleighs, snowmobile, ice skaters, prairie schooners and other methods. Its 117th and final stop will be in Salt Lake City on Feb. 4-8, 2002.

The flame will pass through Alaska for the first time and through the former U.S. Olympic host cities: Lake Placid, N.Y.; St. Louis; Los Angeles, and Squaw Valley, Calif.

A map of the flame's travels can be found at www.saltlake2002.com.

More information on church missions and Scripture distribution along the route can be obtained by calling Mr. Hepburn at 877-553-2837. ■





Jacquelyn Sapiie
Library Services Supervisor
at Bible House

askjacquie

Readers are encouraged to submit their questions about the Bible to Jacquelyn Sapiie, Library Services Supervisor at Bible House in New York City. Questions can be forwarded to absrecord@americanbible.org, or Jacquelyn can be reached at 212-408-1203 or via regular mail at 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023.

Q What is the mustard seed in the Bible?
(B.S., Record reader)

A The mustard seed isn't mentioned in the Old Testament, but Jesus refers to it in the New Testament. In Mark 4.30-32 he compares the kingdom of God to a "grain of mustard seed which, when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all the herbs, and shooteth out great branches." The text in Matthew 17.20 refers to "faith as a grain of mustard seed." The mustard plant is also mentioned in Luke 13.19 and Luke 17.6.

It is likely that Jesus had in mind the black mustard (*Brassica nigra*) for it develops into a great branching herb over 6 feet tall at times. The mustard seed was the smallest of its kind in the ancient Near East. The herb grows wild in Palestine and it is planted as a garden herb.

It is an annual plant. When the main stalk shoots up, showy, four petaled, yellow flowers cover all the branches. They mature into slender, clasping seed pods filled with small, black seeds not much bigger than pepper. One can either grind or use them whole as dressing or flavoring. The oil obtained from the seeds acts as a laxative. The seeds are also an ingredient in plasters used to relieve pain.

The faith comparison of the parable is, of course, that not much would be expected of so small a seed, but it produces a huge plant that is usually taller than humans in the Near East. "If you had faith no larger than a mustard seed, you could tell this mountain to move from here to there. And it would. Everything would be possible for you." (Matthew 17.20-21, CEV) ■

TRUSTEES

Living a Child's Passion

As a little girl in Lima, Ohio, Char Binkley would use the stickers ABS sent in mailings to her mother. She vividly remembers sitting with her mother and placing these stickers on Christmas cards and envelopes.

Today, a married mother of two, grandmother of six, and an American Bible Society trustee for eight years, Mrs. Binkley operates WCBL Radio Network, composed of three Christian radio stations in Indiana and Ohio. There she incorporates her love for the American Bible Society and her love for radio. Although she hosts a daily talk show and a morning variety show, her interaction with the listeners is, by far, her favorite aspect of the radio business.



Char Binkley

Another favorite is the Bible giveaways that she does on a regular basis, utilizing different methods to award free ABS Bibles to listeners.

For Mrs. Binkley, what stands out most about the American Bible Society is the employees. She looks forward to attending Board of Trustee meetings because of the opportunity to interact with the "wonderful and productive" staff at Bible House.

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. This is a mission that Char Binkley "so deeply" believes in and is a mission that is "so clear, so concise, and so doable."

She remarks, "Every time I come to Bible House I am just absolutely amazed at the number of projects that the staff is working on. The creativity just seems to flow from the staff like a fountain." In the eight years that she has been on the Board of Trustees, Mrs. Binkley has seen ideas "blossom" into wonderful projects — *Kingsley's Meadow*, the launch of the *Contemporary English Version* and the *Jubilee Bible*, to name just a few.

Mrs. Binkley is still, at times, much like that little girl in Lima, Ohio. But today, her passion for the ABS runs deeper than just the stickers that are sent to donors. Today her passion is being a part of the American Bible Society family. ■ — LAILA JONES



The first thing you notice about the city of Phnom Penh is the unhurried pace — wide avenues crowded with mopeds, bicycles and three-wheeled pedicabs all moving in a slow, patient rhythm. Even the few cars and trucks negotiate the roads cautiously. ¶ Cambodia's capital on the Mekong River, with a population of about 2 million (a bit larger than Philadelphia's), shows little evidence of the country's recent history of war, conflict and genocide. Phnom Penh remains a low-slung French provincial capital, dotted with Buddhist shrines and pagodas, seemingly unscathed by the brutality inflicted on its people by the Khmer Rouge [see sidebar on page 9]. ¶ As you leave the city, crowded streets quickly give way to pastures and rice paddies, the landscape broken by an occasional small village or settlement of thatched roof huts on stilts. It's easy to imagine that during the wet monsoon season nearly the entire country lies under water. ¶ Our video crew arrived in Cambodia at the beginning of the summer rainy season, which, being late this year, allowed us and staff from the Cambodian Bible Society to visit Rong Veng, a Christian village on an island in the Mekong River.

BRINGING THE GOSPEL TO
THE FORMER KILLING FIELDS

AREBORN

[B Y J A M E S W A L K E R]

The Bible Society chose to work in this village because it is too poor, too small and too remote to attract other caring agencies. Expatriate staffs working for non-governmental organizations support many communities throughout Cambodia. Groups such as CARE, UNESCO and the Mekong River Authority are easily identified by the presence of immaculate white Land Cruisers with elaborate logos painted on their doors. In Rong Veng there are none to be found.

To get to Rong Veng, we drove across the only bridge that spans the Mekong in Phnom Penh and then followed the river west for about a half-hour. We met up with the pastor from Rong Veng at a settlement on the river. There we transferred half dozen boxes of Scriptures from the Bible Society's pick-up truck to a dugout canoe.

We then traveled upriver for another 15

minutes, slowing at a shallow area to allow cattle herded by two young boys to cross to grazing on the opposite side. A short time later we arrived at the steep, muddy banks of the island.

Rong Veng consists of 78 extended families, about 740 people. It's called a Christian village only because it has a church — a meeting place with open windows and a thatch roof. It and a nearby one-room school serve as the center for community life. Fewer than a third of the villagers are Christians.

The Bible Society of Cambodia collaborates with the Korean Service in Asia (KSSA) in a literacy program for the community, populated largely by children and young adults. This is typical. Most Cambodians are under 15 years old. The age of the average Cambodian is 23 years old. Nearly 70 percent of the population is under 25.

KSSA uses materials provided by the Bible Society to teach reading and recitation. The school combines all classes, kindergarten through sixth grade, in the one room.

The Cambodian government, crippled by years of war, is

unable to provide teachers or materials to educate its young population. Instead, it relies upon the work of the Bible Society and missionary groups such as KSSA.

At the school, class continued throughout the morning while in the church a small Bible Study class was underway. People sat on the floor in a circle as the pastor led them in a discussion about the Scriptures and hymn singing. Many in the class cannot read; they learn the Scripture passages by simple recitation.

Yos Em Sithan, executive secretary for the Bible Society of Cambodia, dreams of one day offering the Scriptures on audiocassette, so that people in the Bible Study class will have direct access to all of God's Word, even if they don't know how to read.

The Scripture distribution in this small village is part of the *Opportunity 21* outreach underway throughout Cambodia. Called *Generations of Hope*, its goal is to reach all the youth born after 1979 — to instill in them the hope and confidence that can be drawn

from God's Word and build the church in a new Cambodia.

The aim of *Generations of Hope* is to train 500 young people in Bible knowledge and faith-sharing skills while supporting and extending the ongoing witness already being carried out by pastors, priests, evangelists and catechists. The aim is to provide Scriptures to at least 100,000 non-Christian youth.

Since the program's inception a year ago, Bible Society staff, local pastors, and international missionary groups have visited 10 of 22 provinces. Most are near Phnom Penh and towards the east. Western and northwestern Cambodia presents the more difficult challenge. Access by road is limited, and, with remaining pockets of the Khmer Rouge, (rebels who overran Cambodia in the 1970s and massacred millions in what became known as "The Killing Fields") those areas are still considered dangerous.

By law, the Bible Society of Cambodia cannot sell Scriptures directly. Instead it provides material to churches and missionary groups, who in turn distribute it to people.

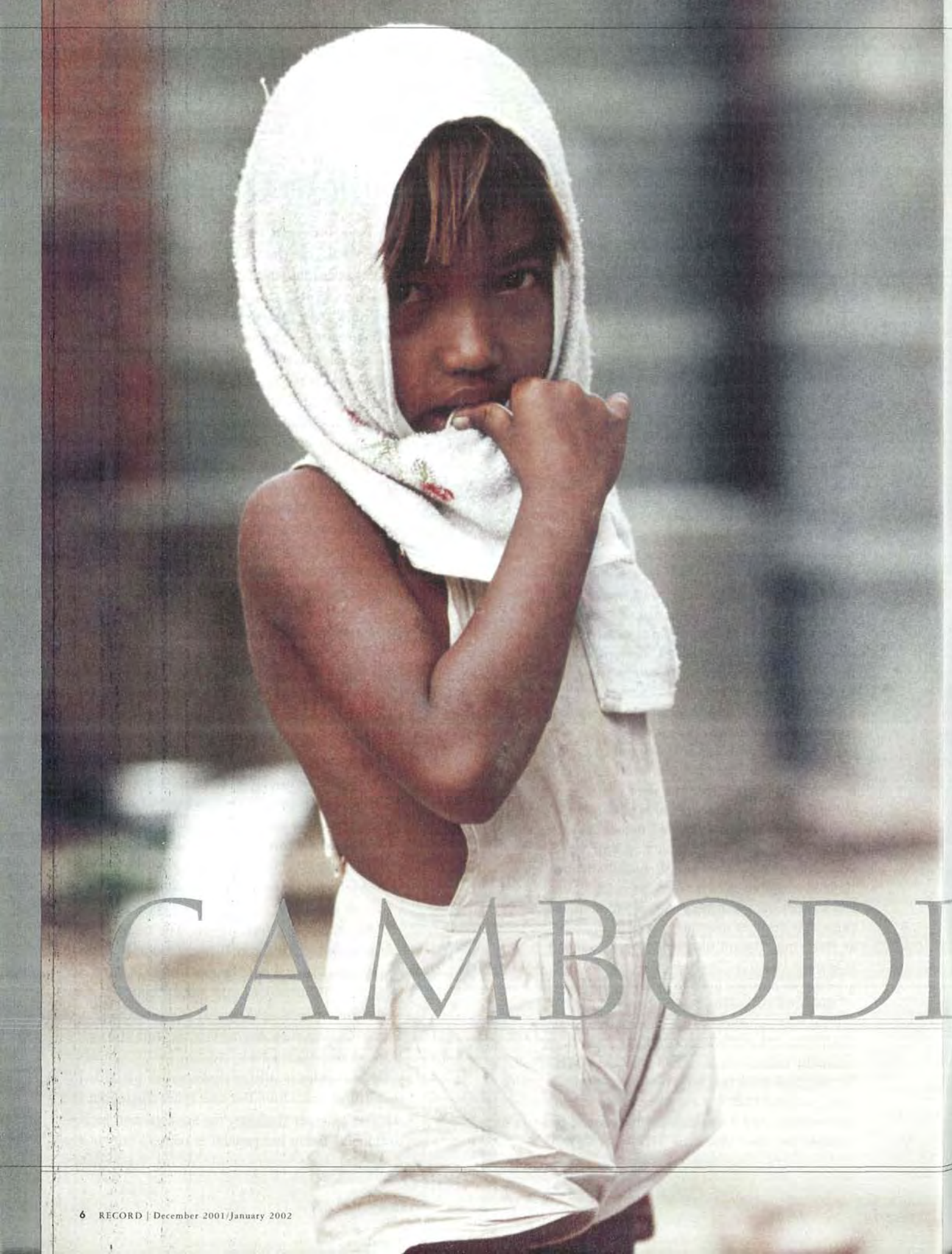
The project will provide 10,000 New Testaments, 10,000 audiotapes, 25,000 Portions, 100,000 New Reader Portions and 200,000 Selections for subsidized and free distribution. Five workshops will train up to 500 young people, who will then return to their provinces and neighborhoods where they will distribute the Scriptures under the supervision of their church leadership.

In another effort to reach out to students and other youth with the Word of God, the Bible Society has set up a reading room at the Bible House in Phnom Penh. Every day, teen-agers from a nearby school visit to read books, including the Bible and Scripture comics. Bible videos are also screened. It is hoped that



PHOTOS BY ROLAND NEVEU

▲ **Angkor Wat, ancient Khmer ruins.**



CAMBODI

CAMBODIAN CHRISTIANITY MAKING INROADS IN A TROUBLED LAND

The Portuguese introduced Christianity to Cambodia in the 16th century and it began to flourish under the influence of French Catholic missionaries in the 19th century. Protestants remain a minority among Christians in Cambodia. But it was a small Protestant denomination, the Christian Missionary Alliance, which came in 1923, that was pivotal in the translation and distribution of the Cambodian Bible.

In 1965, American missionaries were asked to leave the country. The period 1965-70 is called the Period of Silence, a time when it is estimated that only 700 Protestant believers remained in the country.

Five years later the war in Vietnam spilled over into Cambodia, sparking civil war that forced the country's leader, Prince Sihanouk, into exile. In 1975 the Khmer Rouge, a guerrilla army, overran Phnom Penh and ordered the populace to evacuate the city.

The bewildered population was forced into the streets. Families were given 10 minutes to prepare for what they were told would be a three-day journey. No one was exempt; even hospitals were emptied. Doctors performing surgery were ordered at gunpoint to abandon their patients. During

the exodus, stragglers were executed on the spot. Some 20,000 people died in the evacuation. And that was just a beginning.

Cambodian society was about to be re-invented. The Khmer Rouge declared it Year Zero. Markets were abolished; currency eliminated; Buddhist monks defrocked, ministers and priests killed, and city dwellers were herded on to co-operative farms.

Between 1975-79, 10 to 15 percent of the population was killed. All the Catholic priests and many Protestant leaders were murdered. The church has, with great difficulty, been reborn since. Today there is much interest even among non-Christians — who comprise about 90 percent of the population — in the message of hope, peace and reconciliation found in the Gospel.

Most Christians in Cambodia are young people, who have come to faith since 1992, when religious restrictions were relaxed. They are active in their newfound faith. It is the conviction of church leaders that the Christian message, within the Cambodian cultural context, is the answer to the nation's need for emotional and spiritual healing.



ROLAND NEVEU

▲ Teens study Bble in Phnom Penh.

this exposure to the Word of God will bring many of the youth to faith in Jesus.

On the day we visited Bible house, there were four or five boys and three girls sitting at separate tables reading an activity book based on the Scriptures. Vong Bopha, accountant for the Bible Society, was leading the improvised class in an exercise. Each student reads a chapter and then answers questions.

Ms. Bopha explained that most of the children are not Christian and no special effort was made to recruit them for this after-

school class. At first only a trickle of young people came by. But news of the Reading Room spread, and now nearly a dozen attend regularly. According to Ms Bopha, this outreach to students is making an impact on their families as well. Students who visit are encouraged to take Scriptures home with them. Many have done so, and recently Bible Society staff has taken the opportunity to meet with some of the parents.

In order to extend the Bible Society's reach beyond Phnom Penh, a secondhand van has been purchased to transport Scriptures to outlying provinces. And even though Scripture distribution is confined to church properties, as of July 2000, some 7,000 Scripture Portions and 17,000 Scripture Selections had been distributed using the van.

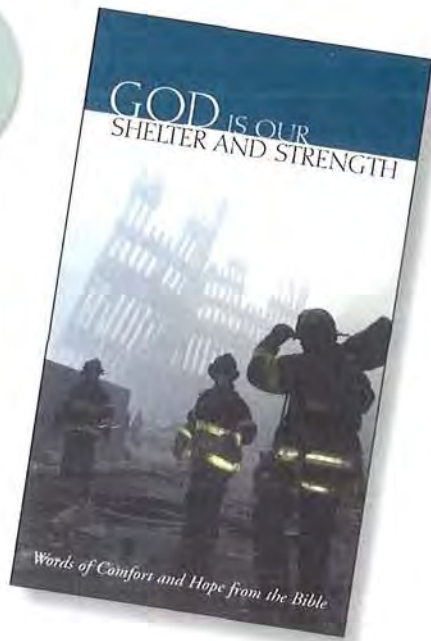
In a country that was frozen from Christian influence for nearly a generation, that is substantial progress. While the pace of Cambodian society may be slow, the country has undergone more tumult in the past few decades than perhaps any place on earth. Now Cambodians hunger for some good news to extend the peace now that the Killing Fields lie silent. ■

James Walker, new media producer for the American Bible Society, recently visited Southeast Asia with a video crew to document Opportunity 21 projects there. Opportunity 21, sponsored by the American Bible Society and United Bible Societies, offers support for Scripture translation and distribution around the world.

TAKING
SHELTER
IN GOD'S
PRESENCE

LIVE under the PROTECTION
of GOD Most High and
STAY in the shadow of God
ALL-POWERFUL. —PSALM 91.1 (CEV)

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The attack on America affords all Christians a bittersweet opportunity. People's awareness of their spiritual need has been awakened. Pollster George Gallup Jr. has monitored the increasing interest in spirituality for several decades. Yet even as Bible sales have increased, Bible reading decreases. Mr. Gallup summarizes, "We revere the Bible but we don't read it."

People need to become acquainted with the God of the Bible — with the source of our salvation. And they can know God best by reading His Word.

Dr. Billy Graham has said, "The greatest evangelist in the world is the published Word of God. The greatest method of evangelism is the distribution of the Scriptures."

Fortunately, in America, getting the Bible to people is no longer the primary challenge. Gallup says that 93 percent of American households have a Bible. Domestic programs at the American Bible Society have been refocused to encourage people to open up God's Word and become engaged with it.

As in the past, when the attack on America came, the Bible Society was poised to respond aggressively to this unforeseen opportunity to share comfort and guidance from God's Word. In 1987, following collapse of the former Soviet empire, the American Bible Society committed \$25 million dollars to rebuild or launch new Bible societies in the newly freed but spiritually starved countries enslaved by godless communism.

At the beginning of the new millennium, the Maclellan Foundation challenged the American Bible Society to match its \$15 million grant for *Opportunity 21* — Bible work in 75 of the world's neediest countries. We responded by committing triple that amount to this gargantuan project — \$45 million. The Maclellan Foundation had chosen the American Bible Society for this challenge grant because it determined that the Bible Society has the *global network* and resources to respond effectively to a project of such scope — to meet the accelerating need for Bibles on such a grand scale.

And, providentially, restructuring our domestic programs in 2001 to foster engagement with God's Word had positioned us to mobilize quickly to meet the monumental anguish of Sept. 11. The national soul-searching for spiritual solace provides unprecedented opportunity to connect millions of Americans with God's Word and its message of hope. Using a new array of programs and a national media campaign, the Bible Society is committed to reach out to the souls of America.

We thank those of you who join with us in this high calling. ■

—EUGENE B. HABECKER, PRESIDENT



PLEASE FORGIVE US

A message from Palestine grips the heart.

MARYLOU HABECKER, WIFE OF AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY PRESIDENT EUGENE HABECKER, WROTE THE FOLLOWING WHILE ATTENDING A MEETING OF CHRISTIAN BENEFACTORS HELD IN PHOENIX IN SEPTEMBER.

"SORRY. PLEASE FORGIVE US." ¶ Those words continue to ring in my ears and to grip my heart. It's been two weeks since the terrorist attacks on New York City and America and, until now, I haven't had enough emotional focus to write down my thoughts. But after what I heard this morning I must write. ¶ For years we have heard how terrorists bomb, maim, threaten and kill people somewhere else. Gene and I have seen and heard about it in Jerusalem and in Beirut. We hear about the atrocities going

on in other parts of the world — in Sierra Leone, the Congo and Nigeria.

People elsewhere live with this terror everyday. I remember visiting Lucien Accad, general secretary of the Bible Society in Lebanon, and his wife, Hugette. They told the stories of how the Lebanese people had been so brave through 17 years of terror, how a whole generation of children grew up knowing bombing, gunfire and death.

We went and saw the wreckage and were horrified. We came back convinced that something had to be done. We needed to pray more; we needed to do more.

By MARYLOU HABECKER We came back from the Middle East with the conviction that only Christ could bring peace there. We thought we understood. Yet, after we had been home for a while and returned to our routines, the vividness and passion of the need diminished.

All this was the backdrop for a moving talk by Labib Madanat, the general secretary of the Palestinian Bible Society on the West Bank in Israel. He is a friend and a brother in Christ who ministers on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

He began by sharing his feelings of indebtedness to America. It was through American Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA) missionaries that his father, a poor young man living in the desert region of Jordan, came to know Christ and eventually became a pastor in Jerusalem.

In this terrible time of tragedy Labib reminded us that God is the God of new beginnings, and

that God is the God of new hope. He wanted to add something else.

"In addition to thanking you, I want to say, 'sorry' and 'please forgive us.' I am an Arab; I want to say, 'Sorry; please forgive us.' Please forgive the Arabic Church and Palestinian Christians for not getting the hopeful words of Christ to those around us who are Muslim. For if we had done our part and not been as passive, maybe this terrible thing would not have happened. It is an ugly wake-up call to us from Satan. It is too late for those who have died; it is not too late to share God's side through God's story."

"When I wake up in the night and hear bombs I hear Satan say, 'This is what I am doing.' Then I hear God say to me, 'What are you doing?' There is always more that we can do. Though we are doing many things it hasn't been in time."



Labib's words still echo in my ears. It was a rude awakening for me to realize that the fear I felt Sept. 11 is the same fear that Labib and his countrymen live with every day.

The Palestinian people — this Christian brother — live with physical terror all the time! Though shaken, for me all is now quiet. For him the terror goes on and on.

Labib explained that Bible Society workers in the Gaza Strip and elsewhere in Palestine see themselves as agents of peace. They have been permitted to place Bibles in every public school library in the country. Soon they will broadcast the Good News on FM radio. Internet chat rooms are being prepared to reach into the universities.

Labib finds more "seekers" than "buyers" coming to the Bible Society bookstore. He illustrated this with the story of a young Muslim man shot during one of the Palestinian uprisings.

The man's close brush with death had

frightened him. He wandered into a church graveyard. Feeling more dead than alive, he wondered, "How do Christians bury their dead?" He came upon a tombstone with the inscription, "Come to me all that are burdened and heavy laden and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11.28)

He read the words over and over and over again. Then he happened upon the Palestinian Bible Society bookstore. In his brokenness, he said to Labib, "I couldn't leave that graveyard for the longest time."

"I'm desperate to find out about the person who said those words — who is it that can give me rest?"

Through God's Word, and the love shown to him by Labib and his staff, this broken and lonely man



found his rest in Jesus Christ.

I was moved — my heart ached for what I had just heard. I quickly tore off a piece of notepaper and scribbled these words:

"Labib, Thank YOU. SORRY!!! PLEASE forgive US!!! Forgive us for not understanding your pain, your incredible circumstances, for not praying more for

you or giving more help financially so that you could do even more. And forgive us for our complacency. We are NOW just beginning to understand what you live with all of the time. We want to say,



DAVID SINGER

Labib Madanat (far left), and Lucian Accad (above), Executive Secretaries of the Palestinian and Lebanon Bible Societies, respectively. Even though often surrounded by death and destruction, they stand in settings of hope — the building of a Bible bookstore in Gaza (middle) and the new Bible House in Beirut (above). Both facilities are now complete.

"SORRY, please forgive us."

With that, I excused myself from our meeting to spend some time alone with God. I wept and prayed:

"I am sorry, Lord Jesus. Please forgive me for not caring more, praying more, giving more, to get the message of hope to those people next door to me, in my neighborhood, in New York City and around the world. Thank you Lord. You do forgive and ignite new fires in our souls. Show me one person that you want me to reach out to today. And help me to be faithful. Amen." ■

1913-2001

BERNARD S. KING

following
IN HIS *steps*

BY DAVID SINGER

WHEN I BEGAN DATING HIS MIDDLE DAUGHTER "MEGS," Bernard King became a guiding, if not always welcome, presence. After each date, as curfew approached and we said our good-byes in the front foyer, a voice from above would beckon, "Megs, it's time to get to bed." During summer months, when our partings took place on the front stoop, my future father-in-law would bring out the trash by way of the nearby kitchen door.

But even as his influence in our romance diminished, it grew as a foundational force in my life. Bernard King, by example, became my mentor. And this past July I learned, not surprisingly, that he had been a mentor to many others — his pastor; the men who had followed in his professional footsteps and Peter Nanfelt, current president of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA) — everyone who spoke at the memorial service held in Dad's honor — eulogized him as a mentor.



DAVID SINGER

I doubt that “Dad” thought of himself in that way. As accomplished as he was, his spirit was humble, his tastes frugal, his demeanor reserved. After serving the C&MA as treasurer for 25 years and then, as executive director of one of Florida’s premier retirement communities, he confided to me that wealthy people still intimidated him.

But whenever Dad got up to testify to God’s goodness, there was no hint of holding back. And when he prayed no one could match him for conveying a sense of God’s majesty. As one speaker at his memorial service boasted, “When Bernard prayed, it was as if he were holding God’s hand.”

Spiritual discipline was like a steel rod running through his erect posture. Like the New Yorker he became, Dad’s pace was fast and determined. He mixed comfortably with financiers and currency traders. Yet, even in these circles, unrestrained passion

and clear vision for promoting world evangelism often earned him and the C&MA financing at below-market rates. And every year he read the Bible through, each time choosing a different version.

He came to his faith honestly enough. When he left home to study at the University of Minnesota, his mother gave him a Bible he didn’t want and made him promise to read it. He began in Genesis, bogged down in Numbers and quit.

His spiritual journey got a boost, much as mine did, when he met his father-in-law-to-be. For Christmas 1931, Allen Butterworth gave Dad a New Testament. Again, he attacked his task at the beginning. Although Matthew proved easier going than Leviticus or Numbers, the story of Jesus didn’t. He was a perfect man. He did no wrong. So why did he have to die? This was the question Dr. King pressed on his girlfriend’s father one night.

continued on page 28 >>



reaching

The American Bible Society Office for Latino Affairs (OLA) recently reached out to the Latino Community in South Florida with the celebration of a *Night of Good News*, a joint effort with Mercy Ministries.

Mercy Ministries, based in Hialeah, Fla., is a non-profit interdenominational organization fully supported by offerings. They provide help, via a Christ-centered program, to those addicted to drugs and alcohol.

Pablo Miret, the general director, together with a team of doctors, Bible teachers and other volunteers, provides support and spiritual growth.

Mercy Ministries holds bi-weekly meetings. Those interested in attending the program go through the process of an interview followed by an evaluation to determine the level of addiction. Every two months, Mercy Ministries hosts a retreat lasting three days. At this retreat, in-depth seminars are conducted covering the clinical and spiritual aspects of addiction.

The Rev. Emilio A. Reyes, vice president and executive director of OLA, was the guest speaker during the *Night of Good News*. Rev. Reyes shared the Word of God with a sermon concentrating on the importance of depending completely on God. Federico Colloca was invited to lead praise and worship. At the end of the evening, the members of Mercy Ministries enjoyed a time of fellowship and refreshments, receiving a free copy of the Bible in Spanish.

Danilo Maqueira, general secretary of Mercy Ministries, is a Bible teacher who, he says, was saved from drug and alcohol abuse by the Lord. His testimony glorified the power of God to change lives.

Mr. Maqueira lived for two years under the highways of the city of Miami, addicted to crack and other drugs. Ten years ago Christ saved him, and his life has never been the same. He has not consumed drugs or alcohol ever since. He commented that the Bible is his most important support, since it illustrates the heart of God.

"The Bible is my guide, manual and nourishment. God changed my addiction to drugs and made me a Bible addict. I need to read the Bible every day," he said in his witness at the event.

Bible teaching at Mercy Ministries is essential. According to Mr. Maqueira, drug and alcohol addiction are incurable diseases. Only divine intervention can perform a miracle in the life of those who live under the influence of those substances. ■



▲ The Rev. Emilio Reyes, right, presents Spanish Scriptures to Mercy Ministries members.

to

The Office for Latino Affairs ministers to the addicted

A Translation First for the Russian Federation

The publication of the Chuvash Pentateuch was warmly welcomed by church leaders and government officials during a launch ceremony held recently in the Chuvash capital of Cheboksary.

The event celebrated a new milestone in the renewal of Christian faith that has blossomed in the old Soviet empire.

The new Scripture contains the first five books of the Old Testament. When complete, it will make the two million Chuvash speakers the first of Russia's minor language groups to have access to a complete Bible in their language. Russian is the only language of the Russian Federation in which a complete Bible is currently available.

The event generated huge news coverage in the Chuvash Republic, which is, after Russia and Tatars, the third most populous in the Russian Federation. President Nikolai Federov made a radio address to the nation about the new Scripture, a project initiated in 1991 by the Bible Society in Russia with the support of the Russian Orthodox Church, the largest Christian group in the region.

Olga Denisova, the minister of culture of the Chuvash Republic, noted at the launch ceremony that the new Scripture was a tribute to the mostly Christian nation. She said the Bible brought a sense of "joy and pride" to the Chuvash people, who are now prepared to continue a Christian resurgence aided by the support of Bible Society benefactors around the world.

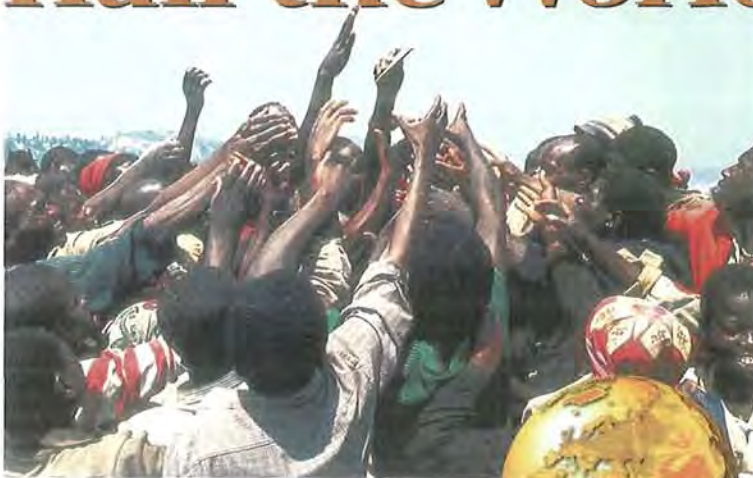


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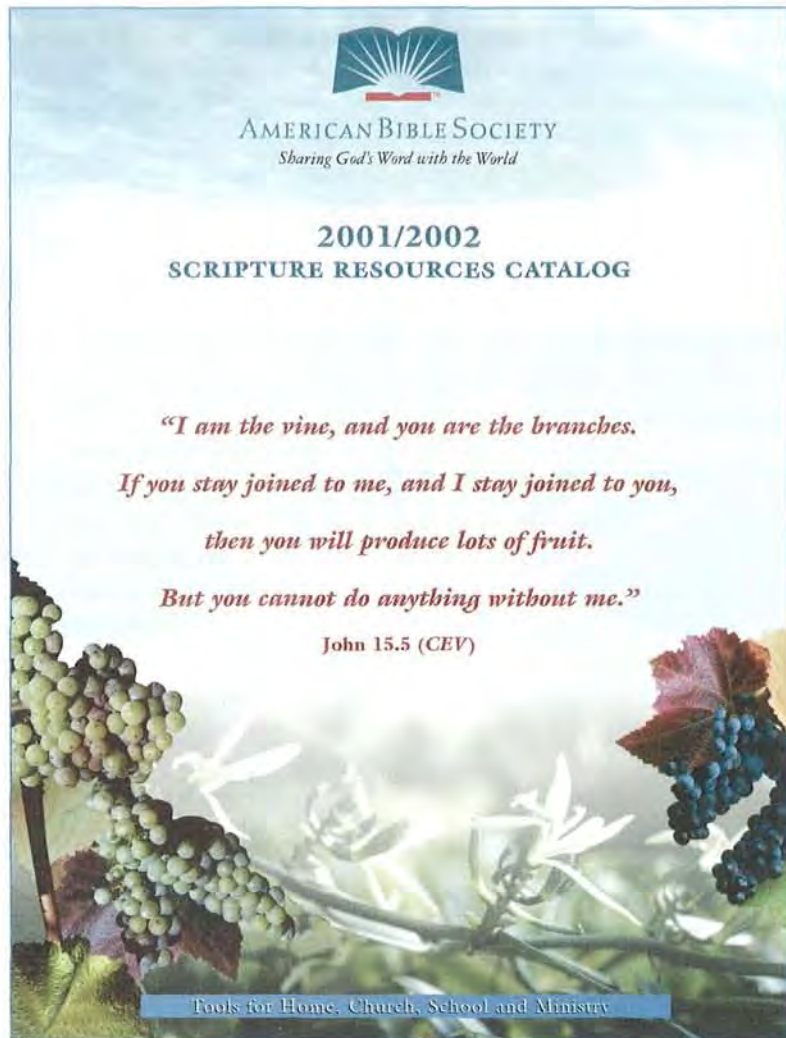
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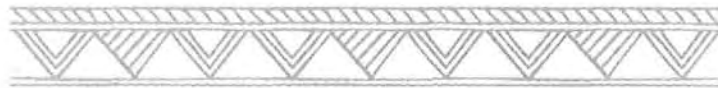


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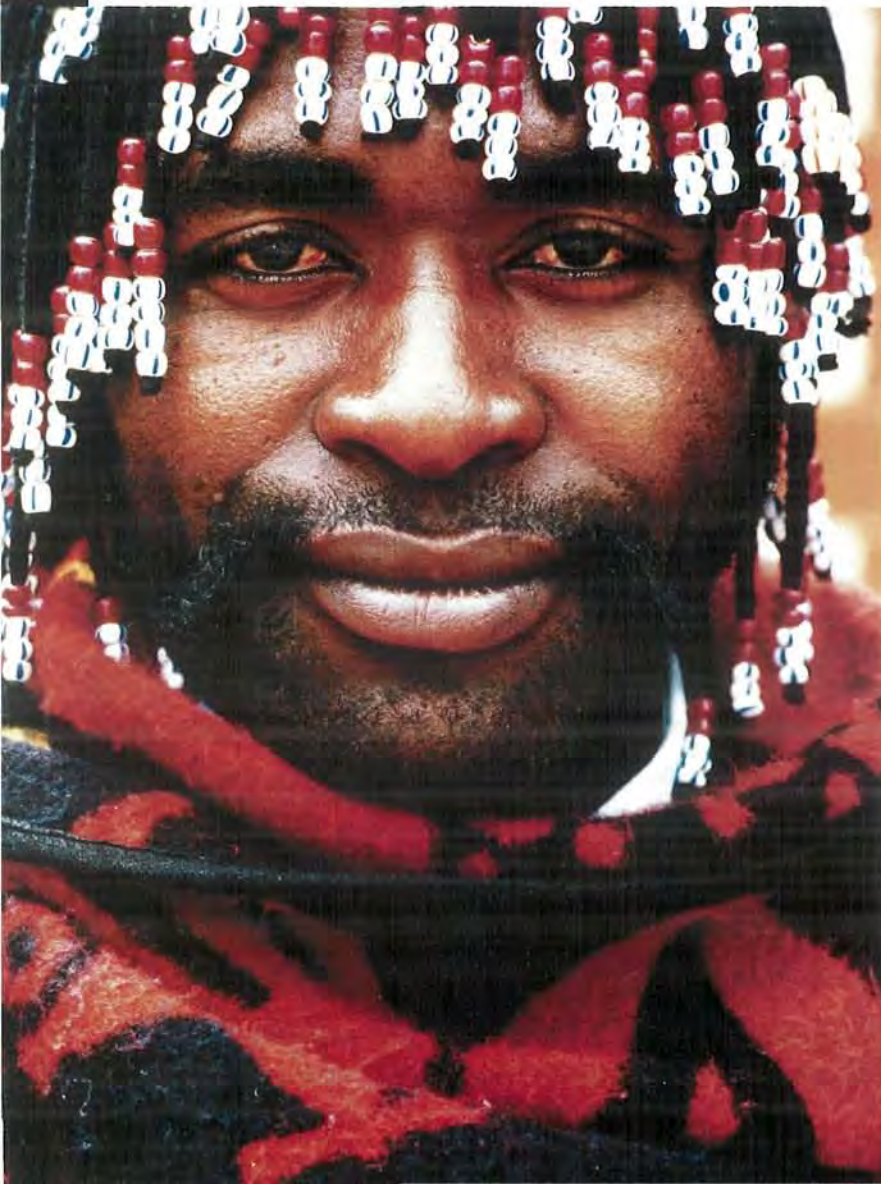
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Shepherds, Healers and Politicians



Bringing hope to the people of Lesotho



The following story is adapted from a report by the Bible Society in Lesotho, a country in southern Africa with a population of more than 2 million, of which about 80 percent are classified as Christians.

Poverty, hunger, extreme weather, loneliness, fear of witchcraft and armed robbery: life for shepherds in Lesotho's mountainous regions is far from easy.

Sent to work at remote posts from the age of six, the shepherds are not able to attend school or church and are said to account for much of the country's 27 percent illiteracy rate.

But the Bible Society in Lesotho (BSL) is reaching out to these shepherds through a project designed to overcome the barriers of illiteracy and hardship that prevent them from encountering the Word of God. The project involves the production and distribution of special audio New Reader Portions and the setting up of six shepherds' listening centers high in the mountains.

Now in its second phase, the project has already made a positive impact. Largely untouched by aid or development organizations and used to a life of isolation, the shepherds have responded very positively



▲ Protests erupted after contested elections in 1998.

to the Bible Society's interest in them. They have been eager to participate in the production of the tapes.

Some have provided music. Others have offered testimonies about the power of God in their lives. This grassroots participation has made the tapes culturally relevant and given the shepherds a sense of pride and interest in the project. Plans call for working with the government by providing *New Reader Scriptures* in print form especially for shepherds, a project designed to increase literacy.

The BSL is not only reaching out to impoverished shepherds. It is planning to take the Scriptures to all kinds of marginalized groups, including abandoned children and prostitutes who live on the streets. Yet it is also making an impact among the country's elite, including its traditional healers and politicians.

In a country still struggling to recover from the violence that followed flawed general elections in 1998, the BSL is planning to distribute Scriptures describing the Bible's perspective on politics and leadership.

Opposition supporters engaged in weeks of bloody demonstrations in 1998 when the governing party claimed election victories. Troops from nearby Botswana and South Africa entered the country to restore order, but this led to further unrest. Maseru, the capital city, was left in ruins by looters and arsonists. Although calm has returned to the small, mountainous kingdom, the memories of the conflict are still in people's minds.

The BSL is targeting young people, the group at the forefront of the political violence, with selections titled *The Right Use of Power* and *Blessed are the Peacemakers*.

"We hope that these Scriptures will help to bring about a lasting peace and stability, which in turn will allow the economy to improve," says Peter Potjo of BSL. "Once this happens, there will be an increase in Bible distribution because, although the people love

the Word of God, many cannot afford to buy their own Bibles."

The Bible is also making inroads among an unlikely group, Lesotho's traditional healers, also known as *sangoma*. They are consulted about physical complaints and psychological problems as well, and are common both in the cities and the countryside.

The *sangoma* are thought of as incarnations of ancestral spirits from whom they are said to derive their power. They are credited with a gift for telling the future and many of their treatments rely on herbs available in the countryside. Although dismissed by some as witch doctors whose practices are no longer relevant in today's world of modern medicine, *sangoma* nonetheless remain an important part of southern African society.

Belief in the power of the *sangoma* is, of course, at odds with Christian beliefs. Still the BSL is reaching out to this influential group, recently presenting a New Testament to Maqenehelo Liphapang, a prominent *sangoma*.



BIBLE SOCIETY IN LESOTHO/PETER POTJO

▲ Shepherds like these, many of whom are unable to read, will benefit from the Bible Society in Lesotho's audio Scripture project.

Dr. Liphapang said that, while she attended church as a young child, she had never read the Bible herself because she had never owned one. The BSL hopes that the Scriptures will bring her comfort and plan to distribute Scriptures to other traditional healers. The goal is that the people who seek Dr. Liphapang's help, and that of other *sangoma*, will be touched by God's Word. ■



October 5 - December 29, 2001

FOR THE RECORD

50 YEARS AGO

Testifying for Value of Bible Reading

In the fall of 1951, the *American Bible Society Record* proclaimed that Bible reading was at an all-time high in the United States. In the first six months of the year, it reported, the American Bible Society had distributed more than 4.7 million Bibles, compared to 2.6 million for the similar period the year before.

But, the editors warned, in a new atomic age the demands for an ethical and religious sense required that America become even more focused on the Scriptures.

To buttress that case, the editors provided testimonials from 11 prominent Americans.



Helen Keller

Helen Keller, the inspiration for Americans overcoming disabilities, noted: "Unless we form the habit of going to the Bible in bright moments as well as in trouble, we cannot fully respond to its consolations, because we lack equilibrium between light and darkness."

Aviator Eddie Rickenbacker testified: "The Bible is One Book for One World. Today I realize that I probably would not be here, had it not been for the spiritual light and the moral power learned from this Book."

The current and future presidents of the United States also echoed their support:

Harry Truman commented, "Never was a weary world more in need of the message which the Bible alone could bring to nations rent by anger, hatred and ill will."

And Dwight D. Eisenhower, who would be elected president the following year, talked about the impact the Bible had on his career as a soldier: "The longer one lives close to the turmoil and sacrifice and suffering of the battlefield, the more he becomes conscious of the eternal worth of the spiritual values inherent in the Christian religion."

Perhaps never before or since had a more celebrated group embraced the Bible cause. ■

Devoción del Pueblo: Religious Folk Art of Guatemala

Devoción del Pueblo: *Religious Folk Art of Guatemala* provides a glimpse of the religious folk art being made and used today in Guatemala. The exhibition balances the aesthetic qualities of the *santos*, small carved wood statues, with their functional importance. The *santos* are an integral part of the context in which they were made; their production and veneration are seamlessly interwoven with a way of life. The 76 *santos* on display are all from villages in the midwestern highlands of Guatemala. The *santeros* (*santo* makers) are all from the village of Nahualá.



Artist unknown,
Annunciation Angel,
Nahualá Region,
Guatemala.

Most frequently, the *santeros* carve and paint the *santos* to bring the Word to a largely illiterate indigenous population. The *santos* help people conceptualize God and teach them stories of Christian saints and martyrs. The *santeros* express the Word as they carve and paint visual representations of the biblical stories.

From the lighthearted depiction of San Crispin, the friend of domesticated animals and Santa Catarina, the patron saint of the village of Nahualá, to the angel of the Annunciation and the Crucifixion, the *santos* exhibited chronicle a way of life revolving around celebrations and festivals that give meaning to a people's Christian faith.

The exhibition *Devoción del Pueblo: Religious Folk Art of Guatemala*, on loan from Messiah College, Grantham, Pa., was organized by Messiah College professors David Parkyn, Linda Parkyn, Donald Forsythe and Christine Forsythe. It will be on display Oct. 5-Dec. 29 at the Gallery at the American Bible Society, 1865 Broadway in New York City. For more information and a listing of special events, call 212-408-1500. ■

BIBLE IN THE NEWS

9/11 aftermath

■ Stories from newspapers around the world indicate a renewed interest in the Scriptures in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States.

The Guardian of Manchester, U.K., reports on the American Bible Society effort in which more than a million Scripture Portions were distributed in the aftermath of the attacks.

"We moved into crisis mode," Sally Shoemaker Robinson, chairman of the American Bible Society Board of Trustees, told the newspaper about the quick response of the American Bible Society.

Dr. Ashley Scott of the British and Foreign Bible Society noted that his organization has also stepped up its efforts, including massive shipments of Scriptures to the British armed forces.

"We're not used to dealing with emergencies in advanced countries. We usually ship to places like Honduras, where food and shelter come first, and the Bible is secondary," he said.

Noted *The Guardian*: "In this case, however, the houses of the disaster victims are intact; it is their certainties about the world that have fallen."

And Jim Jones of the *Fort Worth* (Texas) *Star-Telegram* noted in a column that the disasters have turned Americans towards God. He cited the American Bible Society effort in particular.

"Our Bibles, often dusty in the past, no longer are dusty," he noted.

Finding Biblical values in entertainment

■ *The New York Times Magazine* reports that Christian preachers are increasingly locating biblical themes in an unlikely source: television sitcoms.

Among the most popular examples cited are epi-

sodes of *The Simpsons*, the cartoon family often disparaged in traditional circles for their unconventional ways. But a recent book by religion writer Mark I. Pinsky titled *The Gospel According to the Simpsons* notes that the popular show regularly features religious themes. Evangelicals for Social Action notes that the program is "the most pro-family, God-preoccupied program on television."

Some preachers have also used episodes of *The Andy Griffith Show*, *I Love Lucy*, and *The Beverly Hillbillies* to make Scriptural points.

Not all are happy with the trend.

"It is a concession to society's lack of interest in spiritual things and a compromise with willful ignorance of his Word," the *Times Magazine* quoted an Alabama pastor. Notes another, "Such frivolity with the Word of God would never have crossed the minds of our Christian forefathers."

Where the Bible is a dangerous book

■ Eight foreign aid workers, among them two Americans, and 16 Afghan staff members from Western relief agencies, have discovered that the Bible is a dangerous book in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan. The Taliban is the ruling political party in Afghanistan and has imposed what is the harshest interpretation of Islamic law in the world.

The 24 were arrested for Christian proselytizing, an offense in the Muslim-ruled country that can mean expulsion for foreigners and death for Afghans.

According to *The New York Times*, "the evidence considered most damning includes Bibles translated into Farsi and Pashto, dozens of video and audio tapes about the life of Jesus and a book entitled *Sharing Your Faith With a Muslim*." ■

update

NATIONAL

As this issue of the *Record* went to press, we learned that the Rev. John Yong, national manager of Asian ministries, died Nov. 5, 2001, after suffering a stroke.

Mr. Yong was a leader in the Bible cause. Born in China, he was a minister in the Church of the Nazarene in New York's Chinatown.

He served as a volunteer for the American Bible Society in the Chinese Christian community until being named national manager of Asian Ministries this year.

NEW YORK

A Chinese celebration of Christianity, including religious and civic leaders, took place here in August as the American Bible Society introduced its new Chinese Scripture Resources Catalog, the first of its kind.

The catalog provides more than 15 types of Chinese Bibles along with five Chinese Bible Portions available for purchase. The project was overseen by the late Rev. John Yong, national manager for Asian Ministries.

The catalog will aid in the Society's goal of reaching out to more than 4 million people of Chinese ancestry living in the United States.

ACROSS THE USA

The American Bible Society will be offering a



▲ Dr. Eugene Habecker, left, president of the American Bible Society, accepts a new Chinese catalog from John Cruz, center, and the late Rev. John Yong of the American Bible Society Publishing Area.

number of products helpful for those Christmas shopping for young people.

The seventh installment in the Kingsley's Meadow series, *The Story of Jacob*, is now available. Kingsley is a lovable lion who lives in a magical meadow, where he explains moral values to young people based on biblical principles. The videos also include stories from the Scriptures acted out by young people.

The Story of Jacob is based on Genesis 27.1-40 and focuses on the value of honesty in friendship and family relationships.

Also available from the American Bible Society are two 12-volume Scriptures based on the Contemporary English Version.

The collections are titled *Open Your Eyes and An Awesome Adventure: A Collection of 12 Bible Stories*. Both collections are easy-to-read and full of attractive color illustrations.

Further information about all Scripture products offered by the American Bible Society can be obtained by calling 1-888-239-3976. ■



RICHARD LORD

▲ The *Song of Songs* in the *Contemporary English Version* published by the American Bible Society was recently performed by the Upper West Side Theatre Company in New York City. From left are actors Heather Green, Danette E. Sheppard, Ava Coffee and Charles Anthony Burns.

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75	7.9%	\$790	\$4,284.50	75	7.0%	\$700	\$3,563.30
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A 'HUMBLE SERVANT' OF HIS LORD

"He called together his twelve apostles and sent them out two by two ..."

(MARK 6.7, CEV)

ALVA WYLIE OF GREENWOOD, Miss., is a regular jail fixture these days. It's not that the 82-year-old retired pharmacist is responsible for a one-man crime wave. He's just being a humble servant of his Lord.

The deacon of the First Presbyterian Church in Greenwood regularly spends time visiting prisoners in the county and city jails, as well as youth detention centers. At each stop, accompanied by a friend from the church, he distributes American Bible Society Scriptures and tells the imprisoned about the love of Jesus.

"I've tried to be like the Apostle Paul," he says. "He wanted to know the full power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead and get that good news to as many people as possible to tell them how much he loves us."

Retired since 1982 after 31 years as a drug company representative, Mr. Wylie wryly notes, "I've been working for the Lord since."

He not only spends time in the local jails, he is also a regular visitor to area hospitals, everywhere spreading the word via American Bible Society materials, and will occasionally be seen on the streets of downtown Greenwood witnessing to his faith. He carries only his satchel filled with Scripture materials.

"It's very rewarding work," he says about his life

BY PETER FEUERHERD



Mary Elizabeth and Alva Wylie

in retirement. "It's hard to know if anyone was saved or not. But they are gratified for knowing the Lord in a more personal way."

Mr. Wylie is a native of Tupelo and a graduate of the University of Mississippi.

He is supported in his ministry not only by his friends from First Presbyterian, but also by his wife, Mary Elizabeth. They have been wed for 53 years and have three adult

children and two grandchildren.

Blessed with good health, they have established annuities with the American Bible Society as part of their biblical belief in stewardship.

"It's part of handling the blessings that God has provided us with, more than enough to meet our own needs," Mr. Wylie says. "It's a way of handling the excess in a Christlike way that will benefit people who need to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ."

The gospels tell him that Jesus was concerned about caring for the sick, the hungry, and the maltreated people of this world. Mr. Wylie is a believer in taking care of the physical needs of the poor, but, he adds, "the best thing you can give them is the Good News of Jesus Christ."

That's a belief reflected not only in Mr. Wylie's investment in the American Bible Society, but it's also what inspires him on his regular visits to jail. ■ *More information about planned giving programs sponsored by the American Bible Society can be obtained by calling the Planned Gift Programs Department at 1-800-820-6227.*



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Mr. Butterworth turned to Hebrews. He read from chapter 9: "And it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. So Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him, he will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation."

That next evening, Good Friday 1932, Dad went to church and, taking the communion elements, realized that for the first time he was acting out of faith. As he wrote later, "Believing that in so doing I was taking Jesus as my sin bearer. He died for me, the just for the wicked. Call that my conversion."

In 1938, Dad felt God calling him to full-time Christian work. Even though it was the Depression, he quit his job and left for Bible school with his pregnant wife Dorothy and \$75. Only Dorothy's pleading restrained him from adding his university degree to a bonfire in which he burned all that symbolized his former, "uncommitted" life.

Three months into Bible school Janet King was born. Mom and Dad dedicated her for service to God as a missionary. Janet didn't learn of this until, after graduating high school, she told her parents of her own decision to become a missionary. Now, after 40 years of missionary service in Indonesia, Janet returned to the United States for retirement. Her father had died just four days earlier.

At the memorial service she shared that, when she was home on furlough three years before, Dad was already suffering from advanced Parkinson's disease. She felt the need to ask his permission to return to Indonesia — to finish her mis-

sionary career there. She suspected that she might never see him again. Dad not only gave permission — he said he was "sending her back" with his blessings.

She, too, spoke of her father as a mentor—about this numbers man's concern for people. How, at age 65, he memorized the names of all 900 residents in the retirement village he had just been called on to run — so that he could greet everyone there by name.

As Dad wryly put it, "For retirement, they asked me to start a new career in gerontology." Shell Point Village, the retirement community being built by the C&MA near Fort Myers, Fla., veered near bankruptcy, putting the reputation of the C&MA and the homes of its 900 plus residents in jeopardy. Dr. King was chosen to restore its solvency. Nine years later, Dad finally got to retire to a flourishing Shell Point Village. But, as in all his successes, he gave all the credit to God.

In his final months, even as his body wasted away and caused him constant pain, should you ask Dad how he was doing, he'd furrow his brow for emphasis, and exclaim, "Rejoicing, rejoicing in the Lord," as he anticipated an imminent homecoming with his Heavenly Father.

During the last days of his sojourn here, Dad could do little but pray. So that's how he invested his remaining energy — each day praying around the world. His intercessory prayers had once gotten Megs and I back on track when we'd lost our way. I suspect that he still prays for me and many others — prays that we will stay the course, find our way home and join him in rejoicing. ■

IN MEMORIAM

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Given by: Marian E. Hostetler

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to the editor

We welcome letters from our readers. Letters should be fewer than 300 words and focused on articles that have appeared in the Record. We reserve the right to edit them for clarity or space considerations. You can send your letters to: Editor, American Bible Society Record, 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023-7505. You can also reach us via e-mail at pfenerberd@americanbible.org

Behind the times

I am absolutely amazed that a prestigious Christian organization like the American Bible Society would be so behind the times in its use of the word "leper." You used it in your truly great article on George Gallup (June issue). If any Hansen's Disease patients read it, it must have hurt them.

Half a century ago the International Congress on Leprosy declared that "leper" was a bad word. It reduces a person, sick with a treatable, germ-caused disease, into a creature to be shunned. Isn't it time to stop the use of the defaming sobriquet, and to lift up these sick and healing people to their rightful status as human beings?

As a former Presbyterian missionary in Colombia, pastor of the only Protestant church in the government leprosarium, and later field representative for American Leprosy Missions, I urge you to get up to date.

J. LESLIE INGLIS, WINCHESTER, VA.

In defense of Weight Watchers

I am responding to the article by Patricia Sinclair entitled "Soul Food" in the June/July issue. I am an ordained minister and I am also a leader on staff with Weight Watchers.

This article does a disservice both to the Christian community and to the Weight Watchers organization [when it] advocates fasting as the Biblical means of weight loss, yet fasting in the Bible is for spiritual reasons only. For the Christian, weight management and healthful eating habits are part of the good stewardship of the body that God gave us.

In American culture, many people are slaves to food and overeating. The cure for this is not fasting,

but a commitment to more healthful eating habits.

The Word of God never urges fasting as a means of weight management. In fact, fasting can be dangerous for some people when done in the wrong way for the wrong reasons.

ROBERT AMOR, DETROIT

An eye for an eye

I am writing in regard to the letter from Howard Goeringer in the April/May *Record*. He was disappointed in your story "Why the Hebrew Bible is Also for Christians" because of the Old Testament law of an "eye for an eye."

I also always felt that law to be cruel until I heard it explained by a rabbi on television, who said, "an eye for an eye" didn't mean you had to take an "eye for an eye." It meant you couldn't take more than "an eye for an eye," which puts an entirely different meaning to it. I felt much better because that's how I perceived a loving God. People are inclined to try and give more than they get. The rabbi said this law was to stop them from doing that.

THELMA ANDERSON, MIDLAND, S.D.

Clarification:

In the August/September 2001 issue, we reported on a controversy surrounding a best-selling book, *The Prayer of Jabez: Breaking Through to the Blessed Life*, written by Bruce H. Wilkinson. The *Bible in the News* item was an attempt to report on reactions to Mr. Wilkinson's book. We were making no comment about the biblical passage that was the subject of the book.

Never Ceasing, Always

In Lamentations, the writer declares:

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning. Great is thy faithfulness. (3.22,23 RSV)

For months ForMinistry has been working feverishly to launch our long-awaited Version 3. Since Sept. 11, however, we've also devoted time and energy to play our part in the American Bible Society's response to terrorism and its aftermath. I'm happy to report we've had a hand in the online ordering and distribution of nearly 30,000 free copies of ABS' Scripture portion, *God is Our Shelter and Strength*.

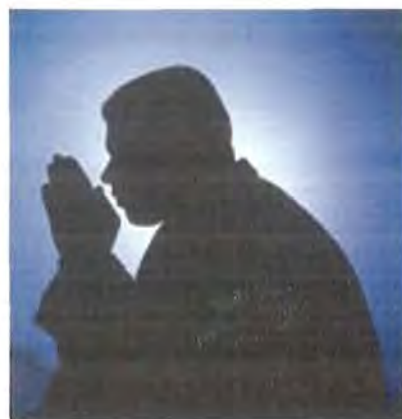
In the middle of it all I sometimes think, "Everything has changed. We've got to change course." And yet when I see 15-20 churches coming online each day at ForMinistry, many of them thanking us effusively for these powerful communication tools at a time of great challenge and opportunity, I become convinced afresh that ForMinistry's mission to equip the Church online for ministry is more clear and compelling than ever.

As testimony to that, here are three articles we recently featured. All our September 11th resources are available from the ForMinistry home page — just click the link labeled "[More September 11 resources](#)"

✦ *How to Pray in the Midst of Crisis*
by David Sanford, Luis Palau Evangelistic Association

How do you pray in the midst of crisis? More than any other portion of Scripture, Psalms shows us how. The Psalms are not only songs of promise and praise; they show God's people, bewildered and suffering, pleading for His help. The Psalms can teach you how to turn to God in times of trouble and stress.

Read the full article online at
[http://www.ForMinistry.com/
Article.asp?Record=3488](http://www.ForMinistry.com/Article.asp?Record=3488)



BY CHRIS THYBERG

New

for **Ministry.com**
Equipping the church online for ministry

► *Grief and Crisis Counseling: Ministering to the Hurting*

by The Church Communication Network

In response to the events of September 11 and their continuing aftermath, The Church Communication Network (CCN) is making a Grief and Crisis Counseling seminar available at no charge to all churches in America, live via satellite. The live, interactive broadcast on Thursday, Nov. 15, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Pacific time, featured Dr. H. Norman Wright, Christian counseling expert and author of such books as *Crisis Counseling*, and *Recovering from the Losses of Life*.



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Read the full article online at

<http://www.forministry.com/Article.asp?Record=3509>

► *Talk To Your Kids!*

by Dr. Kevin Leman, *realFamilies*

As in any tragedy of this magnitude, much of what follows are the questions that attempt to put our families and us at ease. Questions like: Why do people do these things? What should I do to protect my family? and How will this change our world? Dr. Leman suggests ways to help children deal with the Sept. 11 tragedies. He provides advice and Scripture to parents who want their children to understand — but not be crushed by — the events.

Read the full article online at

<http://www.forministry.com/Article.asp?Record=3483>



(Chris Thyberg is director for Ministry Development for ABSinteractive and executive producer of ForMinistry.com)

update

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

Among those receiving 633 million Scriptures distributed last year through Bible societies were Martha Barikder, seen here reading with her child, who is developing literacy skills through a program sponsored by the Bangladesh Bible Society, and an unidentified woman lighting candles during Easter service in Armenia.

THE BANGLADESH BIBLE SOCIETY (LEFT), UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES/AURICE HARVEY (RIGHT)



■ ENGLAND

The Bible societies of the world distributed some 633 million Scriptures in 2000, an increase of a tenth of one percent over the total for the previous year, according to a report recently published by United Bible Societies (UBS), headquartered in Reading, England.

The increase was attributed in part to the strong presence of Bible societies at worldwide celebrations of the new millennium and the Sydney Olympics. The greatest increase in category of Scripture distributed was seen in New Reader Selections, excerpts from the Bible illustrated with pictures and targeted to people who are still developing their reading abilities.

The UBS Report emphasized that a growing number of people are encountering the Bible in formats other than in traditional print. For example, a growing number of churches are playing audiocassettes of Bible readings to churchgoers in study groups, and some Bible Societies have persuaded radio stations to broadcast them. Using a number of dif-

ferent voices and enhanced by music, these recordings often have dramatic effects on the lives of listeners. They are especially popular in countries where literacy rates are low.

Many Bible societies around the world, including the American Bible Society, also put daily readings on their Web sites. Some, such as the Bible Society in Lebanon, make the entire Bible available for visitors to download. Despite the certainty that large number of people access the Scriptures in these formats, it has so far not proved possible to put a figure on them.

The largest increase in Bible interest occurred in Europe and the Middle East, which the report attributed to Scripture distributions made by the Bible Society in Italy, particularly to pilgrims drawn to Rome during the millennium year. Millennium celebrations also put Israel in the spotlight, including the opening of a permanent Bible exhibition in Jerusalem, funded by *Opportunity 21*, a UBS and American Bible Society effort to promote Bible distribution and translation around the world.

■ IRAQ

The *Just for Kids* drama troupe of the Bible Society in Lebanon has completed a tour of three Iraqi cities. An estimated 4,000 Iraqi children attended 14 performances by the group.

The group toured some of the more badly-scarred regions of the country. They performed in



Baghdad, the capital; Basrah, a city near the border with Iran and Kuwait which was badly damaged during the Iran-Iraq war and the 1991 Gulf War, and Mosul, a city which borders the region where civil war has raged between the government and the Kurds since 1947.

"The performance, which is based on Jesus' command to love one another, takes on another dimension in such settings," said Tom Hoglind of the Bible Society in Lebanon. "This command is very powerful and demands a response. To see so many children captivated by the drama and participating in the singing was something we have not witnessed anywhere else."

The drama group, consisting of 12 people, has been asked to return to perform and to run drama workshops.

■ GEORGIA

Three staff members of the United Bible Societies office in this former Soviet Republic were beaten up and many Scripture books and blankets destroyed during a violent attack led by an extremist rebel ex-priest on March 10.

A mob of about 60 people, led by Vasily Mkalavishvili — a defrocked priest well known for violent activities — ambushed a truck containing 1,500 blankets and 1,870 books bound for the Bible Society. The mob beat three Bible Society workers and the driver and set fire to the goods. Local police eventually arrived and broke up the attack but not before a Georgian Bible study guide and the blankets, donated by the French Bible Society for relief work, were stolen.

Protests were lodged by United Bible Societies, the Georgia Parliament, and Bishop Malkhaz Songulashvili, general secretary of the UBS office in Georgia. Mr. Mkalavishvili, who

is against Western influences in the country, is still at large.

■ CANADA

Thousands of Canadians proclaimed God's Word in a Bible-reading marathon that spanned the entire country for 10 days, whetting public interest in the Bible and deepening friendships across denominations.

Proclamation — the Word of the Lord started on March 28 and was the combined effort of dozens of local churches and the Canadian Bible Society. It was a multilingual event, including French, English, and sign language, as well as Native American tongues and languages of new Canadian immigrants.

In Edmonton, the Bible was read in 26 different languages, including Maori, Nepali, and Urdu. Even a blizzard and a civil service strike could not prevent the event taking place in St. John's, Newfoundland.

■ ARGENTINA

High-ranking government officials and local politicians have received Scriptures through an *Opportunity 21* project aimed at providing biblical guidance for the country's decision-makers. *Opportunity 21* is a project supported by the American Bible Society to provide support for 375 Bible translation and distribution projects in 75 countries around the world.

Although Argentina has one of the most stable economies in Latin America, high-level corruption is rife and, according to surveys, many Argentines distrust their leaders.

The project provided 56,000 Pocket New Testaments for distribution to senior officials and members of the Congress, Senate and the legislature. Another 150,000 Scripture portions on biblical ethics was distributed to other government employees. ■

quiet time

We hope you will use this guide in your daily study of the Bible, and that you will write to tell us what you think of this feature and how you use it.

JANUARY

God's Word:

Source of Unity in Christ Jesus

- 1 1 Corinthians 1.1-17
- 2 Ephesians 1.1-14
- 3 Ephesians 1.15-23
- 4 Ephesians 2.1-10
- 5 Ephesians 2.11-22

EPIPHANY

- 6 Matthew 2.1-12
- 7 Matthew 2.13-23
- 8 Ephesians 3.1-13
- 9 Ephesians 3.14-21
- 10 Ephesians 4.1-16
- 11 Ephesians 4.17-32
- 12 Ephesians 5.1-20

SUNDAY

- 13 Matthew 3.1-17
- 14 Matthew 4.12-25
- 15 Matthew 10.1-15
- 16 Matthew 10.16-33
- 17 Matthew 10.34-42

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY BEGINS

- *18 Matthew 16.13-28
- 19 Philippians 2.1-18

ECUMENICAL SUNDAY

- 20 John 17.1-26
- 21 Matthew 17.1-13
- 22 Matthew 17.14-27
- 23 Matthew 18.1-9
- 24 Matthew 18.10-20
- 25 Acts 9.1-25
- 26 Acts 9.26-43

SUNDAY

- 27 Acts 11.19-30
- 28 1 Corinthians 10.1-22
- 29 1 Corinthians 10.23 - 11.1
- 30 1 Corinthians 12.1-11
- 31 1 Corinthians 12.12-31

**The Octave for Christian Unity is January 18-25, 2002.*

FEBRUARY

God's Word:

Source of Love

- 1 1 Corinthians 13.1-13
- 2 Psalm 36

SUNDAY

- 3 1 John 1.1-10
- 4 1 John 2.1-17
- 5 1 John 2.18-29
- 6 1 John 3.1-10
- 7 1 John 3.11-24
- 8 1 John 4.7-21
- 9 1 John 5.1-12

SUNDAY

- 10 1 John 5.13-21
- 11 2 John
- 12 3 John

ASH WEDNESDAY

- 13 Psalm 51
- 14 Psalm 63
- 15 Psalm 136
- 16 Deuteronomy 6.1-9

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

- 17 Matthew 4.1-11
- 18 Matthew 22.23-40
- 19 Romans 8.18-39
- 20 Galatians 5.1-15
- 21 Galatians 5.16 - 6.10
- 22 Hosea 11.1-11
- 23 Hosea 14.1-9

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

- 24 John 3.1-21
- 25 John 10.1-21
- 26 John 13.1-20
- 27 John 13.21-35
- 28 John 15.1-17

PLEASE PRAY

REMEMBER THE SEPT. 11 ATTACKS — Pray for victims of the Sept. 11 attacks, their families, and those that suffer the trauma of digging through the rubble, and for the safety of postal workers and others afflicted with anthrax. Pray also for our military personnel engaged in combat. Pray that the American Bible Society Portion, *God Is Our Shelter and Strength*, gives hope and comfort to those who received them.

The United Bible Societies ask for prayers for the work of Bible societies in the Caribbean region, including:

PUERTO RICO — Please pray that our project, *Path of Hope for Our Children*, will help young people discover that Christian values are key to a good education. The project calls on churches, businesses, and government to help students rediscover the treasures of the New Testament.

GUADELOUPE & MARTINIQUE — Please pray for the successful conclusion of the French Antilles Creole New Testament which will be distributed this year.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC — Please pray for an *Opportunity 21* project that will bring hope to poor communities of Haitian immigrants through the distribution of Creole-language Scriptures.

CUBA — Last year saw the largest import of Scripture materials into Cuba ever recorded, and we hope to continue our large-scale distribution. Pray that we may be able to produce resources in Cuba itself.

SOCCER STAR LEARNS POWER OF FORGIVENESS

SAO PAULO, BRAZIL — EULLER ELIAS DE CARVALHO is known throughout soccer-crazed Brazil as the “Son of the Wind,” in honor of his legendary athletic style. His glittering career spans 10 years and has seen him win many prestigious titles. A forward for Vasco de Gama, last year he was selected for the Brazilian national team.

But Mr. de Carvalho says that his greatest joy is not his soccer career but his conversion to Christianity, which marked a turning point in his personal and professional life.

His unhappy childhood with an alcoholic father had left him full of resentment. When he left his family at the age of 14 to begin his soccer career, he took his anger with him. “I had a great desire to revenge the wrongs my father did to my family,” he says. “I was motivated by hatred and all I wanted was money, fame and prestige.”

All that changed when he attended an Athletes for Christ meeting. There he heard the words from John 3.16 — “God loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die.” (CEV)

The verse changed him.

“When this verse was read out, I understood the love of God for all humanity and I accepted Jesus Christ into my life,” he says. “More than that, I began to understand the value of forgiveness, particularly with regard to my father.” Mr. de Carvalho now enjoys a close relationship with both his parents, who are separated. His whole family witnessed the positive changes in his life and they, too, became committed Christians.

The Word of God has also become a source of strength for him in the demanding world of professional soccer, an endeavor that Brazilians take extremely seriously.

“In soccer there are many injustices and lots of pressure and, as professionals, we have to put up with it and keep quiet about it,” he says. “At moments like these, I open the



BIBLE SOCIETY OF BRAZIL

▲ The “Son of the Wind” practices his soccer skills.

Bible to find answers and comfort.”

Mr. de Carvalho also owns a soccer school, where he teaches students not only about the techniques of the sport but also shares his experience of life with them, including his Christian faith.

“The main advice I give the children is to be disciplined and combine sports and study,” he says. “I also tell them that faith in God is essential because it is through this that their dreams can come true.” ■

Help Open Their Eyes and Hearts This Christmas.

"And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." (LUKE 2.12 NKJV)

Like the shepherds who hurried to find the manger, millions of children need to find the Savior today. But to get there, they need the ability to read — the gift of literacy that will allow them to experience the joy and power of God's Word.

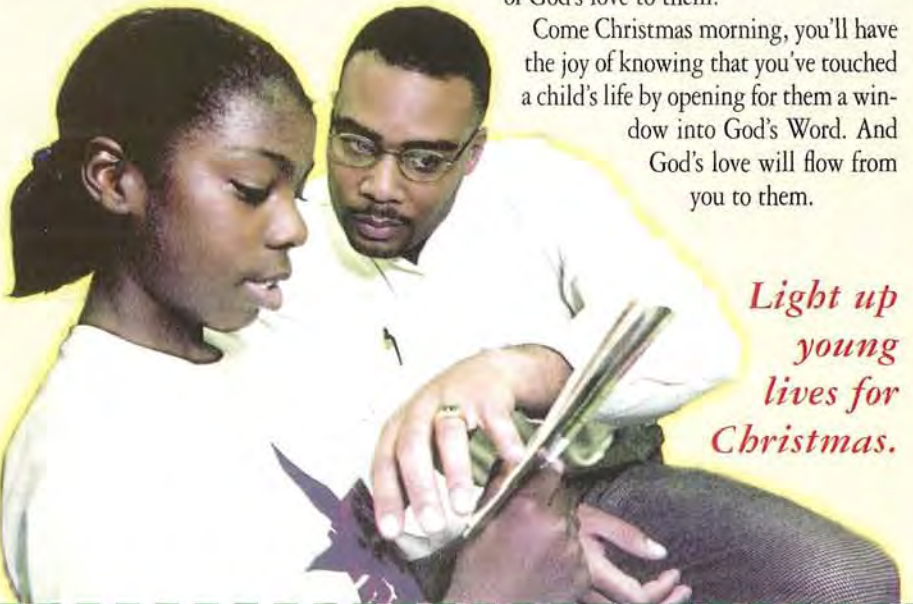
Today you can give the gift of literacy to a child in need of your love and compassion. With your generous response, we can help children learn to read using God's Word itself.

Our Illustrated Bible Literacy Series, a tested and proven curriculum of 30 Bible storybooks written on three different reading levels, enables Christian volunteers to teach children to read while unearthing the treasures of God's Word.

The need is urgent. More than 50 million Americans are functionally illiterate. Studies show that illiteracy is directly linked to poverty.

A child who cannot read grows up in darkness, with little hope, little potential. But your Christmas gift can help break the deadly cycle of illiteracy, poverty and despair. Will you open your heart to illiterate children and give a special Christmas gift that opens the riches of God's love to them?

Come Christmas morning, you'll have the joy of knowing that you've touched a child's life by opening for them a window into God's Word. And God's love will flow from you to them.



*Light up
young
lives for
Christmas.*

Yes! I want to help reach children with God's Word through the new Illustrated Bible Literacy Series.

Enclosed is my Christmas gift of \$ _____

Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Phone () _____

E-mail address _____

Please return this coupon and your check made payable to the American Bible Society. Contributions to ABS are greatly appreciated and are tax deductible as allowed by law.



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