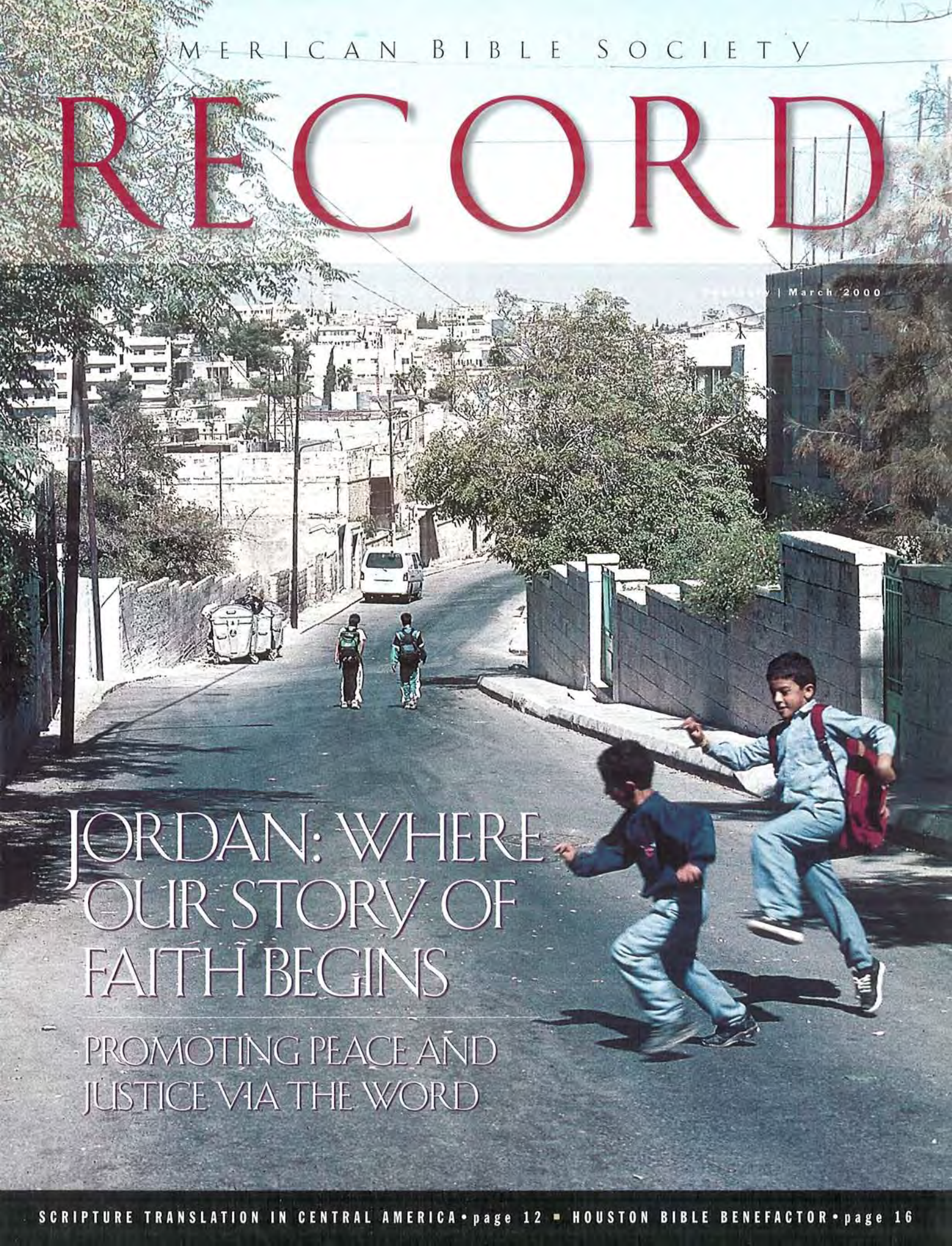


AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

# RECORD

March 2000



## JORDAN: WHERE OUR STORY OF FAITH BEGINS

PROMOTING PEACE AND  
JUSTICE VIA THE WORD



# Hearing God with Our Heart

*"Wasn't it like a fire burning in us when he talked to us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?" Luke 24.32 (TEV)*

English-speaking Christians have many Bible translations from which to choose. It never crosses our mind that God does not speak our language—or we His. But suppose you had never read or seen a Bible in English—the Scriptures you see are always in another language, say Quechua or Chinese. Without someone else to translate our Bible, it would remain a coded mystery.

Would God sound as personal? Might you not think that the Bible's message of hope was really meant for someone else?

In 1985, Joe Gray, a missionary to the Miskitu Indians in Nicaragua and Honduras for 40 years, recognized this was their predicament and he set out to translate the Old Testament into Miskitu. After completing a few chapters he took them to some trusted Miskitu pastors for their evaluation.



"I was prepared to be a hero. Instead they told me, 'This is pretty good, but it reads just the way we expect missionaries to sound.' I was devastated," says Joe. He realized then that only a native speaker could bring the richness and power of God's Word to life for the Miskitu.

Faced with the magnitude of the task at hand, Joe turned to the United Bible Societies for help.

Beginning on page 12, you can read how the Bible Society helped the Miskitus, Sumus, and Chujs of Central America learn to translate God's Word for themselves—to allow God's Word to speak more directly to their hearts with passion and clarity.

At the American Bible Society we believe that exposure to the Scriptures is the single most effective way to evangelize. This was confirmed in San Sebastian, Guatemala, where fully half this small community turned out to celebrate the translation of the Scriptures into their language. When David Ekstrom, a missionary there since 1952, first arrived he was met by only a handful of Chuj believers. He says, "The strength of the church here has depended on the increasing availability of the Scriptures."

As wonderful as this is, there are still thousands of language groups and dialects without their own Scriptures. For these people God's Word, the substance of faith, always comes to them second-hand.

UBS translation coordinator Bill Mitchell drew applause from participants at the San Sebastian ceremonies when he said, "God makes no distinctions—His love breaks all boundaries. Your new Chuj Bible proves that you are not forgotten by God."

We thank all of you who help support the life-changing work of translating God's Word. 📖

*Eugene B. Habecker*

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The mission of the American Bible Society is to provide the Holy Scriptures to every man, woman and child in a language and form each can readily understand, and at a price each can easily afford. This purpose, undertaken without doctrinal note or comment, and without profit, is a cause which all Christians and all churches are urged to support. The Society is a member of the United Bible Societies, a partnership of Bible societies throughout the world cooperating to make Scriptures available to people everywhere in their own language.

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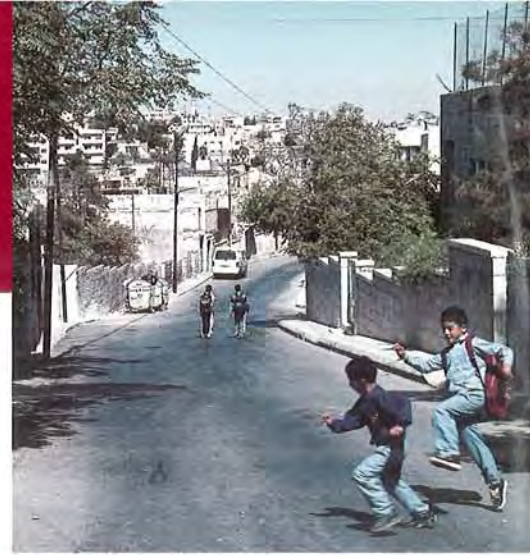
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**ON THE COVER:** Street scene in Amman, Jordan.  
(Photo by David Singer)

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Telephone: (212) 408-8710. Reach ABS on  
the web at [www.americanbible.org](http://www.americanbible.org)



## Sterling Carter's Near-Death Baptism

**D**on't you know that all who share in Christ Jesus by being baptized also share in his death?" were the words Sterling Carter heard from the pulpit of the makeshift church of the Community Center in Winston, N.M., as he waited to be baptized.

As Sterling sat in his chair, he was gripped by an inner turmoil, a feeling of nausea, and heartburn in his stomach. It was not anxiety. Sterling Carter was showing the signs of an impending heart attack, he later learned. About to die to sin spiritually, he was dying physically as well.

Sterling's story is indeed a remarkable one. As a *Year of the Bible* participant, Sterling made a commitment to read the New Testament Bible in one year. With no previous knowledge of God's Word, he hungrily read the New Testament through three times. Putting faith into practice,

Sterling asked to be baptized at his lodge—in his own mud hole.

He had a problem. The mud hole was empty. He needed rain. As if in answer to a prayer, a July downpour drenched the normally-arid Southwest. The mud hole was filled. With fami-



**Sterling Carter**

ly and friends as witnesses, Sterling was baptized on Aug. 8 by Pastor Jack Cain, an ABS volunteer.

The story does not end there, however. The power of God's presence became so very real during the

baptismal ceremony that one by one members of Sterling's family came forward. His wife Judy, their daughter Kristie, along with two of their grandchildren, were also baptized.

Driving home alone some three hours later, Sterling was forced to pull over as waves of nausea and vomiting assailed him. Thinking that he had the flu, he kept on driving. Arriving home, Sterling suffered a heart attack and was immediately rushed to the hospital. Within hours of his baptism, Sterling was lying on a hospital operating table undergoing surgery.

"God and the Devil were fighting over your soul," said members of Sterling's family as he recovered in his hospital bed.

"God won!" said Sterling as he recalled his baptismal Scripture—"We were baptized, so that we would live a new life, as Christ was raised to life by the glory of God the Father." (Romans 6:4 CEV).

**Sterling Carter gets baptized in his own mud hole in New Mexico.**



## Answering the Call After the Flood

**I**f one part of our body hurts, we hurt all over. If one part of our body is honored, the whole body will be happy." (1 Corinthians 12:26)

The Rev. Leonard Ponder choked back tears as he recounted the horrors of the flood that ravaged eastern North Carolina back in Septem-

ber. Cemeteries were buried under 20 inches of water, caskets were uprooted and the threat of an epidemic became real. "It was extremely difficult," he said, "to comprehend the turmoil and the pain that the residents experienced." In a quandary, Leonard realized that he had to do



something. But what?

What Leonard did not know, however, was that the American Bible Society was inundated with urgent requests for Scriptures. One request read, "Please help us get Bibles to these people. I don't think that anyone realizes how bad it is out here. These people need the Word of God. Please help!" With requests piling up, ABS launched a search for a North Carolina contact to coordinate the shipment of Bibles and Scripture materials to these needy residents.

"Would you help us?" the ABS Grants Department asked Leonard. Unhesitatingly, he said yes. He literally became the eyes and ears of ABS in the flooded areas of North Carolina.



REV. & MRS. LEONARD PONDER

Leonard tirelessly coordinated the Scripture distribution on ABS' behalf. At his request, the North Carolina Baptist Men's group housed 10,000 Scripture pieces, while the First Baptist Church of Tarboro housed another 10,000. Both acted as supply centers for 42,000 pieces of Scriptures, given free to those devastated by Hurricane Floyd.

The distributed Scriptures, appropriately enough, heralded God as the hurricane victims' "Shelter and Strength."

"Our hands became an extension of God's long arm as we prayed and held the hands of the suffering," remarks Leonard. ■

—Patricia Sinclair

## Serving a Familiar Mission

**W**hen Dr. Don H. Argue was appointed to the American Bible Society board of trustees last year, he had no need to study a mission statement. He's known about ABS since he was a boy growing up as a pastor's son.

"I've followed the ministry of ABS most of my life," Dr. Argue says in a recent interview with the *Record*. "ABS and its ministry was part of the table talk in my home."

Dr. Argue's career and the ABS mission have complemented each other. Since 1998, he has been president of Northwest College in Kirkland, Wash., a Seattle suburb. The liberal arts school is sponsored by the Assemblies of God, but includes students from all Christian denominations.

Previously, Dr. Argue served as president of the National Association of Evangelicals and as president of North Central University in Minneapolis. He holds a doctorate in education from the University of the Pacific, and also earned degrees at Santa Clara University and Central Bible College.

He has served the U.S. government on a delegation to promote religious freedom in China, where he met with that country's leadership, including President Jiang Zemin.

Dr. Argue says, because of his busy schedule, he is reluctant to serve on boards. But ABS is an exception, he notes.

"I am very interested in distributing the Scriptures," he says, adding that he is also attracted to ABS' appeal across the breadth of Christianity.

As president of the National Association of Evangelicals, which represents 42,500 congregations and 49 member denominations, Dr. Argue was the first to hold that position to speak to the National Council of Churches. He also worked closely with the U.S. Catholic bishops to promote common goals.

Dr. Argue has also been successful as a fund-raiser, both as an educator and church leader. "I hope to be able to bring that strength to this position," he says. ■



DR. DON H. ARGUE



# JORDAN: STORY OF

By Peter Feuerherd

So Jesus was baptized. And as soon as he came out of the water, the sky opened, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down on him like a dove. Then a voice from heaven said, 'This is my own dear Son, and I am pleased with him.'

Matthew 3.16,17  
(CEV)

Sunset at Wadi Rum.  
(Photo by Peter  
Feuerherd)

The rediscovery of the baptism site of Jesus is, appropriately enough, the fruit of peace.

While a Jordanian military officer was helping to dismantle mines on the Israeli border after his country signed the 1994 peace accords, he stumbled upon an ancient Greek mosaic in the desert landscape. By accident, he was able to view part of an ancient Christian shrine dedicated to the baptism of Jesus.

Akel Biltaji, Jordan's minister of Tourism and Antiquities, is a Mus-



# WHERE OUR FAITH BEGINS

lim, not a Christian. But, he proclaims to a group of visiting American travel writers, the discovery of the baptismal site is "God's gift to Jordan. It is the result of peace."

This modern tale of transforming swords into plowshares, Jordanian tourism officials hope, will reap a rich bonanza in Christian pilgrims seeking to experience the rich Biblical heritage of Jordan.

The country already boasts of Mount Nebo, where Moses viewed the Promised Land before his death; the site where Jacob wrestled with the angels of God; the place, near the baptism of Jesus, where the prophet Elijah ascended to heaven; and King Herod's castle and jail, where John the Baptist was beheaded.

Jordan has a claim on a host of other Biblical figures, including Abraham, Job, Lot, Aaron, and Ruth. Pope John Paul II plans to visit the baptismal site in March during his tour of the Middle East, and the Catholic Church has designated it an official shrine for year 2000 millennium pilgrimages.

Rami Khouri, a Greek Orthodox scholar and archaeologist with a degree from Syracuse University in upstate New York, is a native Jordanian who speaks with pride of the buried treasures in his country. It is a land which has been traversed by biblical tribes such as the Hebrews,

Ammonites, Moabites, and later, Greeks, Romans, Arab Muslims and Christian European Crusaders, all of whom have left traces on the varied landscape of the land anchored by the Dead Sea in the north and the Red Sea in the south.

"In Jordan, you can walk through the history of human civilization," Rami told the travel writers during an afternoon briefing at the Jordanian tourism offices in Amman, the capital.

The next morning, the writers are experiencing some of that history.

In the desert air, there is a stillness at the baptismal site. (In actuality, there is no claim for any particular site, although Jordanian guides favor a place near an ancient cistern close to the Jordan River. Scholars who support the view that Jesus was baptized on the east side of the Jordan point to Scriptural references—John 1:28 notes that the baptizer came from Bethany beyond the Jordan—and the fact that early Christian tradition, evidenced by ancient mosaics placed in Greek churches in the area, recognized the baptism as occurring in that area).

Any visitor can see why John the Baptist was viewed as something of a wild man, existing on locusts and wild honey. The area is bleak, bereft of plant life for much of the year. For nearly 300 years, until the 19th century, the bleakness of the land discouraged nearly everyone from vis-



**Jamal Hashweh, General Director for the Bible Society in Jordan, greets Roman Catholic Bishop Selim Sayegh.**



**Record editor Peter Feuerherd visited Jordan in September 1999 as part of a tour for religion and travel writers sponsored by the Jordanian Tourist Board.**

iting it, despite its sacred history. Today there are still red flags warning visitors not to stray into areas recently cleared of mines along the formerly-tense Jordanian-Israeli border.

The area is in the midst of transformation, however. Workers are preparing the sites for a Baptism Archaeological Park which will open in the spring of 2000, providing amenities, including a new highway, to make it easier for pilgrims to visit.

At the moment, however, getting to the baptismal site means a trek over desert sands in special four-wheel drive vehicles.

Amidst the desert bleakness as the land slopes down towards the Jordan River, which is barely a trickle most of the year, are patches of green. Such areas, claim scholars, are fed by underground streams which could have been the

source of the water used to baptize Jesus.

The stillness emphasizes the sacredness of the area, which includes an ancient restored shrine dedicated to the prophet Elijah, who was said to have ascended to the heavens there.

For Rami Khouri, the traditions of Elijah and John the Baptist are appropriately joined here.

Elijah, he says, "begins the prophetic mission" in this region which culminates with John the Baptist and later, Jesus. "This extraordinary continuity is available nowhere else," he says, noting the land east of the Jordan contains "almost the full story of the salvation history of God."

This land, he emphasizes, is where the Christian story begins. In the next millennium, Jordanian tourism officials expect that Christian pilgrims will come to their country in recognition of that Biblical heritage. ■

# PROMOTING PEACE AND JUSTICE VIA THE WORD



**For worshippers and priests alike, the Word is a central focus at Orthodox services throughout the Middle East.**



Jamal A. Hashweh, general director of the Bible Society in Jordan, is overjoyed that his country will celebrate its Christian past in the upcoming millennium year. But at the moment it's the present which is on his mind. Talking with an American visitor, he apologizes that his Arab sense of hospitality has slipped. The conversation in his modest office is regularly interrupted by urgent phone calls from people who need help.

Christian preaching has existed in Jordan since Jesus, who visited nine of the then 10 Greek cities which comprised the Decapolis. Jamal would like to continue that tradition next year by distributing 40,000 Bibles to foreign pilgrims and

Jordanians next year.

Jordan is 7 percent Christian; most of the rest of the country is Muslim. The Jordanian government officially espouses tolerance—for example, the famous King Abdullah Mosque in Amman is situated next door to a majestic Greek Orthodox Church and Christians are encouraged to take two hours off on Sundays, a normal working day, to attend services. But while Jordan is one of the more welcoming countries in the Middle East, life can still be difficult for Christians. As in other largely-Muslim countries, many have emigrated abroad.

That provides a challenge to the Bible Society, headquartered in a house in a simple resi-



dential neighborhood in Amman.

"We are not just a bookstore. We are here as a ministry," declares Jamal.

That sense of mission is evident each morning when the small staff gathers for morning prayer.

"If we don't do that, pretty soon we will be discouraged. There is a spiritual dimension to what we're doing here," he says.

While the challenges are great in Jordan, they are even greater in Iraq, the neighboring country the Bible Society in Jordan is also responsible for. The economic embargo directed against the Saddam Hussein regime there for the past decade has resulted in massive poverty and hunger.

Chaldean Patriarch Raphael Bidawid, the spiritual leader of most of Iraq's million Christians, who constitute about 8 percent of the population, visited the U.S. in September to speak out against the economic embargo. The Chaldean Rite is part of the Roman Catholic Church. He told the *Record* the embargo has caused the deaths of more than a million Iraqi children from hunger and lack of medical supplies.

"It's a shame that the American people don't know about our situation," he says in an interview aboard the airplane from Amman to New York. "We need to make the American people sensitive to our plight."

That appraisal is backed by Jamal, who recognizes the complications of the situation brought about by the conquest of Kuwait by Iraq and the subsequent Gulf War which resulted in the defeat of Saddam Hussein.

The Bible Society is still active in Iraq, he says. "Looking through Jesus' eyes we see a hope for the future which can only be accomplished by providing the Word of God."

He says that Iraqis, including Iraqi Christians, "are paying a high price for the mistakes of their government."

The impact of the work of the Bible Society in Iraq is felt everyday at headquarters in Amman. Frequently staff members will receive calls from desperate refugees seeking food and shelter. Guided solely by an imprint on Bibles distributed in Iraq, they seek help from the only



Christian source they know in Jordan.

Although the Bible Society in Jordan is not set up to do social work, Jamal cannot turn his back. He tries to help the best he can.

"We cannot just give a Bible to somebody and know they are hungry and sick. We cannot give a book without our hearts being moved to give more," he says. ■

**Jamal Hashweh talks with customers at the annual book fair held in Amman. Below: School girls pass by ruins in the center of Amman. (Photos by David Singer)**





# A Bible Revival in Los Angeles

Story and photos  
by Thomas D.  
Sullivan



**Jeanette Russo gives  
Cardinal Roger  
Mahony a Bible at a  
celebration of African-  
American Catholics  
in Los Angeles.**

**A**s people arrived at the high school, most had one question: Where can I get Bibles?

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles had invited African-American Catholics to celebrate their faith and heritage. Those who pledged to read the Bible, share their faith, and attend Mass on Sundays were promised a commemorative Bible with a painting of a black Christ watching over Watts.

The 3,500 people rediscovered their faith and history during the celebration, part of ABS's outreach to spread God's Word.

In earlier decades, African-Americans moved from the South and the Midwest to Los Angeles. A sizeable number of these new arrivals were Catholic, and they put down roots in and around the city. The Archdiocese of Los Angeles organized its festival to recall this heritage—and to revive them with the Word.

During recent times, black Catholics who lived in once largely African-American parishes have moved to other parishes, and the festival aimed to “bring them back together,” says the Rev. Fisher Robinson, vicar for African-American Catholics in the archdiocese.

There are more than two million African-American Catholics in the United States, and the Catholic Church wants to honor their faith and history. As with all Catholics, Father Robinson says, “Each time they partake in the liturgy,

## *Scriptures a Big Draw at Church Festival*

which is the center of everything we do, we have Scripture.” The Mass, the fundamental worship service of Catholics, includes readings from the Old and New Testaments.

At the festival, participants staged “Word events”—dramatizations in music and dance of Scripture passages such as Jesus' raising Lazarus from the dead and Jesus' washing of the Apostles' feet. After these presentations, organizers urged those present to discuss and reflect on the rich meaning of these stories and their lives.

Father Robinson cites Jesus' meeting of the woman at the well (John 4.7-30) as well-suited for adaptation as a Word event. He cites the story as a model of how all Christians are charged to spread the gospel. Not only was the woman moved by her encounter with Jesus, but “she ran back to the village and said, you have to hear this man.”

The Rev. John Harfmann, who directs the African American Catholic Center for Evangelization and Culture, explains that the concept is based on lessons learned from a meeting two years ago. At that gathering, the National Black Catholic Congress, there were no workshops, only Word events.

After the meeting, “We were hoping that people would then go back to their parishes in all the different dioceses all over the country and do the same things,” Father Harfmann says.





Kwanzaa portions, and more.

Jeanette presented Cardinal Roger Mahony with a Bible, which he held aloft to applause.

People there “were so pleased with our Bible,” Jeanette says. “It was a day of excitement.” Traffic at the ABS booth was so heavy that the festival organizers sent three volunteers to help Jeanette handle the crush. 📖

**The Rev. Fisher Robinson and the Rev. John Harfmann display ABS Bibles in front of a painting, “God So Loved the World That He Gave His Only Begotten Son,” by the Rev. Fernando Arizti.**

## The Image of the Divine

He hopes that Word events will prompt home Bible study and the formation of Bible study groups.

When the Archdiocese of Los Angeles held its Word events at the festival, it was crucial that people have Bibles ready at hand, so they could explore the stories themselves. “We wanted to be assured that no one could say, ‘We didn’t have a Bible,’” says Father Harfmann.

With the pledges people signed, and the Word events they saw, there was no shortage of desire for Scriptures. And ABS came through with more than 5,000 special imprints. People wanted to get their hands on the Bibles. According to Father Harfmann, the Bibles were “the drawing card” for the event. Weeks after the festival, Father Harfmann’s office phones were ringing off the hook with requests for God’s Word.

The festival introduced many to the work of the American Bible Society. Jeanette Russo, who works in Catholic ministries for ABS, represented the Society at a booth and was struck by the enthusiastic response. Visitors were surprised at the variety of resources—20th anniversary editions of *Today’s English Version* Bibles, Catholic Lectionary Reading Guides, youth Bibles,

**T**he Rev. Fernando Arizti first painted a black Christ in 1966. When Loyola University Press published a reproduction, the popular reaction to the painting made a deep impression on Father Arizti. Loyola sold 35,000 prints of the painting—to people of different races.

That reaction showed Father Arizti the “extreme need” people felt to see Christ portrayed as of African descent. “I truly believe there was much need” for this vision of Jesus, Father Arizti says. “People can see their own worth and dignity in the Divine with their own features.”

His mural graces the cover of the Bibles distributed in Los Angeles, where Christ spreads His arms to encompass Watts. In that depiction, Fr. Arizti says he’s aiming to portray, “the great love of God for all His people. And in this particular instance the love of God for the African-American people.” 📖



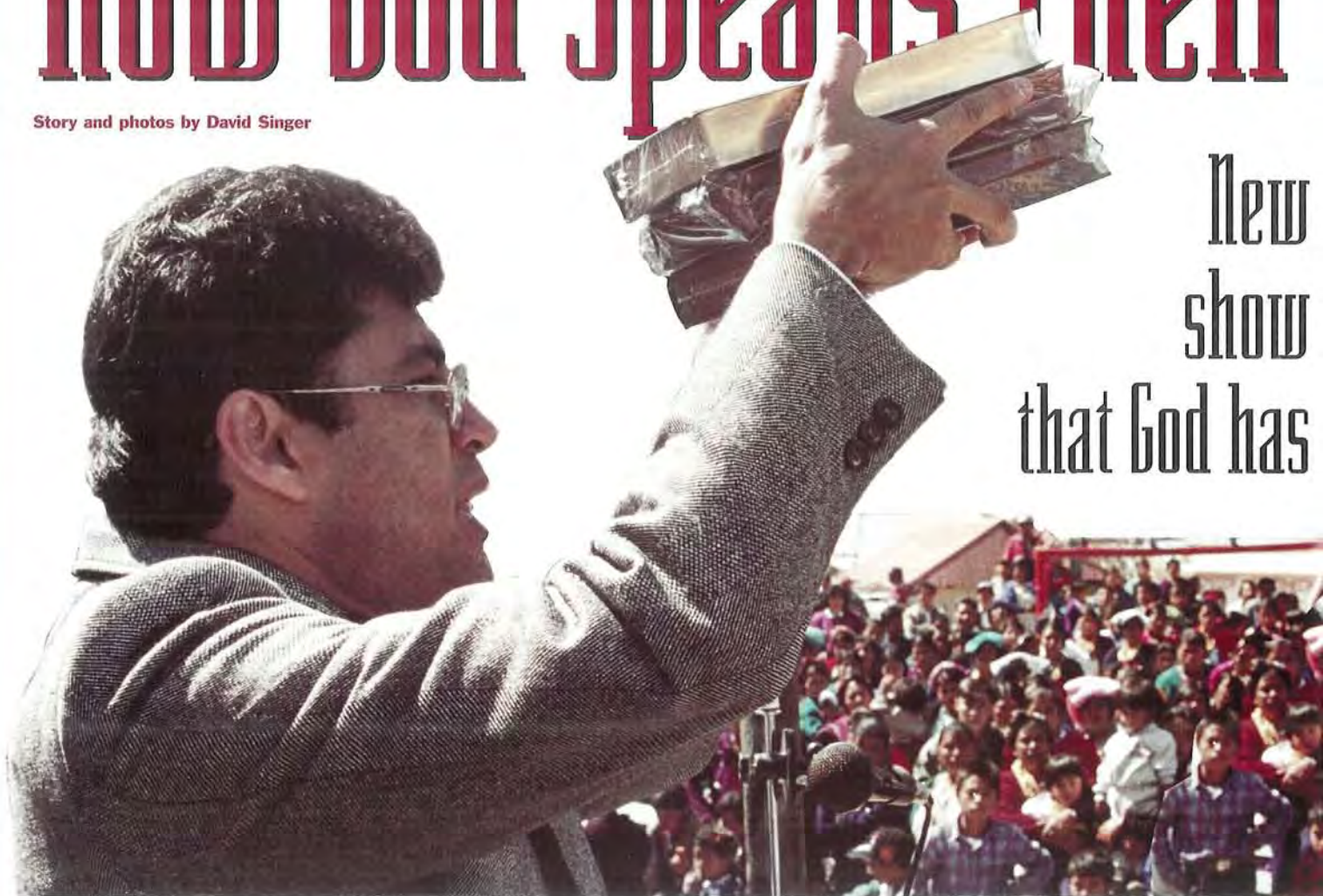
**The Rev. Fernando Arizti with his painting, “Crucifixion in the City in the Name of Progress.”**



# Now God Speaks Their

Story and photos by David Singer

New  
show  
that God has



**T**wo slow-moving caravans of cars, pick-ups, and placard-carrying pedestrians converged on the central park in Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua. Loudspeakers mounted on a van invited onlookers to join the hymn-singing processions. One placard quoted 2 Timothy 3.16, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness."

The motorcades ended at a basketball court at one end of the park. On a small hill adjacent to the court, a large white tarp shaded pastors, government dignitaries, community officials, translators, and United Bible Societies staff from the brilliant sun. A banner in Spanish read, "Presen-

tation Celebration of the Miskitu and Sumu Bibles."

Hundreds had gathered from more than a score of churches in the surrounding communities to thank God that, after a century of sporadic translation work, they now had His word in two of the languages spoken in this Nicaraguan backwater, Miskitu and Sumu. (Miskitu is pronounced with a final "o" in Spanish but the Miskitu orthography does not use the letter "o.")

A week later in Guatemala, a larger caravan of pickup and flatbed trucks crowded with celebrants traveled 14 kilome-

**The Rev. Cornelio Midence, General Secretary of the Bible Society of Guatemala, delights the Chuj people by showing off the first copies of their Chuj Bible.**



# Language

## Bible translations indigenous peoples not forgotten them



ters through sparsely populated mountain villages to announce the Bible Society's dedication of another indigenous translation—the Chuj Bible. Arriving at the town square in San Sebastian, riders joined with nearly half the citizenry for this community-wide celebration. Women, dressed in native wardrobe, added a rainbow of color to the festive atmosphere.

These were transforming events in the lives of three indigenous peoples who had never before seen all of God's Word printed in any language they could read and understand. Many, especially women and the elderly, don't read (or speak) Spanish, the national language of both Nicaragua and Guatemala. For those who do, it is a second language at best.

For these marginalized people, having God's Word in their language was an affirmation of God's love.

Mískitu translation, begun by the American Bible Society 100 years ago, had ended with the New Testament in 1905. By the time the Rev. Joe Gray, a Moravian missionary working among the Mískitus in Honduras and Nicaragua, took up the task again in 1983, translations of the Psalms and Proverbs were also available. Rev. Gray found that he enjoyed translating for guest speakers who came to speak to Mískitu parishioners. He says, "The Lord gave me an easy tongue for language. Greek, Hebrew, and French came easily." It seemed logical to Joe that he should translate the remaining books of the Old Testament for the Mískitu congregations.

After finishing a few chapters Joe took his work to some local pastors for review.

"I expected to be a hero. But when they said it read just the way they expected a missionary to sound, I was devastated. But it was a blessing in disguise," says Joe.

Even though he had been speaking Mískitu for 50 years, Joe now realized that only a native speaker could capture the



**Ronald Blue, head of Ekstroms' Central American Mission, shares a new Chuj Bible during the translation dedication.**

flavor and nuance that would bring God's Word alive for the Mískitu Indians. He says, "When Mískitus did the work they'd come up with words I'd never even heard before." Joe now also realized the magnitude of the task he had undertaken—this was more than a one-man job. He turned to the Bible Society of Nicaragua and the United Bible Societies for help.

Work began in earnest in 1985. Some of the Sandinistas' revolutionary rhetoric had awakened a sense of cultural pride among the various indigenous groups. And language is important. Geerhard Kloppenburg, who served as UBS coordinator during the

final stages of Mískitu translation, says, "Language is a large part of these people's identity."

The Rev. Eugenio Flores, recruited in 1987 to help translate the Sumu Bible, beams when he says, "I have succeeded in such an important job, something transforming in the life of a nation...the Sumu language, which was beginning to disappear, will no longer disappear because it is molded in a book. Not any book, but the book of all books."

Training a native Sumu speaker like Rev. Flores, someone with the intuitive language skills and a passion to do the work, is always the first challenge in building a translation team. Barnabas Walden, a Catholic Spanish teacher who speaks Sumu, assisted Rev. Flores as a style checker, focusing on con-



sistency of syntax and word usage.

Mískitu pastors in Puerto Cabezas recruited Rev. Waldemar Bushey, a pastor who had “fallen in love with the Bible,” to be the core of their translation team. For 14 years Rev. Bushey worked with Joe, completing 98 percent of a draft with paper and pencil before Geerhard arrived in March of 1995 with an SIL (Summer Institute of Linguistics) “Shoebox” computer program. The computer enabled them to do text analysis, review and build a dictionary, and otherwise vastly streamline the work.

Making the new Mískitu Bible a cohesive whole also meant revising the New Testament translation that had been done years earlier. UBS Production Coordinator Hank Spent says that, during the final stages, it was important for supporting churches to move in their thinking from a translation project to publication ownership—to help them realize that the Bible they were translating was going to be their Bible.

“They need to choose what they want their Bible to be,” says Hank. “We encourage them to make it as user friendly as possible. What do they want it to be called? In the case of the Mískitu Bible it was important to distinguish it from the former New Testament, so they chose ‘Lord Word Whole.’ The Sumus chose ‘Lord Father Word.’”

Lack of funds limited the first printing to 10,000 Mískitu Bibles, 5,000 Chuj Bibles, and 3,000 Sumu Bibles. Nine thousand of the 10,000 Mískitu Bibles, which arrived in Puerto Cabezas a week before the ceremonies, were distributed by the time of the celebra-

tion service, and the Catholic church was still waiting for the 5,000 copies it had hoped for.

Freddy Fonseca, General Secretary of the Bible Society of Nicaragua, explains that even though production costs ran about \$13 per Bible, a pastor’s committee set the price equivalent to five US dollars. “We have been able to achieve this subsidy through donor support,” he says. “In many of these isolated communities where barter is the main means of



**Rev. Waldemar Bushey and Rev. Joe Grey congratulate one another on a job done for God’s glory.**

exchange five dollars is a lot of money.” He says production costs could have been lower had they been able to raise funds for a bigger first printing.

To emphasize how much the Bibles are appreciated, Fred-

dy stresses, “The closest Sumu village is eight hours from the nearest town—not eight hours by car, but on foot. Brothers carried cases of Bibles to the Musawas community on foot, walking for eight hours.”



**Translation Coordinators David and Helen Ekstom celebrate with their new Chuj Bible.**

Translation of the Chuj Bible in Guatemala has a similar history. When David and Helen Ekstrom

came to San Sebastian in 1952, the few Christians there were the result of the missionary work of Ken Williams, who had translated the New Testament into Chuj. In 1988 the Bible Society of Guatemala and the local church council recruited Diego Nicolás and Baltazar Nicolas (no relation) to help the Ekstroms finish translation of the Old Testament. UBS Translation Consultant for the project, Ron Ross, says that now half the community are believers.

Helen Ekstrom says that the strength of the church in San Sebastian has depended on the Scriptures. Speaking to the throng of believers gathered at the dedication service on “this very happy day,” she said, “I look at all the believers here and give thanks to God that now you have all of God’s Word in your own language.”

The loudest applause came when United Bible Societies Translation Coordinator Bill Mitchell told the Chuj audience, “God makes no distinctions. His love has no frontiers—it breaks all boundaries. Your new Bible proves that you are not forgotten by God.”

Diego says, “My father worked with Ken Williams. When the churches asked me to become a translator my father said, ‘This is God’s work and you must do it.’ When I began I had a superficial knowledge of the Bible. Now I know it well. Through that knowledge I’ve had a tremendous impact as a father and spiritual leader in my family and among my friends.”

**Eugenio Flores receives from Freddy Fonseca, General Secretary of the Bible Society of Nicaragua, a copy of the Sumu Bible he helped translate.**







# Philanthropist Shares a Personal Relationship with the World

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER FEUERHERD

Eleanor McCollum's Houston penthouse apartment is filled with the mementos of a public life. It is a veritable gallery of the rich and famous, people who have shaped American

life in the last half of the century.

On one table is a picture of Mrs. McCollum with George and Barbara Bush—not a posed White House publicity shot, but a photo of a gathering among friends. In another room is a photo where she is at a party with former Secretary of State James Baker. Another photo shows Mrs. McCollum with track star Carl Lewis, taken at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. And standing by itself is an enlarged reproduction of a 1946 *Life* magazine article, with a stately and elegant Mrs. McCollum taking the reins of a horse-and-carriage on the old Whitney estate on Long Island, where she lived in splendor for many years.

Yellowed newspaper clippings indicate that Mrs. McCollum, now in her nineties, was known, in the parlance of a pre-feminist era, as a "socialite." She was a fixture in the New York newspapers, attending charity events, and was even named the best-hatted woman in America at one time.

Yet, she would prefer the moniker "Mrs. Nicodemus" to any of the other titles she has earned through the years.

It is a reference to John 3.1-19, the story of a Pharisee—a group frequently derided in the gospels as enemies of Jesus—who went to see the Savior in the dark of night. He was told by Jesus

**A friend of the powerful with a simple message**



that to receive salvation he needed to be “born in a new way.” (CEV)

“I used to call myself Mrs. Nicodemus because I went to Jesus at night in secret,” Mrs. McCollum recalls.

She remembers that night in 1957 at New York’s Madison Square Garden. Mrs. McCollum—then Eleanor Whitney—had attended Dr. Billy Graham’s massive crusade at the prodding of her Episcopalian pastor on Long Island. She even invited Dr. Graham and his crusade staff to her home, and attended a number of crusade events with her friends.

“I was leading a good, generous philanthropic life. But I didn’t have a personal relationship with Jesus,” Mrs. McCollum, the great-granddaughter of the founder of the Lutheran Church in her hometown of Plymouth, Ohio, recalls.

But one night she went by herself to a crusade meeting. As Dr. Graham issued his altar call to the throngs at the old Madison Square Garden, for the first time she publicly acknowledged Jesus as her Savior. Soon afterwards, she became part of a Bible study group with her Christian friends.

The act of public conversion transformed her life. She became a speaker for Christian groups of all denominations and wrote an autobiography titled *Invitation to Joy*, detailing her conversion and struggles. She traveled the world in tourist class, being sure to get a middle seat so she could converse to fellow passengers about the joys of knowing Jesus. For more than 30 years, she served on the American Bible Society board of trustees, and underwrote a Bible with a distinctive butterfly design cover in an easy-to-read TEV version.

“Of course we were laughed at,” she says about the reaction of her society friends at the time of her personal conversion. “They said the girls were on a Bible binge.”

After she married Leonard Franklin McCollum, her late husband who was a CEO of Conoco and founder of Bank One, she moved to Houston in the early 1970s.

There she maintained her wide social concerns. She is a supporter of the Houston Grand Opera—she is a former concert and oratorio

soloist and occasionally will sit down at her piano to play “Amazing Grace,” her favorite hymn. Mrs. McCollum is also a backer of the Orbis flying hospital, which brings aid to the sick poor around the world, and the DeBakey Heart Center in Houston.

“Those to whom much is given, much is expected. The Lord has been very good to me,” she says.

Her newest project is support for a literacy campaign now being developed by the American Bible Society Houston office. The idea is to use Bible materials to encourage adults and children to read.

In that way, many more will discover both the joys of reading the daily newspaper, a job application, and the wonders of the Scriptures. According to ABS Houston director Steve Shanklin, the project will begin in Houston, branch out to other Texas cities, and then be taken nationally, thanks to the support of Mrs. McCollum and other ABS donors.

She hopes that the literacy campaign will allow more people to discover her favorite Bible verse, John 3.16-17: “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)

Mrs. McCollum likes to put her own spin on the text: “For God so loved Eleanor...” she says. That way, she says, “it becomes very real” to her. It is a belief she wishes everyone could have about themselves.

“I want to have all the people I speak to have the opportunity to know God personally. That’s all I want to do in my life,” she says. ■



**Eleanor McCollum holds a copy of her autobiography.**



# Carrying on a Biblical Tradition in Korea

FOR THE RECORD

100 YEARS AGO

## A Lament for the Good Old Days

Ever wonder about what's the matter with kids today? Concerned that Scriptural truths seem to hold less sway on a new generation as we begin a new century?

You are not alone. *Record* readers were once asked to contemplate similar questions. That century was the 20th. The issue was dated February 1900. The editors of the *Record* quoted a piece in the *New York Evening Post*:

"There is only too much reason for fearing that the Bible no longer holds its ancient place as the chief fountain of literary reminiscence," an unnamed *Evening Post* writer declared in a piece titled "The Decay of Literary Allusion."

"The systematic reading of it [the Bible] in the family has much declined, and has already largely disappeared from the schoolroom. Few teachers of college classes now venture to refer to it, save on the assumption that their students know nothing about it."

Interest in the Bible, the author contended, waned as young people developed other interests, including "popular magazines, with their entertaining fiction and descriptive sketches."

The author contended that the pressures of life in the early 20th-century made the reading of literary classics such as the Bible difficult for many Americans.

"We are intensely self-interested, fervently bent on knowing ourselves and our surroundings, as they are today; and the themes of literary masterpieces, limited in scope to no time or place, are, frankly, not exactly to our mind," the writer lamented.

The *Record* editors, while agreeing with the basic thrust of the *Evening Post* piece, argued that the writer did not go far enough in his diagnosis of the problem. Faith, or the lack of it, they saw as the main reason for the decline in Bible reading.

"The literary use of the Bible has always rested upon something deeper and more vital, namely, its religious significance," the *Record* editors wrote. They warned, "Let this deep sense of the authority of the book once be destroyed, and its literary grace can never permanently charm the ear and soothe the heart of mankind." ■

Won Suk Soh of the Korean Bible Society clutches the documents in his hands. He was holding not only a piece of the history of his own country but that of his own family as well.

"This is like a national treasure," he says, pointing to the Gospel of John in Korean, dated from 1882 and stored by the American Bible Society library in New York for decades. While attending a recent meeting of the United Bible Societies in New York, Mr. Soh made sure to pick up the Korean Scriptures, one of the first ever translated into that language. He brought it home, and it is now displayed at Bible House in Seoul.

The translation of the Scriptures into Korean promoted one of the great Christian evangelization efforts of the past 120 years. "The gospel was spread by the Korean people," Mr. Soh notes, emphasizing the role that Korean Christians had in promoting the gospel on their peninsula, growing from a handful of Christians to nearly claiming a third of the population.

That missionary effort was spearheaded by foreigners, such as John Ross, from Scotland, and also by local people, including Sang Ryun Soh, Mr. Soh's great-grandfather. He translated the Scriptures into Korean from Chinese and smuggled them into his far northern village from Manchuria.

When Sang Ryun Soh's efforts began in 1882, "there were no Christians in Korea," notes his great-grandson. A year later a Presbyterian Korean congregation was established.

Distributing the Scriptures at that time was not a simple task. The Korean government had formally closed the country to Christianity, shutting the people away from what it considered to be a dangerous foreign influence.

Mr. Soh's family includes two brothers who are Presbyterian pastors. He now serves the Bible cause as secretary for fund raising and public relations for the Korean Bible Society.

"After 110 years, I am doing the same work as my great-grandfather," he says proudly. ■



Won Suk Soh

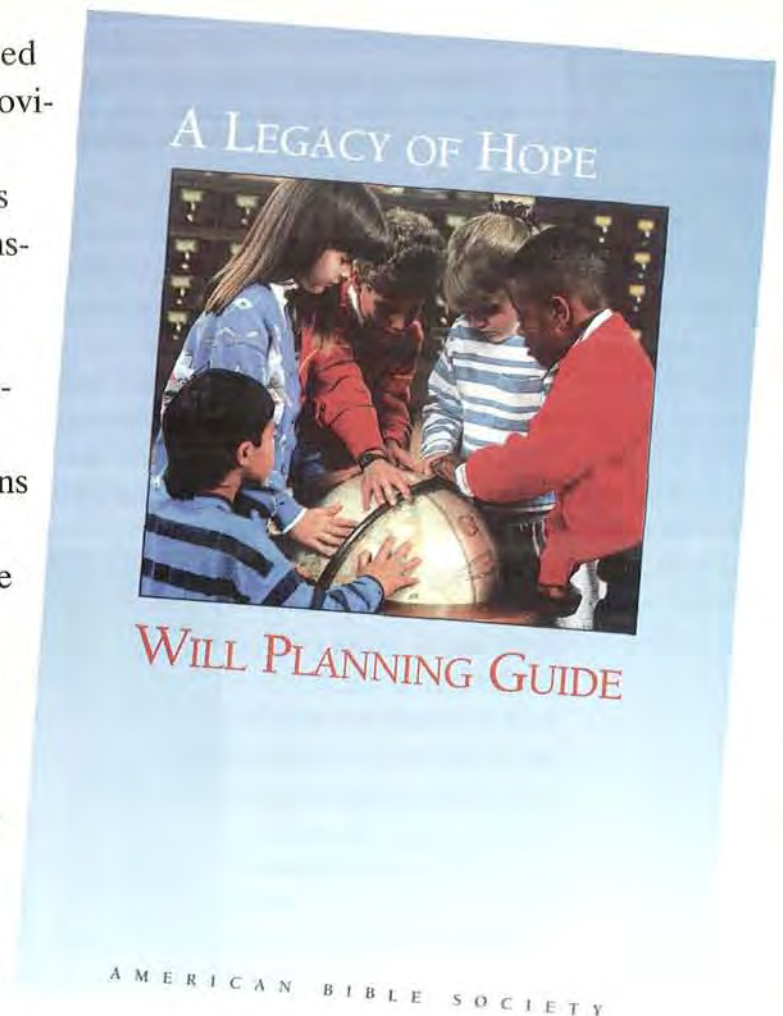


# Caring for Those You Love

**E**stablishing a will allows you to provide for your family and loved ones. Your plans can also include provisions to enable the American Bible Society to benefit future generations through its mission of Scripture translation and distribution. If you don't have a will, your assets will be dispersed according to the State's "general will," with little likelihood that people you love and the organizations you wish to support will benefit.

You owe it to yourself to exercise the power and freedom to make your own choices regarding the distribution of your estate. To assist you with the will planning process, the American Bible Society has created a guide called, "*A Legacy of Hope*," filled with step-by-step instructions, forms, an estate planning checklist, and information about opportunities for remembering ABS in your will.

To obtain your FREE copy of "*A Legacy of Hope*," simply complete and return the coupon, or call toll free **1-800-820-6227**. Your will is vital to the future security of the people and causes you care about. Take this important first step in estate planning today!



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# Gaining Treasure by Giving It Away

**Don't store up treasures on earth! Moths and rust can destroy them, and thieves break in and steal them. Instead, store up your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy them, and thieves cannot break in and steal them. Your heart will always be where your treasure is. Matthew 6.19-21 (CEV)**

Cyrus Cunningham and Pearl Rowell Cunningham of Vernon, Vermont, have discovered a modern paradox. Sometimes the only way to increase your treasure is to give much of it away.

He is 87. She is 90. They have been married eight years, both having outlived their first spouses.

Mrs. Cunningham's first husband was employed for many years as an engineer for the General Electric Co. in Massachusetts. Their retirement nest egg, invested primarily in company stock, grew handsomely in the recent stock market boom, reaching a value far surpassing anything they would have dreamed about 30 years ago as they entered retirement.

Cyrus and Pearl, in consultation with their advisors, decided against subjecting her nest egg to further income, capital gains, and estate taxes. They began a gift program to their favorite charities. This has included outright gifts of stock and the purchase of charitable gift annuities. One of the beneficiaries of their stewardship is the American Bible Society.

Cyrus talked with the *Record* about their philosophy of money management and why they have both decided to manage her resources in a generous manner.

"One of the big reasons is to cut the capital gains tax," says the retired engineer, citing a pragmatic approach to stewardship.

Another reason, he says, is to build heavenly

treasures through causes, such as the American Bible Society, which can make a difference in today's world.

They both agree that the ABS mission is a vital one in changing people's hearts through distributing Scripture.

"If we don't provide the spirit of the Gospel, we will just be spinning our wheels," he says about the problems facing contemporary America.

The couple lived most of their lives in Massachusetts. They knew each other for many years because Pearl was a friend of Mr. Cunningham's first wife. She originally retired to Florida, but has returned to New England.

The Cunninghams attend the weekly chapel services held at their retirement home.

Previously, they were affiliated with the Advent Christian Church, a denomination which has its roots in mid-19th Century New England.

It is a church with a tradition of concern for the end days. But Mr. Cunningham notes that he is wary of the hype in some Christian circles that the coming of the current new millennium is a foreshadowing of the end times.

"I doubt that God goes by a man-made calendar," he says.

That's one reason to be concerned about assuring that a personal treasure makes an impact on future generations who will hear the Word transmitted via the work of the American Bible Society. ■



**Cyrus Cunningham and Pearl Rowell Cunningham**

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■ **'BAD GIRLS OF THE BIBLE'**

Author Liz Curtis Higgs knows what it's like to be a "bad girl." When she worked on a Detroit radio station in 1980, she was given advice by shock jock Howard Stern.

"You know you are a bad girl when Stern tells you to clean up your act," notes the *Arizona Republic* in a feature interview with the author of *Bad Girls of the Bible*.

Ms. Higgs' book, written with the assistance of her husband, a Hebrew scholar, focuses on the lessons to be learned in the Biblical stories of women such as Jezebel and Rahab.

She also focuses on the woman who anointed Jesus at dinner with expensive perfume (Matthew 26.6-13, Mark 14.3-9, John 12.1-7).

"She shows total repentance and total humility and total worship. I think that's what God asks of us," Ms. Higgs told the *Republic*.

■ **RABBI PROVIDES MANAGEMENT ADVICE**

David Baron, a Beverly Hills, Calif., rabbi, says that management gurus need look no further than the Scriptures for business advice.

In his new book, *Moses on Management: 50 Leadership Lessons from the Greatest Manager of All Time*, Rabbi Baron focuses on the prime figure in the Book of Exodus.

Interviewed for the on-line magazine *Salon*, Rabbi Baron notes, "I think Moses was flawed. He was human. He made mistakes, and I think the great thing is that he allowed people to make mistakes."

The way Moses handled the golden calf crisis on his watch is a lesson for management types everywhere. "He dealt with it and moved forward," says Rabbi Baron.

■ **BIBLE FOCUS OF NEWSWEEKLY COVERS**

The Bible was the focus of two cover articles in American newsweekly magazines this fall.

"Is the Bible True?" asked *U.S. News and World Report* on its Oct. 25 cover. The answer, according to writer Jeffrey L. Sheler, is that the

Bible—while not completely verified by objective empirical research—is historically accurate in many details, according to modern archaeology.

Mr. Sheler notes that an inscription recently unearthed in Israel indicates the existence of King David, a figure some scholars had previously dismissed as pure legend. "In extraordinary ways, modern archaeology has affirmed the historical core of the Old and New Testaments," says Sheler, who has written a book about Biblical truth published by HarperSanFrancisco.

Biblical stories about Israel's patriarchs, the Exodus, and the life of Jesus have been affirmed by recent findings, claims Mr. Sheler.

Exodus rings of truth, notes Richard Elliott Friedman, a professor at the University of California-San Diego interviewed for the article, because it goes against the grain of most stories celebrating the beginning of a nation. "If you're making up history," he says, "it's that you were descended from gods or kings, not slaves."

*Newsweek* writer Kenneth Woodward delves into Biblical teaching on the end days in a Nov. 1 cover story.

He notes that the Book of Revelation (or the Apocalypse), attributed to John of Patmos, has been a source of fascination throughout history. Mr. Woodward concludes that, although the book has often been read for the wrong reasons, it "nonetheless insists on hard truths that no serious believer can discount. One is that sinners have reason to fear a God who, having chosen to create the world, can also choose to destroy it. The second is that the just have reason to hope in a God who stands by those who trust their lives to him."

He adds, "Thinking of the end of the world—like contemplating one's own end—is a painful process. But studying the Apocalypse presumes that even the end of the world is within the province of God. And who's to say that John's mythic battle between Christ and Antichrist is not a valid insight into what the history of humankind is ultimately all about?" ■



**"In extraordinary ways, modern archaeology has affirmed the historical core of the Old and New Testaments."**

**—Jeffrey L. Sheler,  
U.S. News and  
World Report**





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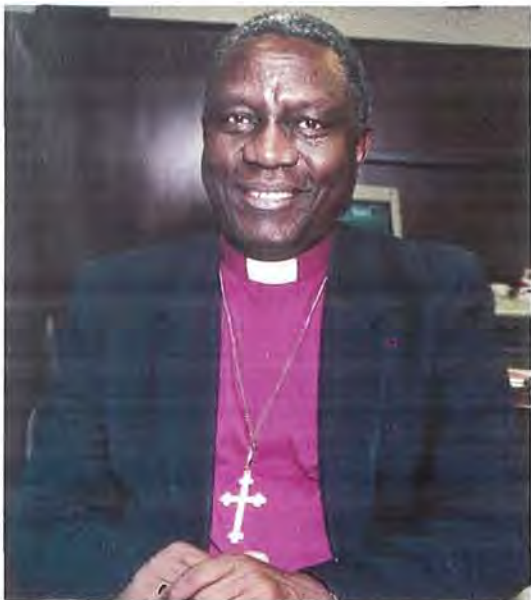
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**Bishop Alpha Mohamed**



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

■ TANZANIA

Bishop Alpha Mohamed has long known that his very name is a discussion-starter. After all, why does a Christian clergyman have an obviously Muslim name?

Bishop Mohamed, an Anglican bishop who leads the Rift Valley Diocese in Tanzania, is from a Muslim family. As board chairman of the Bible Society of Tanzania, Bishop Mohamed knows the impact that the Scriptures have had on his country, which is now nearly one-half Christian.

That love for Scripture began for Bishop Mohamed when he was a 19-year-old student. A friend urged him to read Revelation 3.15-16: "I know everything you have done, and you are not cold or hot. I wish you were one or the other. But since you are lukewarm ... I will spit you out of my mouth." (CEV)

He wondered if he were one of those "lukewarm" types. "Please help me!" he prayed that restless night he became a Christian.

Bishop Mohamed did not develop a lukewarm response to his newfound faith. Far from it. As an Anglican clergyman, he has reveled in the opportunity to share his Christian insights with others.

And, as in many places in Africa, converts continue to enrich the church. In his own Anglican diocese, Bishop Mohamed notes during a recent

interview with the *Record* while visiting Bible House in New York, eight years ago there were 67 congregations. Now there are 207.

That growth could not have happened without the work of the Bible Society, says the bishop. "You can't serve the Lord without the Bible," he notes, adding that Scripture is essential for a full understanding of the Christian message.

The Bible Society of Tanzania has been active in translating Scriptures into three of the country's tribal dialects, as well as distributing Bibles in Swahili, Tanzania's national language. The Society has also been active in distributing the Scripture in prisons.

Still, despite the enthusiasm of a church regularly enriched by converts, there are still struggles.

"We are serving the Lord in a poverty-stricken zone," says the bishop, emphasizing that the need for Scripture far outstrips the available resources.

■ CHINA

The Amity Printing Company has received permission from the government to print and distribute an additional 300,000 copies of the Bible. The total number of Bibles distributed each year by the Chinese Christian Council will now total 2.8 million.

The Amity Printing Company, established in 1987 to serve China's growing Christian population, has now published more than 22 million Bibles. China has an estimated 13 million Protestants and five million Catholics in officially recognized churches, with millions more estimated to be members of non-official churches.

■ ST. LUCIA

The first New Testament in a local language in the Eastern Caribbean was launched in a joyous ceremony on St. Lucia.

The translation of the New Testament into



Creole—the native language of the small island nation—has evoked strong emotions and a sense of national pride among St. Lucians who have been struggling to gain official recognition for their language.

The project has been 15 years in the making and was under the guidance of a team composed of representatives of the Bible Society in the East Caribbean and the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

English is St. Lucia's official language, but more than 90 percent of the 150,000 people on the island also speak Creole.

■ **CANADA**

Members of Canada's Micmac community recently celebrated the completion of a 28-year-long effort to translate the New Testament into their language.

This means that 11,000 Micmacs living in Quebec and the maritime provinces will now be able to read God's Word in their own language. The translation is the fruit of a partnership among the Micmac people, the Canadian Bible Society, and Wycliffe Bible translators.

■ **SWAZILAND**

Thanks to a grant from United Bible Societies, the 23 blind students at St. Joseph's Catholic Mission in Mafutseni can now read God's Word with their sighted classmates through Braille Scriptures.

At ceremonies presenting the Braille Scriptures, Sobahle Mthethwa, 22, a student who has been blind for 10 years, read fluently from the Gospel of Mark.

■ **CUBA**

Cuban President Fidel Castro and other government officials were present at Havana's Revolu-

tion Plaza when 100,000 evangelical Christians were allowed to openly celebrate their faith for the first time in 40 years.

The rally was also shown on national television and was part of a three-week long celebration of evangelical Christianity in Cuba.

The event came 17 months after Pope John Paul's unprecedented open-air Masses during his visit to Cuba signaled a new official openness to Christian faith in the communist country.

Readings from the Scriptures generated the loudest response from the crowd. At one point, a Cuban pastor paraphrased aloud Romans 8.35: "What shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship?" The crowd loudly responded, "No!"

One highlight of the rally was when a young girl stood on the platform and quoted verse after verse of Scripture from memory. The crowd roared its approval.

One million Scripture Portions, brought into the country through the assistance of the United Bible Societies and Cuba's Bible Commission, were distributed at the rallies by the Assemblies of God, the largest evangelical denomination in Cuba. 📖

**Evangelical Christians proclaim a spiritual "revolution" in Revolution Square, Havana. (Photo by Jose Lopez, Bible Commission of Cuba.)**





NATIONAL NEWS

■ NEW YORK

The American Bible Society, Tyndale Entertainment, and SonyWonder have combined resources to produce the "Kingsley's Meadow" video series for children ages two to six.

The series focuses on the musical kingdom of Kingsley, a lovable lion. In the series, Kingsley promotes faith lessons from the Scriptures.

One video focuses on the quality of goodness while sharing the Old Testament story of Ruth. Another features the story of Elisha, whose life embodied the quality of perseverance. Other videos focus on the stories of Naaman and Kings David and Solomon.

Kingsley plans to take his show on the road. He will appear early this year in South Florida, where he will entertain Spanish-speaking children, and in ABS' office in Springfield, Mo.

The videos were created by Tony Salerno. They retail for \$12.99 each and can be ordered by calling 800-323-9400.

■ GEORGIA

Atlanta's Providence Missionary Church will be the site for a ceremony promoting the African-American *Jubilee Bible* published by the American Bible Society. The ceremony will be held as part of Sunday services Feb. 6.

The ceremony is part of a national promotion effort for the *Jubilee Bible*, which comes in both *King James* and *Contemp-*

*orary English* versions and features more than 280 pages of material focusing on the role of African Americans. Similar Sunday service events will be held in Chicago, Los Angeles, and Baltimore, among other places.

The Jubilee Bible will also be promoted in the *Wade in the Water* program sponsored by the American Bible Society art gallery in New York from May to July of this year. *Wade in the Water*, organized by the Smithsonian Institution, celebrates the African-American sacred music tradition.

■ OHIO

A newspaper editor in Ohio has welcomed positive reader response after his publication featured a regular selection from the New Testament as part of the American Bible Society's 1999 *Year of the Bible* campaign.

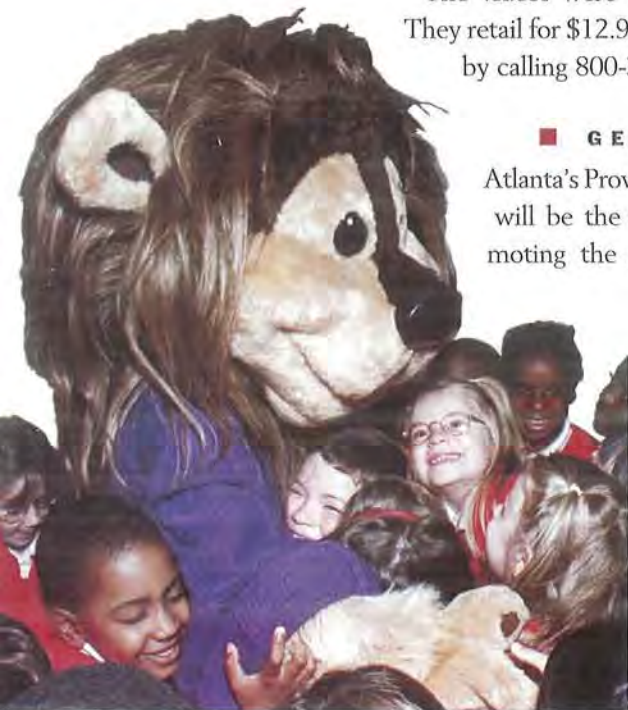
"While I expected a fairly positive response to printing a chapter of the New Testament each day, I was still overwhelmed by the immense positive feedback I received," noted the editor.

He said that the response was indicative of a deep spiritual need in his region.

"I believe it [the printing of a New Testament chapter every day] brought an immediate sense of much-needed relief, that there is something positive out there, that the daily lives of readers do not have to be mired in negativity."

Another newspaper in Montgomery, Ala., also received a positive response. In a letter to the editor, one of its readers described the decision to print the New Testament as a "ray of light in a dark journalistic world... God's Word is something I need every day. One can only wonder if we took the life of our Lord more seriously, would there be less murder, theft, and less crime to report? Thank you for your effort to turn on the light." ■

Kingsley (played by American Bible Society staffer Dulce Alvarado), greets visitors from St. Pius X School in Scarsdale, N.Y., during a special appearance at Bible House in New York City. (Photo by Thomas D. Sullivan)







## Isolated Village in Ukraine Renewed by Bible

Olesia is a 12-year-old girl who lives off the beaten path in a tiny hamlet called Verkenivestry, located deep in the Carpathian Mountains in the former Soviet Republic of Ukraine.

Olesia is an earnest Christian. When she saw a television show advertising Bibles from the Bible Society in Kiev, she put in her order. But her village is so isolated it took a full year for her to receive the prized book in the mail.

Her friends heard about her Bible, and soon teen-agers in the village were sending their letters off to Kiev to order their own Scriptures. The Bible Society received 20 letters from friends of Olesia. Like them, however, the Bibles were delayed due to chronic mail difficulties.

Their interest so inspired Bible Society officials in Kiev that they sent a television crew off to the village to interview Olesia and her friends. It took some time to find the village. As they arrived, Orthodox believers were completing their march of witness on Pentecost. Olesia and her friends were among them.

Meeting the girls, the Bible Society director from Kiev presented Olesia and her friends with Bibles of their own.

One girl commented, "I am very happy to receive this Bible because in it I will learn about Jesus."

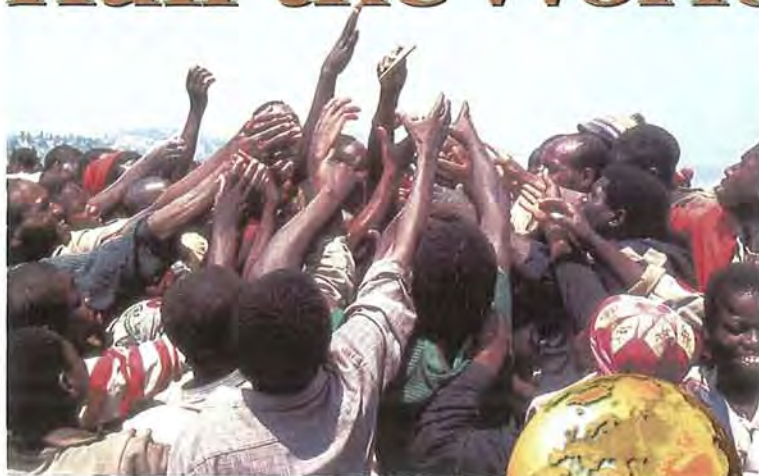
Other villagers also wanted Bibles and crowded around the Bible Society team until the stock ran out. 📖

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

# PLEASE PRAY

**For the people of the Middle East—**

That people in those countries with a strong Biblical heritage, such as Jordan, come to a greater appreciation of the spiritual treasures in their midst. [See cover story]

**Indigenous peoples—** That the ongoing effort to translate the Scriptures into more Native American languages will bear fruit with the emergence of strong Christian communities among the indigenous people of Central America. [See pages 12, 13, and 14]

**Philanthropists—** May those who have been blessed by God with abundant resources realize that to those for whom much has been given, much is expected. [See pages 16 and 17]

**The American Bible Society—** May reflection on the history of the achievements of ABS spur greater efforts to promote Scripture distribution around the world. [See page 18]

**United Bible Societies—** Pray that the Word of God may continue to go forth around the world in promotion of Christian evangelization. [See pages 18 and 22]

**For renewed Lenten observance—** As preparation for Easter continues, may Christians find renewed spiritual strength in practices of fasting, almsgiving, and Scripture study.

**Journalists—** Pray that the news media will spotlight how the Word of God continues to make an impact on the world. [See 'Bible in the News' on page 21] ■

MARCH 2000

**A Fresh Beginning by Coming to the Lord in Prayer**

- 1 Psalm 80
- 2 Psalm 84

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

- 3 Psalm 85
- 4 Joel 1.1-12

SUNDAY

- 5 Joel 1.13-20
- 6 Joel 2.1-17
- 7 Joel 2.18-27

ASH WEDNESDAY

- 8 Matthew 6.1-18
- 9 Habakkuk 1.1-17
- 10 Habakkuk 2.1-20
- 11 Habakkuk 3.1-19

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

- 12 Psalm 38
- 13 Psalm 39
- 14 Psalm 40
- 15 Psalm 42
- 16 Psalm 51
- 17 Psalm 56
- 18 Psalm 57

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

- 19 2 Kings 19.8-19
- 20 1 Chronicles 17.16-27
- 21 1 Chronicles 29.10-25
- 22 2 Chronicles 1.1-13
- 23 2 Chronicles 6.1-11

- 24 2 Chronicles 6.12-21

- 25 2 Chronicles 6.22-33

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

- 26 2 Chronicles 6.34-42
- 27 Ezra 9.5-15
- 28 Nehemiah 1.1-11
- 29 Daniel 9.1-19
- 30 Jonah 2.1-10
- 31 James 5.13-20

ORTHODOX LENT BEGINS ON MONDAY MARCH 13, 2000.

APRIL 2000

**A Fresh Beginning by Rejoicing in Hope**

- 1 Philippians 1.1-11

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

- 2 Philippians 1.12-30
- 3 Philippians 2.1-11
- 4 Philippians 2.12-30
- 5 Philippians 3.1-11
- 6 Philippians 3.12-21
- 7 Philippians 4.1-9
- 8 Philippians 4.10-23

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

- 9 Hebrews 4.14—5.10

- 10 Hebrews 5.11—6.12

- 11 Hebrews 6.13—7.9

- 12 John 11.1-27
- 13 John 11.28-44
- 14 John 11.45-57
- 15 John 12.1-11

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY

- 16 John 12.12-19
- 17 John 13.1-20
- 18 John 13.21-38
- 19 John 18.1-18
- 20 John 18.19-40

GOOD FRIDAY

- 21 John 19.1-30
- 22 John 19.31-42

EASTER SUNDAY

- 23 John 20.1-18
- 24 John 20.19-31
- 25 1 Corinthians 15.1-11
- 26 1 Corinthians 15.12-34
- 27 1 Corinthians 15.35-58
- 28 Revelation 21.1-8
- 29 Revelation 21.9-27
- 30 Revelation 22.1-21

Orthodox Christians will observe Palm Sunday on April 23, 2000, and will celebrate Easter on April 30, 2000, and may wish to substitute the readings from April 30-May 6 in place of the readings for April 16-22. This substitution will allow for the Passion and Resurrection readings to coincide with the Orthodox dates.



**I N M E M O R I A M**

**M E M O R I A L I Z E A L O V E D O N E B Y H E L P I N G T O P R O V I D E  
B I B L E S T O P E O P L E W H O D O N ' T Y E T H A V E O N E**

MY WIFE,  
NANCY TAYLOR ARMSTRONG  
*Given by: Mr. Wilbur C. Armstrong*

MRS. AMELIA CLODFELDER  
*Given by: Ms. Mary Felts*

MY WIFE,  
ELIZABETH H. (LIB) DIXON  
*Given by: James B. Dixon*

MY MOTHER,  
MARCELLA ELLIOTT  
*Given by: Bradley M. Elliott*

RUTH FERRIS  
*Given by: Janice F. Huszti*

OUR SON & DAUGHTER,  
CHARLES DWIGHT FREEMAN  
SAUNDRA KAY FREEMAN  
*Given by Parents: Charles & Mary Ellen Freeman*

OUR UNCLE,  
MR. WILLIAM L. GELLERSEN  
*Given by: Rev. & Mrs. Howard Schaar*

MY PARENTS,  
GEORGE & ELAINE GILES  
MY GRANDFATHER,  
LLOYD E. ROBERTS  
*Given by: Craig R. Giles*

OUR BROTHER IN CHRIST,  
DELROY GRAGES  
*Given by: William & Merrlyn Seefeldt*

MY HUSBAND,  
RAYMOND J. HAAS  
MY PARENTS, WILLIAM &  
GERTRUDE MOLLHOUSE  
*Given by: Irene M. Haas*

OUR PARENTS, MR. & MRS.  
CHARLES HABECKER  
*Given by: Roy & Doris Bender*

BENNIE HIGGINS  
*Given by: Dr. Betty H. Royal*

MY HUSBAND,  
CECIL HUDMON  
MY SON, JIM HUDMON  
*Given by: Mrs. Cecil Hudmon*

CARLTON (PETE) HUGHES  
*Given by: Mr. & Mrs. George F. Riddle, Jr.*

JOHN CHARLES HUGHSON  
*Given by: Dr. & Mrs. Claude H. Richey, Jr.*

MR. & MRS. HERMAN  
KAUTSCH  
AND OUR PARENTS, MR. &  
MRS. ADAM SCHEPERLE  
*Given by: Mr. & Mrs. Raymond G. Scheperle*

KATHLEEN (AMSTUTZ)  
KINDLE  
*Given by: Maynard & Mary K. Amstutz*

JENNIE KNOOT  
*Given by: Members of Faith Community Church*

JOHN H. KORNHAUS  
*Given by: Stanley E. Yoder & Elva Kornhaus Yoder*

MY SON, GARY LEE  
*Given by: Mrs. Ann Underwood*

REV. A. RODGER LEWIS  
*Given by: Dorothea L. Whiting*

MY HUSBAND,  
PASTOR CHRISTIAN MARTIN  
*Given by: Vida Martin*

FRED MCCAIN  
*Given by: Mr. & Mrs. Robert F. Robinson*

FRED MCCAIN  
*Given by: Mr. David T. Simpson, Jr.*

MR. & MRS. E. LEE MCDOW  
*Given by: Dr. & Mrs. E. L. McDow*

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MRS. JULIA MOSS  
*Given by: Mr. Thayer D. Moss*

HARRIETT NEILSEN AND  
NANCY DAVIS  
*Given by: Mr. & Mrs. Alan Buseman*

MY WIFE,  
LUCILLE NELSON  
*Given by: Martin Nelson*

MY FATHER,  
REV. I. V. NEPRASH  
*Given by: Irene Cotter*

PORTER PEAK  
*Given by: Ronald & Debra D'Souza, Robert & Dolores Hill*

MY WIFE,  
HARVETTE I. PETERS  
*Given by: Sherwood R. Peters*

MR. THOMAS PETTY  
*Given by: Tirzah Bible Society*

MY MOTHER,  
DOROTHY PLACE  
*Given by: Cindy Conrad*

RICHARD RHODES  
*Given by: Betsy Rhodes*

ELEANOR DEUEL RIKER  
*Given by: Richard & Judith Riker*

S. H. ROBINSON  
*Given by: Mr. & Mrs. John T. Wilson*

SAMUEL HERBERT ROBINSON  
*Given by: Janet, Katie & Tracy Tyson*

GENEVA ROTI  
*Given by: The Estate of Geneva Roti*

CHARLES DAVIS ROYAL  
*Given by: Betty Royal*

MY HUSBAND,  
ROBERT A. SANDEFUR  
*Given by: Dorothy Sandefur*

WIFE & MOTHER,  
ELAINE L. SCHULTZ  
*Given by: Donald Schultz & Family*

ALLISON SIMPSON  
*Given by: Mr. & Mrs. R. E. Simpson*

SAMUEL A. SIMPSON  
*Given by: Carolyn S. Starnes*

MR. & MRS. L. J. SIMPSON  
*Given by: Mr. & Mrs. David T. Simpson*

HATTIE CARLTON SMITH & J.  
MCCREE SMITH  
*Given by: Lucille A. Smith*

MARGARET SMITH  
*Given by: Members of Fox Valley Church of God*

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MARGE E. SONTRA  
*Given by: Keith E. Sontra*

MARIE K. STEVENSON  
*Given by: Members of Bethel Baptist Church*

MARION E. STEVENSON  
*Given by: Mary Clare Matthews*

DOREEN STINNETT  
*Given by: Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Thiel*

MY HUSBAND,  
WILLIAM W. STONE  
*Given by: Zelma E. Stone*

MY SISTER, HARRIET STRACTE  
*Given by: Mrs. Annabelle J. Buseman*

JUDY SZABARA  
*Given by: Andrew Becay*

MY HUSBAND,  
CHAPLAIN (COL.) WILLIAM  
C. TAGGART, JR.  
*Given by: Mrs. William C. Taggart Jr.*

DR. & MRS. J. N. WAGGETT,  
MR. & MRS. W. S. WALKUP,  
MR. & MRS. PAUL D.  
WOODALL  
*Given by: Rev. & Mrs. John S. Walkup*

MRS. ELOISE WANDS  
*Given by: Emily W. Baldwin*

COLONEL JERRY WITT  
*Given by: John L. Fugh*

GENE WOODARD  
*Given by: Raymond & Libby Currie*

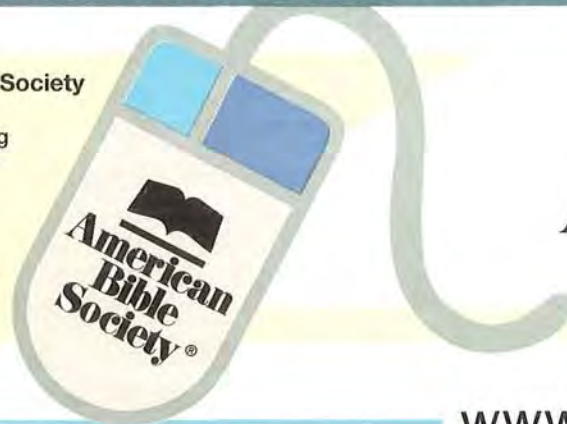
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