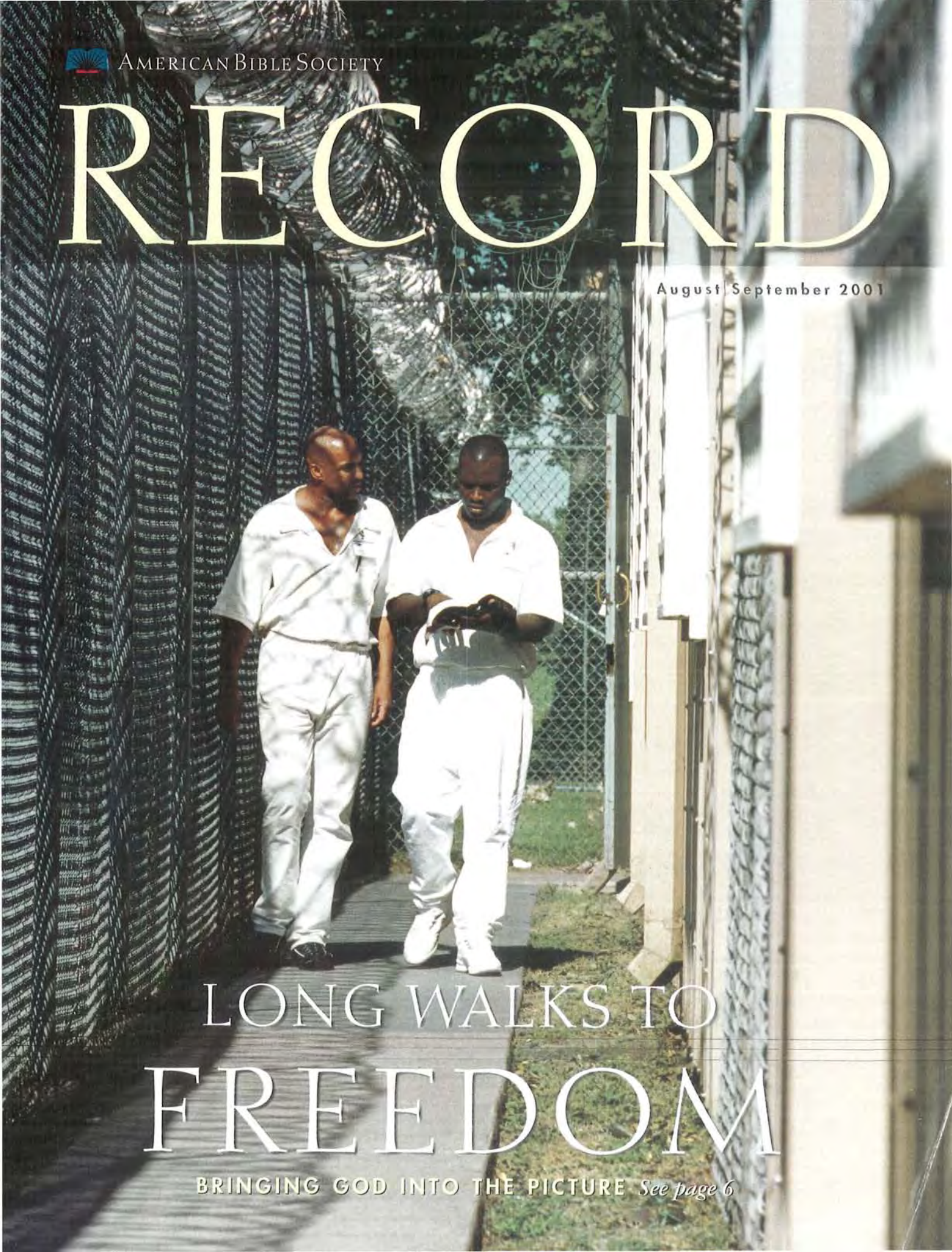




AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

RECORD

August | September 2001

A photograph of two men in white jumpsuits walking down a narrow, paved corridor. The corridor is flanked by high, chain-link fences topped with razor wire. The man on the left is looking towards the right, while the man on the right is looking down at a small object in his hands. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting daylight.

LONG WALKS TO FREEDOM

BRINGING GOD INTO THE PICTURE *See page 6*

FROM THE PRESIDENT

A Practical Vision

"Sir, with the money you gave me I have earned ten times as much." —LUKE 19.16B CEV

In May we celebrated 185 years of ministry — a ministry made possible because it is shared by millions of faithful supporters.

And we are made more effective today because, almost from our founding in 1816, Bible Society supporters and leaders alike had a vision for future ministry — to welcome estate gifts dedicated to meet future needs and unforeseen ministry opportunities. It was the American Bible Society that wrote this country's first gift annuity in 1834. The long-term investment of gifts given through wills and other designated giving has paid off handsomely — often in unexpected ways.

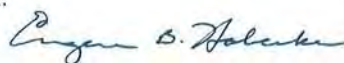
Probably of greatest interest to donors is the fact that all regular giving to the Bible Society goes directly for ministry. In fact, the Bible Society virtually doubles all contributions to the Bible cause, dollar for dollar, from our return on invested funds. While direct donor contributions were generous last year (\$39.1 million), thanks to future-oriented stewardship, the American Bible Society was able to spend more than double that (\$87 million) on ministry programs.

Of equal importance is the Bible Society's ability to leverage its fiscal discipline to achieve greater impact on a global scale. Two years ago when the Maclellan Foundation challenged the Bible Society to match a \$15 million grant targeted to meet Bible translation and distribution needs in the 21st century, ABS not only met the challenge; we doubled the match — \$30 million — again with funds held for long-term investment.

A decade ago the unexpected collapse of the Soviet empire challenged the United Bible Societies to build or rebuild Bible Societies in 23 countries that, for seven decades, had been denied access to the Scriptures. Only ABS had the resources to provide the \$23 million needed.

While our future-oriented stewardship allows us to maximize current contributions, these fiscal policies don't always match up well with formulas used by organizations such as Wall Watchers whose intention is to provide donors with good giving guidance. Their one-size-fits-all formula can penalize charities such as ABS for their long-term fiscal prudence. But the proof is in the numbers. The American Bible Society invests two dollars in programs for every dollar received from regular donor contributions.

For this I give praise to God and thanks to those who faithfully work with us to share God's Word.



AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY RECORD

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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.

Published continually since 1818, the *American Bible Society Record* is the official periodical of the American Bible Society and the second oldest continuous publication in the United States. It is published six times per year, and is sent to anyone contributing \$4 or more each year to the Society. Postage is paid at New York, New York, and additional mailing offices. Other publications wishing to reproduce any of the articles contained herein are encouraged to do so. A credit line acknowledging the source of the material and a copy of the issue containing such material would be appreciated.

(ISSN 0006-801)



ON THE COVER: Inmates follow a new path in a Texas prison. (Photo by David Singer)

RECORD

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

VOLUME 146, NUMBER 5

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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

SEEKING A Bible Sunday REPEAT SUCCESS

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY VOLUNTEERS ARE LOOKING FOR a repeat of last year's success for this year's Bible Sunday to be held Nov. 18 in most participating churches.

Churches around the country participated in last year's event, raising awareness and funds about the role of the American Bible Society in distributing Scriptures around the world via the *Crusade of Light* campaign.

Jack Dunkelberger of Sarasota, Fla., gave all 500 members of his fellow worshipers at the Fiesta Key Chapel a special American Bible Society *Promise Edition CEV New Testament*. That book features a Scripture Reading Guide for the entire year.

Mr. Dunkelberger supports the goals of the *Crusade of Light* to reach 25 million people around the world with the Scriptures. But he emphasizes that message of hope also needs to be heard in the United States.

"We in America need to be aware of the importance of reading the Bible on a daily basis," he says.

The impact was felt in more than churches. Nearly \$50 was collected from 19 nursing home residents who attended chapel at a retirement home in Bedford, Texas, on Bible Sunday last year.

The Rev. Pacifico G. Camarin Jr., of the Bella Vista, Ark., United Methodist Church, reports that his congregation collected \$108 for the Bible cause. As a result of Bible Sunday, he says, "there is a new realization on behalf of most of the members of this church that the American Bible Society is a mission outreach."

Mr. Camarin emphasizes that a contribution on Bible Sunday will "put wings on the Bible to fly to the hearts of people in China, Mozambique and to the prisoners in our country."

The Rev. Thomas Burns of Hope Christian Church

in Columbus, Ohio, says the emphasis on prison ministry in the American Bible Society materials made an impact on his congregation, which supports a nearby prison outreach.

"Knowing that a part of our effort will help to transform America's prisons is very encouraging," he says.

Virginia Less of First Congregational Church in Glen Ellyn, Ill., notes that her congregation's focus on children made an impact in raising Bible awareness.

"We highlighted the Bible offerings during our children's worship time. Our theme was to help children around the world know more about the Bible and how it helps one to find God in worship," she says.

Phil Pruitt of the New Life Community Church in Bessemer, Ala., says that Bible Sunday provides his congregation with the opportunity to connect to the wider church.

"We are a relatively new and very small congregation. Yet by participating

in Bible Sunday, our people feel that they can help to make a difference in the world by providing Bibles for those who need them," he says.

Jennie Goodman of St. Andrew's United Methodist Church in Charleston, S.C., says that Bible Sunday was a success at her church because a link was made between the Sunday reading (Hebrews 4.12) and the Bible cause.

"The American Bible Society is always on target and I am grateful," she says.

{You and your congregation can join us on Nov. 18, 2001, or another date that is convenient for your church. Just send for your Bible Sunday of Light Resource Guide Packet today, or call us toll free at 1-866-89LIGHT (1-866-895-4448), e-mail us at biblesundayinfo@americanbible.org or visit us on the Internet at www.americanbible.org.}





Jacquelyn Sapiie
Library Services
Supervisor for ABS

askjacquie

Readers are encouraged to submit their questions about the Bible to Jacquelyn Sapiie, associate director of the American Bible Society Library 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 How were the books chosen to be included in the New Testament? *L.N., Indiana*

A At first, the gospel message was transmitted orally. Written gospels gradually replaced the oral tradition. The early writings were intended to give pastoral guidance to young churches. By 200 A.D., the official church recognized all four Gospels and the 13 letters of Paul as New Testament canon (list of approved books).

In 367 A.D., the Paschal Letter of Athanasius listed all the books of the present New Testament. Although the letter was intended for the churches under his supervision in Alexandria, Egypt, Athanasius' influence was so great that his canon was widely followed in the East. By 419, the New Testament canon, with its 27 books, was almost universally accepted.

There were a number of criteria for the inclusion of the New Testament books. The first was apostolicity. Was the writer a bona fide apostle? If not, did he have close associations with an apostle?

The second was content. Were the subject matter and treatment of it of the high order demanded by the test of Holy Scripture? The third was universality. Did the church as a whole receive the book and did it have universal appeal? The fourth was divine inspiration. Did the book give unmistakable evidence of being God-breathed? Did the Holy Spirit give this conviction to men of God that this was true? This was the final test. The decisive factor was the impact of the person and message of Jesus. ■

TRUSTEES

Bible Society Trailblazer

The Rev. Robert J. Robbins is a trailblazer, the first of his kind. Still, he wears the mantle of pioneer easily and humbly.

Father Robbins has been a member of the American Bible Society Board of Trustees for the past 10 years, the first Catholic priest elected to serve in that capacity, although lay Catholics have been a part of the American Bible Society leadership since the early 1970s.

"It's been a wonderful experience," Father Robbins says. He's seen the American Bible Society move from an emphasis on handing out Scriptures to a more program-oriented focus. And the work of the American Bible Society in various media forms provides a forward-looking focus.



The Rev.
Robert J. Robbins

The Society, he notes, is trying to minister in a culture in the United States where almost everyone has a Bible. The challenge of the Society's outreach, he notes, is to get Americans to open their Bibles.

Catholics in particular continue to be interested in the Scripture work of the American Bible Society.

"One in four people in the United States are Catholic. It's a large area of ministry," he says.

Interest in the Scriptures among Catholics is booming. "Any pastor will tell you that if you announce a Scripture group, people will flock to it."

He started such a group in his own parish, the Church of the Holy Family. The parish has two personalities. One is a weekday business parish, focused on the workers at the United Nations nearby. It is an international ministry and the parish offers Mass in French, Korean and English.

The weekend liturgies attract people who live in the surrounding neighborhood.

He keeps busy as a pastor, but he leaves time open for his work with the American Bible Society. It's important, says Father Robbins.

The Bible "is truth, it is the revelation of God." He adds, "no matter what century you live in, everyone considers the world to be topsy-turvy. Everyone needs an anchor." ■

— PETER FEUERHERD

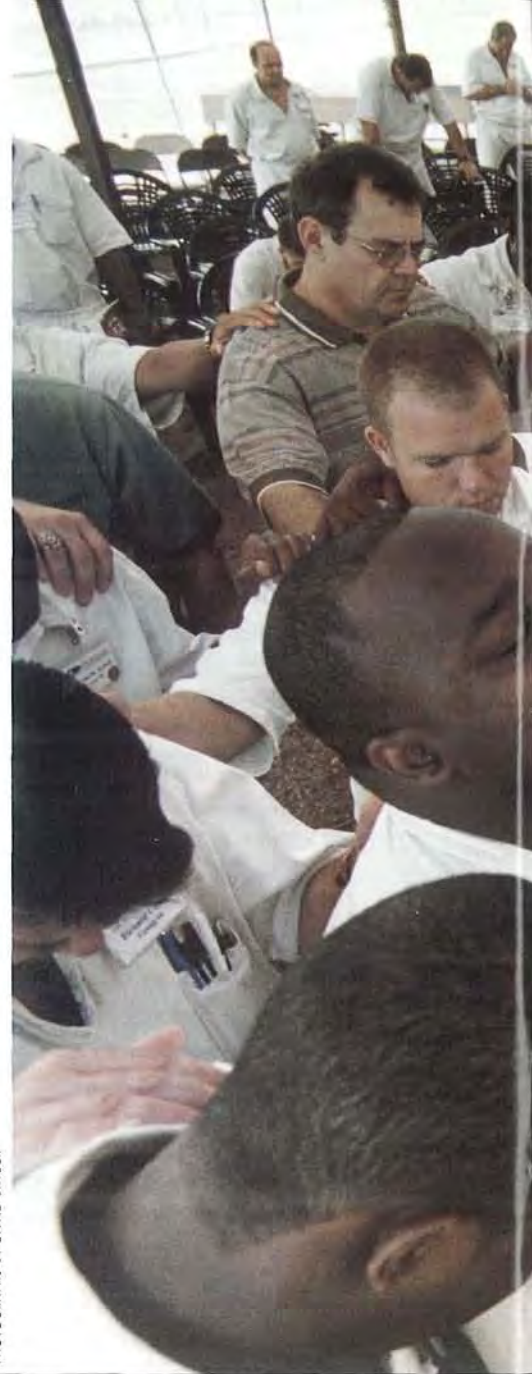


one

hundred seventy-three men, all dressed in white, some clapping hands in time to the strumming harp, are singing praises to God. A huge canvas tent shelters them from the hot Texas sun. Following a few choruses two of the men come forward to confess, one at a time, a personal issue — a rules infraction—with which they've been struggling.

No, it's not a tent revival service. It's a community meeting of convicted felons, housed at a medium-security prison near Houston. They are desperate men fighting for their freedom — volunteers in a revolutionary experiment in corrections — not one more attempt to modify bad behavior, but one aimed at transforming the inner life. Inner Freedom Initiative (IFI), conceived by Prison Fellowship in 1997, is now underway in state prisons in Texas, Iowa and Kansas.

Paradoxically America, the land of the free, con-



PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID SINGER

Bringing God into the Picture:

LONG WALKS



▲ Prayer for a Christian brother's struggle makes "Community Meeting" more than merely a program label.

TO FREEDOM

By David Singer

► **Learning life skills and their practical application are major components of the IFI curriculum.**



finer more citizens with bars and razor wire than any other free society — currently some 1,500,000 men and women. And while imprisonment protects citizenry from the “criminal element” during their period of confinement, most of these prisoners will one day get released, unchanged. Half will repeat the cycle again — crime, arrest, and imprisonment. It’s called recidivism.

This cycle of crime and punishment is why Prison Fellowship founder Chuck Colson (of Watergate infamy) and many corrections professionals say prison just doesn’t work. In Texas, 75 percent of those released will return.

IFI is conceived to break this cycle by bringing God into the picture. Inspira-

tion for IFI began in São José dos Campos, Brazil, where a group of Christian laymen showed how a Bible-based prison program could work. They discovered that a program designed to change the hearts of prisoners by directing them to Jesus Christ can result in the improved behavior other approaches to “corrections” fail to produce. When these Brazilians heard about Prison Fellowship (PF) they eagerly joined the international prison-ministry movement PF has spawned. Now the inspiration has come full circle — Prison Fellowship’s IFI is importing the “corrections” approach that has already proven itself effective in Brazil and, more recently, in Ecuador.

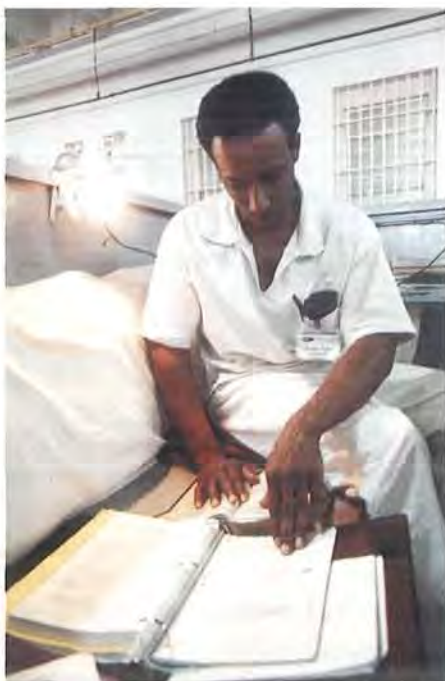
Sam Waters, a “member” of the IFI

program in the medium-security prison in Newton, Iowa, says of his experience, “It’s the best choice I ever made — working through what I normally wouldn’t — learning about finding the road to a new life. IFI is a totally out-of-prison environment. You don’t spend all your time talking about how to do [your crime] better next time but how you’re not going to do it.”

Even though the states provide the facilities — items such as housing, security, meals, and clothing — Christian vol-

▼ **A Christ-centered program breeds accountability and community, breaking down many typical “codes” of prison life.**





Homework assignments include long hours of Scripture study.

unteers remain the very heart of the IFI program.

Jerry Hansen has been imprisoned since 1959 for murder and is not eligible for release for another 11 years. Usually prisoners have to be eligible for parole within two years to qualify for the 18-month program.

Mr. Hansen, nearing graduation from IFI in Iowa, testified, "Even though I'm confined in a penitentiary I know I have a future. I'm a new creation and without IFI I didn't have a future except in hell. Volunteers are the backbone of the IFI program. When a volunteer comes in it's like getting a visit from Jesus. Volunteers give all they have and then God fills them up again."

Ben Schrader, one of the 300 volunteers it takes to run the IFI program in Texas each month, tutors algebra. After retiring from a career in engineering at Gulf-Chevron, Ben got certification to teach math and science in the public schools. He found that teaching algebra 80 hours a week at a magnet school didn't feel much like retirement and that substi-

tuting didn't seem much like teaching.

"I find tutoring the inmates very satisfying," he says. "They're motivated. There's a real hunger to learn once they get past their anger at the system. So there's also a certain amount of mentoring involved. One inmate was excited to find that math was easy — that's because we do applied math. They see how practical it is."

Ben tutors at IFI because he feels the need to practice what he was preaching in his adult Sunday School class — to apply what Jesus said (Matthew 25:43) about those who were faithful to visit Him in prison. He says, "I feel rewarded. These men are my outreach. [Texas] has allowed this to happen — my witnessing here is helping these men establish a real life. One of my students is just now starting his life — at age 48. The inmates' commitment to living a good Christian life — to become good citizens — has changed my view of incarceration. Except for the grace of God it could be me. This program changes prison from punishment to rehabilitation."

Volunteer recruitment keeps Sam Dye, Program Manager for IFI in Iowa, on the road visiting churches in the area. He says relationship issues are crucial to IFI's success. The program depends on 100 volunteers a week coming from 59 churches. And he's always looking for the mentors, teachers, and counselors needed to come alongside inmates as they prepare for life on the outside. Mentors begin to work with inmates six months prior to their release and then commit to work with them and their parole officers for another

(continued on page 24)

OPERATION STARTING LINE

ABS HELPS FUEL THE MISSION

Thousands of prisoners are hearing and responding to the Good News of Jesus Christ through Operation Starting Line (OSL), a collaborative effort spearheaded by Prison Fellowship (PF) and including a number of other ministries whose goal is to present the Gospel in state and federal prisons. The American Bible Society is providing the tens of thousands of Bibles, in both Spanish and English, volunteers distribute to inmates at these events.

An OSL celebration held June 22-24 at New York City's Rikers Island Jail Complex, home to some 15,000 prisoners, gave Bible Society staff an unusual opportunity to personally hand out the Bibles and Scripture Portions ABS provides.

ABS staff members John Colligan and Lyn-Dianne Franco were drawn to Jeff, an inmate sitting by himself in the weight yard, his head buried in his hands. Lyn says Jeff had learned of his 20-year sentence just the day before. "He was about to lose it. I tried to encourage him — to share with him the hope we can draw from Scripture."

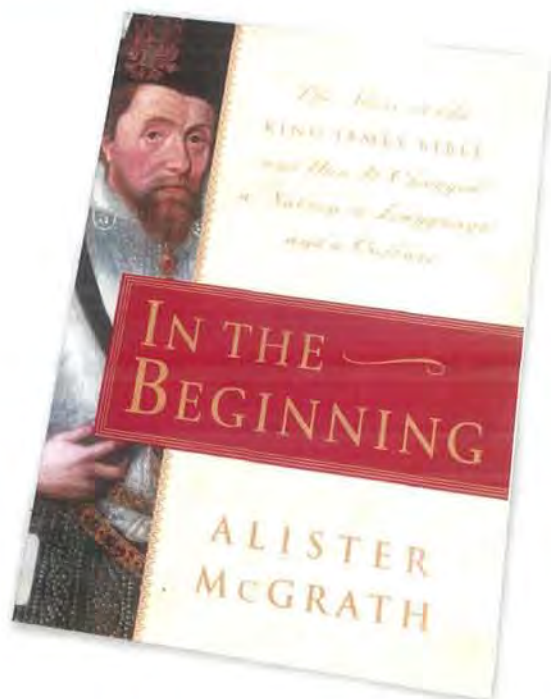
John said of his experience, "This is what Bible Society work is all about."

Dr. Darcel Holloway, a New York City Department of Correction chaplain at Rikers, expressed gratitude for all the Scripture materials the Bible Society provides to her for ministry — everything from complete Bibles to Scripture portions on substance abuse and domestic violence.

The Rev. Jerry Brayan, a Texas Department of Corrections Chaplain assigned to PF's Inner Freedom Initiative [see cover story] says that, thanks to the American Bible Society, every prisoner who wants a Bible can get one.

KING JAMES' SC

New books describe origins of a translation



In 1611, Robert Barker, the king's printer, set his men to work at Northumberland House near the center of London. They were charged to produce a new translation of the Scriptures. Barker and his men could not imagine that their handiwork — the Bible now known as the *King James Version* — would continue to move hearts for the next four centuries.

The creation of the *King James Version* is the subject of two new books, *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture*, by Alister E. McGrath (Doubleday); and *Wide as the Waters: The Story of the English Bible and the Revolution It Inspired*, by Benson Bobrick (Simon & Schuster).

Both authors provide a clear picture of how the translation we know as the *King James Version* came into being. The books have different strengths: *In the Beginning* is better at some of the details, while *Wide as the Waters* covers slightly more historical ground.

England saw much religious struggle from the 1400s to 1600s, and translation of the Bible into English was one of the major issues at stake. The Catholic Church had resisted the "Englishing" of the Scriptures. As the Church of England grew further from the Catholic Church, it took cues from two figures on the Continent, first Martin Luther, then John Calvin, who were strong advocates of publishing the Scriptures in the vernacular — the languages commonly spoken at the time.

Mr. McGrath's book includes a timeline featuring those who played a significant role in the history leading to the *King James Version*. Johannes Gutenberg prints the Bible (in Latin) in 1456. The scholar Erasmus publishes the first printed Greek New Testament in 1516. Luther publishes a German translation of the New Testament in 1522. In 1526, William Tyndale publishes the first complete English

R I P T U R A L G I F T

that inspired the English-speaking world.

edition of the New Testament.

In 1535, Miles Coverdale publishes the first printed English Bible, based on the work of a number of translators, including Tyndale. In 1557, the *Geneva New Testament* appears, a translation by William Whittingham and others, followed in 1560 by the full *Geneva Bible*. The *Bishops' Bible*, created with the approval of the Church of England, is published in 1568.

Both Mr. McGrath and Mr. Bobrick draw engaging portraits of the people who championed translation of the Scriptures: John Wycliffe, the English scholar who dearly loved the Bible and led others to translate; William Tyndale, who believed that it would be impossible to teach divine truth to lay people unless "the Scripture were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue"; and King James I of England, who translated some of the Psalms himself, and ordered the translation that now bears his name.

Dissatisfied with flaws in the *Bishops' Bible* translation and the marginal notes in the *Geneva Bible*, King James I called on the "best-learned" scholars at Oxford and Cambridge universities to translate God's Word. As king of Scotland, James had earlier suggested the *Geneva Bible* might be revised, "both for the profit of it and the glory of it."

About 50 men (historical records are inconsistent on the total number) formed six groups, two each at Oxford, Cambridge and Westminster, and the books of the Bible were distributed among them. Steeped in love and knowledge of Scripture's original tongues, these scholars led their disciplines and often lived remarkable lives. Grouped into "companies," the translators took up their work.

Mr. Bobrick describes Laurence Chaderton of the First Cambridge Company as "an outstanding lin-

guist" and a powerful presence in the pulpit. Having once preached for two hours straight, Chaderton paused, thinking he should stop. His congregation pleaded, "Go on! We beg you!" So he continued for another hour.

Richard Kilbye, a notable Hebrew scholar from the First Oxford Company, once overheard a young clergyman question the translation of a biblical passage. Kilbye, Mr. Bobrick writes, told the parson that the translators had considered not only his proposed rendering, but also 13 other possibilities. "Only then did we decide on the phrasing as it appeared," he said.

Kilbye was as assiduous in charity as he was in translation: He left his entire estate to his parishioners after his death.

While the "Authorized Version," as the *King James Bible* is known in Great Britain, did not immediately supplant other translations, it slowly gained pride of place. Over time, it won English speakers over. Why? Because of the beauty of its language, its combination of directness and exalted tone, its "antique rightness" of phrasing, as scholar A.C. Partridge put it so well.

English-speaking Christians worldwide continue to cherish the *King James Version*. While the English language reshapes regularly, phrases from the *KJV* live on: "the salt of the earth," "the powers that be," and others.

That achievement nearly 400 years ago prompts one to think of another phrase the translators coined for their Bible: "to stand in awe."

by Thomas D. Sullivan



Welcome!
The digital doors
to the Bible are opening.



open scriptural *information standard*

A gathering of optimists has reached agreement on a computer sharing of the Bible and related texts, thanks to the American Bible Society (ABS) and the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL). To be sure, there was considerable skepticism as to whether non-profits and

A Computer Bible

for-profits could find themselves on the same page, but doubts turned to a common conviction that good will and a commitment to developing a common computer format for the Bible could open the door to an unprecedented sharing of information.

ABSinteractive (ABSi) and SBL were key to the agreement — what John Walter of ABSi calls a “free trade zone” for the Bible. The consensus on using an XML computer format was reached with commercial and non-profit groups at a Bible Technologies Conference in Chantilly, Va., April 30-May 2. Mr. Walter was the chief planner for the event that brought together Bible publishers, scholars, software manufacturers and technical experts.

The conference achieved agreement on creating a common XML format for biblical materials called an Open Scriptural Information Standard (OSIS). Walter is the Group Director, Strategic Development, of ABSinteractive, the technology arm of the American Bible Society.

There were moments when it took extensive computer literacy to follow the presentations and back-and-forth exchanges. There were also plain-spoken moments when “techies” and biblical scholars committed themselves to an attitude of good will, a focus on shared results, and to common interests rather than self-interests. The participants worked hard to speak each other’s language as pure seriousness mixed with times of humor and whimsy.

At the basic level, OSIS will make it possible for scholars to easily share their research, to preserve research for future scholars, for ministers and Sunday School teachers to access and incorporate scholarly research into their presentations. It will also help interested laypeople to easily open the large body of biblical and related literature.

Kent Richards, Executive Director of SBL, notes that there is a common mission in having shared standards and a need to nurture that process through the many differences that exist.

The situation now, says Richards, is “mass chaos” because everyone uses an individual computer language rather than using OSIS. This is especially confusing to “mass users who are unsophisticated,” Richards says.

The ultimate aim is for all persons to read, without hindrance, an open source portable text. Participants envision a greater electronic sharing of the Bible itself, which will aid scholars, publishers and mission organizations to achieve their objectives.

Mr. Walter says the future of an Open Scriptural Information Standard based on XML means the Bible will be able to be read on any computer platform. It will easily display base text in any current or new media type, reference information from other systems, and is created in an open format which any XML compliant software can use.

Patrick Durusau, Director of Research and Development at SBL, supports OSIS: “Increased accessibility will lead to greater communication between these diverse communities and will strengthen each as a result. Everyone wins when there is cooperation rather than competition.”

The Rev. Trevón Gross, Senior Vice President of Programs at the American Bible Society, is also excited about the prospect of collaboration that will enhance the importance of the Bible mission. He notes that the goal is to gain tangible results from honest talk while everyone works together in a collegial fashion. Gross says, “I’m delighted that this is involving the top people in translation scholarship, publication, churches and synagogues.”

A half-dozen working groups were formed at the conference to address the variety of topics raised by the establishment of a common text format, in essence creating road maps for standards development. The guiding principle for the groups is increasing communication among scholars, religious communities and laypersons interested in biblical and related texts.

For further information, go to www.bibletechnologies.org.

BY ROY LLOYD

‘Free-Trade Zone’

Student Leaders

THEY ARE A QUIET ARMY OF THE NIGHT, DESCENDING upon midtown Manhattan from a secluded campus in an upscale Westchester suburb.

Twice a month some 35 students from Concordia College in Bronxville, NY, a Lutheran-affiliated college, come to the big city after midnight and distribute peanut-butter sandwiches, fruit, snacks and a verse from the Scriptures to the homeless. They also provide caring conversation, something precious to many who live on the streets.

The work is surreptitious — New York City health law prohibits handing out food on the streets — and potentially dangerous. The students are trained to travel in groups and not to wake the sleeping homeless, some of whom interpret such actions as a threat.

"You see the same people over and over. You make friendships," noted Nat Giambalvo, a pre-seminary senior from Queens, N.Y., and the leader of the quiet army of students who participate in the homeless outreach as well as three other ministry projects at Concordia.

Mr. Giambalvo, 20, was recently recognized for his achievements by the American Bible Society with an Excellence in Academics and Ministry Award.

If you had told him a few years ago that he would have earned such an honor, he surely would have scoffed. As a high school student, he would routinely dress all in black, and wore long, unkempt hair. He was a self-described "headbanger". Mr. Giambalvo held a number of consuming passions — heavy metal rock, a fascination with Satanism, a racist view towards black people nurtured after some unpleasant encounters on the streets of Queens, and pitching for his high school baseball team. God was not on the list.

But one Sunday morning, after a late Saturday night, Mr. Giambalvo felt an urge to attend church

at Redeemer Lutheran near his home in the Glendale section. He got there late and was told by an elderly parishioner that the service had been held earlier in the morning. Yet someone took his name down and when time came for the church to locate confirmation candidates, he was called.

The 15-year old appeared at a Bible study class led by the pastor. When the minister asked the participants to locate a verse from Matthew's Gospel, Nat was bewildered.

"Who is Matthew?" he thought. Never having read a Bible, he was completely unfamiliar with its contents.

The pastor showed him how to use the book, and he was hooked. For the next three weeks — quietly, so his "headbanger" friends wouldn't know — he read through the Scriptures. Every week, filled with questions, he would attend confirmation meetings and barrage his pastor with inquiries about what he had read.

"I came to faith slowly," he recalled. Still, he said, "I started changing. I stopped being racist. I still had my image but everyone noticed the changes within me."

Some called it a phase. Out went the dark clothing and the fascination with Satan. His transformation influenced his mother, who came back to faith and is now a lay leader at Redeemer Lutheran. He

Discover



Nat Giambalvo

wanted to devote his time more fully to serving the Lord. He decided to end his baseball career.

"It was no longer my life," Nat said.

He came to Concordia intent on learning about ministry, with the eventual goal being ordination. His first year was a disappointment, as there were few opportunities to do the kind of Gospel-inspired outreach he wanted to accomplish. He tried to start

up a few programs, but nothing caught on. Nat even left the Bronxville campus for a while, attending its sister school of the same name in Ann Arbor, Mi.

Yet he began to feel that there was still work to do in New York.

"I felt called to be back in Bronxville. I felt God was calling me back to help finish what I had started," he said. Renewed, and taking a cue from Martin Luther, Nat wrote up 13 theses on the need for a student outreach ministry and submitted them to student leaders and the college administration. The end result was a bonanza year of ministry outreach by Concordia students.

Besides the outreach to the homeless, students at Concordia also joined in ministry to nursing home residents, students at Lutheran schools in Queens and on Long Island, and a street ministry during which students distributed Scriptures to tourists and others in the Rockefeller Center-St. Patrick's Cathedral area in Manhattan.

The heart of the ministry outreach remains the visitations to the homeless. Some students, Nat noted, become emotionally involved, sometimes weeping as they minister to people who live in degradation amidst abundance. It has been an inspiration not only to the students, but also to the police. Some officers, in quiet acknowledgement of the good done by the students, look the other way as the young people feed the homeless in violation of city ordinances.

It's a continuation of the Scripture lessons Nat learned when he was a teen-ager desperately seeking the Word of God. He now knows where to locate Matthew's Gospel, particularly chapter 25:35-36, 40 (CEV): "*When I was hungry, you gave me something to eat, and when I was thirsty, you gave me something to drink ... Whenever you did it for any of my people, no matter how unimportant they seemed, you did it for me.*"

Gospel Meaning

Making an Impact Despite Persecution

After the van has drawn up and parked, the Rev. Verghese Thomas, from the North West Auxiliary of the Bible Society of India, says a short prayer. Laden with Bible Society materials, the evangelists hop out and quickly disperse into the surrounding New Delhi streets.

"Only two minutes," he reminds them as they leave.

"Two minutes is the maximum time we can stay in this area," he explains. "In slum areas like this, the Hindu extremists are very powerful. In a matter of minutes they can assemble a small army."

Unworried, the evangelists hand out their tracts. "This is good news," they tell the passers-by. "It tells us Jesus loves us." A few reject the offer but most thank them and start reading. Some stay to ask questions.

Two minutes later the evangelists pile back into the van and eagerly exchange experiences as they are driven to their next stop.

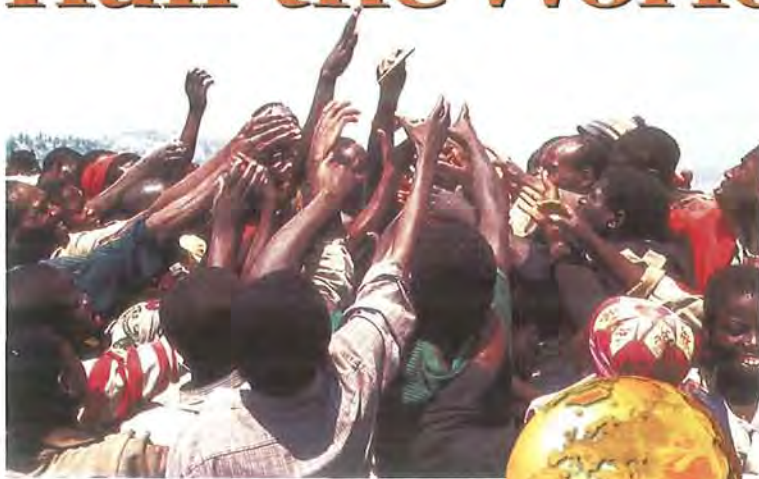
Despite obstacles, including violence perpetrated by Hindu extremists who have attacked Christians over the past few years, the Bible Society of India continues to distribute the Scriptures, making no distinction between rich or poor, high caste or low, regularly reaching out to those on the margins of Indian society.



Your August gift will bring Bibles to people in China, while your September offering will provide Scriptures in Turkey and Armenia. To find out more about joining the Bible-a-Month Club, fill out the reply form below, or write:

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08201REC

BIBLE IN THE NEWS

Death of Christ debate creates media stir

■ This spring even the sports pages were filled with debates about what the Gospel teaches about those responsible for the death of Jesus.

New York Knicks basketball player Charlie Ward was quoted in the *New York Times Magazine* profile of his team blaming Jews for the death of Jesus. The quote was part of an article that described Mr. Ward's leading of a regular prayer service for his teammates.

And Paul Weyrich, a prominent Washington political lobbyist, wrote similar sentiments on a Web site.

Biblical scholars, however, pointed out in a story by religion writer Gustav Niebuhr in the *New York Times* that Jesus was crucified under Roman authority and that nearly all the players in the Passion story — both Jesus' friends and foes — were Jews. Still, Jews have borne much of the blame for the crucifixion as a result of historic anti-Semitism that developed after Christianity emerged from its Jewish roots and became a mostly gentile religion.

While Christian scholars largely understand this history, there is still much education to reach those in the pews, said Rabbi Leon Klenicki, director of inter-religious affairs at the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai Brith. "The disconnect is that those ideas are not incorporated yet in the teaching of local churches and seminaries," the rabbi said in Mr. Niebuhr's article.

Prayer of Jabez spreads prosperity gospel

■ *The Prayer of Jabez: Breaking Through to the Blessed Life* by Atlanta evangelist Bruce H. Wilkinson has become a bestseller, reports the *New York Times*. The book is a reflection based upon an obscure line from the Book of Chronicles 4.9-10 in which God is beseeched in the quest for prosperity.

The book has sold more than 4 million copies. It spreads the view that it is perfectly acceptable to ask

God for material success, as long as wealth is used for a godly purpose. The prayer in the book has been credited with increasing profits for business people; assisting single women to find husbands, and helping pastors increase the size of their congregations.

But not everyone is happy with the success of the book. "It fits with the narcissism of the age. Religious life is focused on me and my needs," says Jeffrey H. Mahan, professor of ministry at the Iliff School of Theology in Denver.

Answering the Lord's call

■ Young Europeans are rarely seen in church, yet they have answered the call to Christian prayer on their cell phones, reports the *Industry Standard*.

A Lutheran Church youth ministry based in Hanover, Germany, recently held a service based on 2 Timothy 1.7. The service consisted of six messages sent in seven-minute intervals over a short message service. A total of 1,500 people participated.

Indiana town fights for Ten Commandments

■ The Ten Commandments have run into another legal challenge, notes the *Wall Street Journal*.

The city of Elkhart, Ind., has been challenged for violating the separation of church and state for publicly displaying a granite replica of the Ten Commandments. The replica was presented to the town as a gift by the producers of the 1956 Hollywood epic of that name starring Charlton Heston.

A federal appeals court in Chicago has ruled that the replica is an unconstitutional support for an established religion. The town fathers have appealed the case, arguing in part that the tablets are displayed not for religious purposes but for their cultural value as an artifact from a classic Hollywood film.

The Supreme Court has refused to hear the case.

FOR THE RECORD

100 YEARS AGO

Mourning a Slain President

The editors of the *American Bible Society Record*, with the rest of their countrymen, were in mourning the summer of 1901 after the assassination of President William McKinley.

"The awful shadow of the King of Terrors seems to overhang the land," the editors wrote. They said that the news of the president's murder came upon the country "like the shock of an earthquake" after which "strong men wept in the streets, and the whole people seemed benumbed with horror."

While in mourning, the work of the Bible Society continued, however. In that same issue, Erhelbert D. Warfield, president of Lafayette College in Pennsylvania, argued the case for Bible reading in liberal education.

"None of the classics have so rich a gallery of portraits as the Bible," he wrote.

"How does Lear pale before Abraham, and Hamlet before Saul? Can any of Shakespeare's kings be placed beside Moses or David? Are any of the Canterbury pilgrims so real to us as the long line of characters whom we meet in the books of Judges and Samuel? What creation of Spencer's genius moves us as does Job? Where shall we look for men so human yet so Godlike as Joseph and Moses, as Paul and John?"

Dr. Warfield noted that "to have lived in this world and not to have known the men and women of the Bible, not to have thought its thought, not to have felt its great emotions, not to have shared its hopes, is indeed to have lived in vain."

He concluded, "The Bible is the only final standard of spiritual training. It is the great essential support to our civilization which claims to be Christian. Many materials for other kinds of culture are available, but the Bible alone can give the spiritual education demanded by our whole civic, industrial and religious life."



President William McKinley

The First Polyglot Printed Scripture

The idea of presenting a synoptic view of the Bible in many languages and versions goes back to Origenes (c. 184-c. 254), an early Church Father, who compiled a monumental edition of the Old Testament, including the Hebrew text and four Greek translations.

His work covered probably the equivalent of 6,500 pages and no scribe was ever tempted to copy it. Only the invention of printing made the publication of such polyglot Scriptures possible.

The earliest to be released was the Psalter edited by Agostino Giustiniani (c. 1470-c. 1536) and printed in Genoa, in 1516 by Pier Paolo Porro. The book displays five languages,

four scripts, and seven versions. Eight columns spread on two facing pages contain the Hebrew text, a literal Latin translation prepared by Giustiniani, the Latin Vulgate, the Greek Septuagint, an Arabic version, the Aramaic paraphrase, its literal Latin translation, and the editor's marginal notes. The Arabic and Aramaic versions are the earliest printed editions of the Psalter in these languages.

In addition to being an outstanding example of scholarship and a masterpiece of typography, the Giustiniani Psalter is also remarkable for the editor's note to the phrase *in fines mundi*, "to the ends of the world" in Psalm 19:4.

In Giustiniani's opinion, the ends of the world had been recently discovered "through the wonderful daring of Christopher Columbus of Genoa." A full-scale biography of Columbus follows, the earliest ever printed. The discovery of America is the centerpiece of Giustiniani's narrative, but Genoa is given credit as both the birthplace of the explorer and the recipient of his munificence.

— LIANA LUPAS



Psalter, published in 1516, contains a tribute to Christopher Columbus.

update

N A T I O N A L

■ NEW YORK

Dr. Eugene Nida, described by the *New York Daily News* as “the cheerful, passionate godfather of modern Bible translations,” was honored during a recent Bible House conference on translation sponsored by the American Bible Society Institute for Biblical Scholarship. Dr. Nida pioneered the concept of meaning equivalency in Scripture translation.

More than 100 international scholars, linguists and translators attended the conference, held in May and June. Speakers focused on the challenges and risks of translating great ancient works, including, of course, the Scriptures.

One of the conference speakers was Dr. Nida, who emphasized, “You can’t translate without cultural context.”

Dr. Nida, a Baptist minister, began work with the American Bible Society in 1943 and was instrumental in many of the hallmark biblical translations produced by the Society. Now re-

tired, he remains a busy translation consultant.

In honor of his achievements, the Institute has been renamed the Dr. Eugene A. Nida Institute for Biblical Studies.

■ MARYLAND

Sally Shoemaker Robinson of Baltimore, chairman of the board of the American Bible Society, was recently elected chairman of the United Bible Societies (UBS) Global Board. Mrs. Robinson is the first woman to hold that post.

As chairman of the UBS Board, she succeeds Dr. Eugene Habecker, the president of the American Bible Society.

The board provides direction to UBS, the confederation of Bible Societies around the world.

Mrs. Robinson has been an American Bible Society trustee since 1988. She previously served 12 years with the United Presbyterian Church as a missionary in Korea. From 1984 to 1998, she was director of Episcopal Social Ministries, a community outreach program based in Baltimore. She is a lay associate at Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church in Baltimore.

■ TEXAS, MAINE

Ernest Reeves of Pharr, Texas, a generous American Bible Society benefactor, died on May 22. Mr. Reeves, 92, was a retired Iowa farmer who generously contributed to the work of the Society. Mr. Reeves is survived by his wife, Jessie. The couple provided the largest cumulative giving of any individual donors to the American Bible Society.

Another generous American Bible Society benefactor, Frederick Schmidt of Belfast, Maine, died on May 20. Mr. Schmidt and his wife, Doris, contributed very significantly to the life income programs of the Society. ■



▲ Raul Perez stands in front of the artwork he produced as a member of a group of New York City high school students, members of the Seekers' Club, who worked with American Bible Society staff in a class on art and Biblical themes led by curator Tricia Pongracz from the Gallery at the American Bible Society. The artwork produced by the students was recently displayed at Bible House.

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A LINK IN THE LITTLE RED BIBLE CHAIN

WHEN WILLIAM BRYAN OF Silverdale, Wash., sends his regular donation to the American Bible Society, he becomes transformed.

In his mind's eye, he is no longer 70 years old and retired in the cool Pacific Northwest. No, he returns to that time in the early 1970s when, as a U.S. Air Force officer, he was serving in the steamy jungles of northwest Thailand. There he was a link in the chain that delivered what he refers to as the *Little Red Bible*.

Mr. Bryan gives to the American Bible Society because of that personal experience.

He was in the Golden Triangle region, an area best-known at the time for being a center of the international drug trade. The U.S. military maintained a base there as close to North Vietnam as possible. The base where Mr. Bryan served as deputy commander was a refuge for pilots of damaged planes who were then bombing communist territory during the Vietnam War.

While there, he delivered Bibles to the Rev. Jim Conklin, a minister involved in an arduous and dangerous mission. Mr. Conklin would take the Bibles, travel for two days through rough jungle roads, and then walk for two days when the roads became even more impassable. He would then deliver the Bibles across the Chinese border. At the time, China was just recovering from the tumult of the Cultural Revolution, during which the communist government brutally suppressed all Western influences, including Christianity. Bibles were considered dangerous contraband.

To help Christians read the Bibles unimpeded, the books were produced to mimic Mao's *Little Red Book* of sayings, then a fixture in Chinese life. Where the Bibles were produced, and by whom, Mr. Bryan

cannot recall. But he says being in the project was a highlight of his Air Force career.

Mr. Bryan gives Rev. Conklin, now deceased, credit for missionary zeal in overcoming tremendous obstacles. He sees his role as a minor one.

Still, he recalls some three decades later, "I felt good about being just a small part of the Bibles in Red China project."

The project was one of the highlights of Mr. Bryan's long career in the Air Force. Raised in South Dakota and California, he enlisted during the Korean War and was attracted to flying, which he describes as "being the closest thing to being in heaven." With the Air Force, he served around the world, including a number of domestic bases, Iwo Jima, and his stint in Southeast Asia. Thanks to a civil engineering degree earned at the University of Texas during his Air Force years, Mr. Bryan was able to land a good job as a public works director when he re-entered civilian life.

He is married to Bobbie and they have three adult daughters and two grandchildren. In retirement, he has spent some time traveling, including a recent visit to China. His travels are not just a coincidence, he notes. They reinforce for him that, even while China is free from the worst oppression of the Cultural Revolution, there is still a need for Bibles there, a mission that the American Bible Society has long supported. It's a major reason why he keeps giving to the American Bible Society.

"The Good Lord keeps pointing fingers," he says. ■

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.

***'I feel good
about just
being a small
part of the
Bibles in Red
China project.'***



ARE YOU AND YOUR CHURCH CONNECTED?

ForMinistry.comSM connects God's people through the Internet for effective ministry to their communities and to the world.

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- New ways to communicate: efficient channels for reaching the unchurched and equipping members for ministry.

Church leaders will find resources at www.ForMinistry.com to support their ministries.

ForMinistry.comSM is an information-rich source equipping Christian leaders. The site features resources from the American Bible Society and over 150 leading ministry organizations representing the full spectrum of Christian faith and practice.

If your denomination, clergy association, or non-profit ministry would like to partner with the American Bible Society to equip the Church online, please contact Chris Thyberg, Executive Producer.

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AN INTERNET MINISTRY OF THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

(continued from page 9)

six to nine months following release. Right now Sam has 31 mentors but needs 56. "Our preference is to have them one on one with IFI members," he says. "But for now the solution is to double and sometimes triple them up."

Phillip Dautrich, program manager in Texas, has 63 mentors, but currently needs 99, and that is before considering what will be needed to double the program by December 2001. That's when IFI is scheduled to take over the entire facility now shared with "general population" inmates — prisoners not members of the IFI program.

For the most part the populations are isolated from one another in both Texas and Iowa. But where they intersect the contrast is stark. Phillip Dautrich says that Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) personnel are starting to "see" what restorative justice looks like.

"When the Captain, TDCJ's chief security officer, comes through the unit he sees that a relationship with Christ and the teaching and the values of Christ from the Bible are making a difference. One of his comments to me is, 'When I walk onto the unit, and I walk into the

day room, and see the [IFI] guys having a Bible study and talking about the Bible and not arguing over what TV show to watch, that's pretty good. My biggest [security] concern here is do they have enough changes of clothing.' TDCJ is actually seeing people have a change of heart."

Twelve years on the job gives TDCJ chaplain Jerry Brayan some perspective on the changes. He says statistically it's too early to tell, but anecdotally the numbers are impressive — a reduction in recidivism from 31 percent to 2 percent. "And," he says, "our standards are much higher. We don't just want to keep these guys out of prison. We want them to live for the Lord and be members of a church."

He says, "You don't have to be a Christian to get into the program. Our recruits aren't choir boys. But they have to be willing to do all the bookworm stuff; all the classes, assignments, and very restricted TV and recreation." Then he boasts, "IFI Director Jack Cowley says he wants to make IFI the hardest prison time an inmate can serve."

Chaplain Brayan teaches a course in systematic theology; what one inmate dubbed, "It's a Wonderful Life" in the second phase of the three-phase IFI pro-

gram. Phases one and two consist of classes in life skills and Christian teaching. Community service, with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, and evening classes on re-entry, conclude phase three.

"Inner Change functions as a church," Program Manager Dautrich explains. "We are a body with one-on-one accountability. Accountability contradicts everything they learn in a penitentiary. The guys here don't know what a church is — a 'serve and be served' attitude. They need to get plugged in; everything is done through the Body. When they are paroled, churches need to help with the transition — to help them get connected. The challenge is finding churches that are offender-friendly — that are willing to be their brother's keeper."

Inevitably questions regarding the separation of church and state come up. From the point of view of director Jack Cowley, a former prison warden, Inner Freedom Initiative is helping the state finally achieve what it's been trying to achieve all along — reduced recidivism. And if the initial recidivism numbers hold up, he expects IFI will transform corrections across the country. ■

IN MEMORIAM

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Marilyn "Billie" Gerken
Given by: Martin Gerken

Miss Evelyn L. Kuhn
Given by: John R. McGuire

Our Sister,
Sarah Luginbuhl
*Given by: Rev. & Mrs.
Raymond Lumley*

My Mother,
Annapurna Nalamati
Given by: Jhansi Nalamati

My Husband,
Lloyd Petrick
Given by: Palma H. Petrick

Nellie B. Polen
Given by: Fay M. Brooks

Our Loving Parents,
Rev. Ezra G. & Helen V.
Roth; Lavilla & Carl M.
Rigney
*Given by: Mr. & Mrs. Carl
J. Rigney*

In Memory of my beloved
father, August S. Carlson
*Given by: The Estate of
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Our Neighbor,
Anna Squitieri
*Given by: George & Dolores
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Our Daughter,
Lisa Lynn Troyer
*Given by: Mr. & Mrs. Jarnot
D. Troyer*

Memorials of \$500 or more for one individual or family unit will be published in the American Bible Society Record.

For further details about the memorial program, please write to:

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

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 pfueherberd@americanbible.org

Unity question

Re: the December/January issue's story on American Bible Society sponsorship of ForMinistry.com.

The emphasis on unity by not putting up barriers to make people feel excluded, expressed by Chris Thyberg, executive director for ForMinistry.com, really isn't sitting well with me.

God's word has basic truths that are foundational to our belief in the inerrancy of Scripture. Once anything is added to this pure stream of doctrine for the sake of insisting on the "feel good" mentality, something is wrong.

Is your wonderful organization of so many years being used to give ForMinistry.com some credibility?

SANDRA FRANKLIN, CAPE CORAL, FLA.

{EDITOR'S NOTE: The American Bible Society is a proud sponsor of ForMinistry.com, and our readers are welcome to check out the site. We are an inter-confessional organization. Our ministry is to distribute and promote the Bible across the Christian spectrum and our board includes Protestants, Catholics, and Orthodox representatives.}

No black or white

On the cover of the February/March 2001 *Record* there is a picture of a lady with dark brown skin, an African American. It is very visible that African-Americans have brown skin.

Why then, on the inside, is the term "black person" used? To respect our African American brothers and sisters, let us call them what they are, African Americans.

I am 70, Catholic, and love all people, regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, or age. I am Caucasian/Anglo.

In all of my 70 years, I have never seen a white (snow) or black (coal) person.

GERALD JOSEPH KREBS, PASADENA, TEX.

{EDITOR'S NOTE: We use both "black" and "African American" in the Record, reflecting what we believe to be contemporary American usage.}

No evidence of how Jesus looked

Re: April/May *Record* letter by Rosemary Miller, who wrote that Jesus was a good-looking person, as was his mother.

There is no evidence from Scripture that Jesus or Mary were beautiful to look at. They may have both been homely. We have no Bible evidence to prove it either way. I don't choose a person by their looks anyway.

CHARLES COBLE, SCAMMON, KAN.

Prefers 'First Testament'

In the February/March issue of the *Record*, the Rev. E.T. Heyne writes: "But why stress the phrase Hebrew Bible on the cover? Even Jewish scholars tell Christians to use Old Testament as they have for thousands of years!"

I beg to differ. We Jews have always used the term TaNaK (Torah, Neviim, Qetuvim) to describe our Scripture. Those of us who are believers (in Jesus) use the nomenclature of First Testament for TaNaK and Second Testament for the Gospels, Acts, the Epistles, and Revelation. Did not Jesus say in Matthew 5:7 that he did not come to abrogate but to fulfill the Scriptures? How then can we call the First Testament "old"?

HERBERT A. OPALEK, NEW YORK, N.Y.

American Bible Society



"... to equip all God's people for the work of ministry, that the Body of Christ may be built up, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ."

EPHESIANS 4:12,13

It's amazing to set these words of St. Paul to the 1st-century church against the backdrop of 21st-century communications, particularly the Internet. One can only wonder what the blessed Apostle would do with his own Web site, e-mail and a Palm Pilot were he alive today!

Welcome to *E-Quippers Journal* and what we hope will be a thought provoking and inspiring look at how churches are seizing the unprecedented potential of the Internet to equip themselves, their leaders and their members with new tools and resources that extend the reach and effectiveness of their ministries.

With every advance in technology the Bible Society faces opportunities and challenges in carrying out our mission. And consistently we've employed appropriate communication tools that allow the Word of God to come alive in individual and public life. In fact, over the last year, we created a new group, *ABSinteractive*, which focuses specifically on the digital delivery of Scripture and biblical materials. Already, *ABSinteractive* is a recognized leader in the field and promises to have a powerful impact on how God's Word is made available around the world.

The Bible Society has also been blessed with support from many denominations. Roman Catholics and Protestants, Evangelicals and Orthodox, all are able to come together in support of the Bible cause. And now there's a new way we are serving these partners — it's called *ForMinistry.com* and it's *ABSinteractive's* flagship program for equipping churches and ministries with digital tools for Scripture delivery.

ForMinistry's mission is to equip the church online for ministry by:

- ▶ Providing congregations and parishes, denominations and church associations with free Internet tools and services, including editable Web sites. Since our public launch in July 2000, tens of thousands of congregations have already claimed their cost-free, ad-free Web sites at *ForMinistry*.
- ▶ Gathering the very best ministry-enabling resources from every corner of the church and

BY CHRIS THYBERG

's ForMinistry.comSM

forMinistry.com
Equipping the church online for ministry

lifting up this content at ForMinistry for ministry-minded Christians everywhere to see and learn from. The site features resources from more than 150 leading ministry organizations.

In a nutshell, we empower Christian leaders with technology that they in turn may:

- Increase the church's capacity to mobilize and equip God's people for ministry;
- Strengthen the church's competency in using digital tools to access biblical resources;
- Enhance the church's capability to do collaborative ministry.

In September, we will release Version 3 including:

- Unlimited pages: no fees, no ads;
- Custom domain name: reinforce your church's identity;
- Easy-to-design features: offer a wide choice of templates, colors, style sheets, and graphics;
- New ways to communicate: effective, efficient channels for reaching the unchurched and equipping members for ministry.

To whet your appetite now, here's a look at what First Congregational Church of Scarborough in Scarborough, Maine (www.forministry.com/04074FCC) has done with their current Version 2 site.

Thanks to the efforts of the Rev. Michael Lowry, First Congregational Church keeps up an active Web site for an inviting church that considers visitors and members worthy of top-notch communications. He tells his readers in a welcoming paragraph, "Information on this site is updated weekly" and lives up to it. The most recent sermon text is included with an introduction and link from the home page, and the material included under the "What's New" heading really is new.

First Congregational Church is only one of nearly 15,000 churches that regularly update their sites at ForMinistry.

We're very excited about what's to come with Version 3; in future issues of *E-Quippers Journal* we'll be reporting on how these tools are being used and the impact they are having on people's lives.

Again, welcome to *E-Quippers Journal* and thanks for your continued prayers and support as together we seek to equip the Church online for ministry.

(*E-Quippers Journal is written by Chris Thyberg, 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

■ DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Almost 200 Haitian immigrants, including many children, recently embraced Christianity as a result of an *Opportunity 21*-sponsored distribution program organized by the Dominican Bible Society.

Opportunity 21, a joint project of the American Bible Society and United Bible Societies, is a program to raise funds to promote Bible distribution and translation around the world.

The Dominican Republic and Haiti share the same island. Many Haitians, who live in what is considered the poorest country in this hemisphere, regularly cross the border into the Dominican Republic in search of work and a better life. Many find jobs on sugar plantations, yet still live in severe poverty. There is a long history of antagonism between native Dominicans and Haitian immigrant workers.

In 1999 the Dominican Bible Society reached out to these immigrants with a three-year Scripture distribution program. The Society developed relationships with some 500 churches from

23 denominations, including the Catholic Church, the spiritual home of most Haitians and Dominicans.

More than 25,000 Haitians have been reached by the program. A total of 270,000 Haitian Creole Scriptures have been distributed, including 6,000 Bibles.

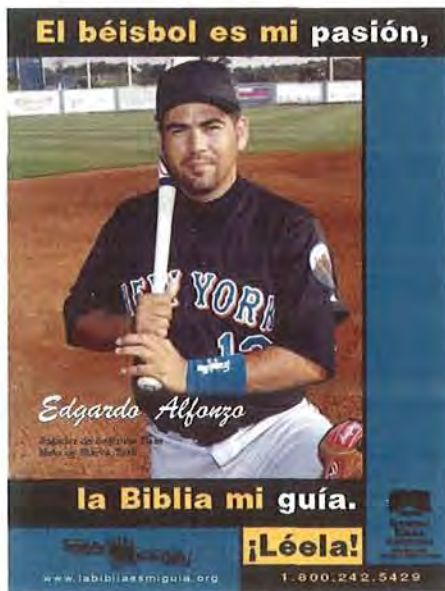
■ RUSSIA

A Bible translation begun in the 19th century and left undeveloped for more than 100 years has now resumed progress with the help of the Bible Society in Russia (BSR).

The language of the translation is Kreshen, a dialect of Tatar. The Kreshens number between 300,000 and 600,000, and they are scattered widely in the Volga and Ural regions. Although they are surrounded by Muslim Tatars, they have a long history of adherence to Christianity dating back to the sixth century.

A volume containing the first books to be translated into Kreshen since before the Russian Revolution — the letters from James, Peter, John and Jude — was given an official presentation in December at the Kreshen parish church in Kazan, the capital of Tatarstan. The city was the base of the translation and mission work of the 19th-century Russian Orthodox Church and the parish church is still, in effect, the spiritual center for the Kreshens of the Volga and Urals regions.

It was five years ago that discussion about restarting the translation work began. During the Soviet era all the Kreshen churches were closed, but more recently Archbishop Anastasii of Kazan and Tatarstan asked the BSR to reprint the translation of New Testament books made by Nikolai Ilminsky, a missionary linguist to the Muslim Tatars in the 19th century.



▲ Edgardo Alfonzo of the New York Mets promotes the Bible in a series of posters sponsored by the Office of Latino Affairs of the American Bible Society, based in Plantation, Fla. Mr. Alfonzo's poster, one of a series featuring Latino celebrities, notes "Baseball is My Passion, the Bible is My Guide." Mr. Alfonzo, a native of Venezuela, is one of a number of Latino celebrities from the worlds of sports and entertainment to join the Bible promotion, including salsa musicians Bobby Cruz and Richie Ray, and singer Jocelyn Arias.

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.

SEPTEMBER

*Growing in Faith
and Learning of God's Wisdom*

1 Proverbs 1.1-19

SUNDAY

2 Proverbs 1.20-33

3 Proverbs 3.1-18

4 Proverbs 3.19-35

5 Proverbs 8.1-21

6 Proverbs 8.22-36

7 Ecclesiastes 7.1-14

8 Psalm 19

SUNDAY

9 Psalm 111

10 Psalm 112

11 Job 26.1-14

12 Job 27.1-23

13 Job 28.1-28

14 1 Corinthians 1.18-31

15 1 Corinthians 2.1-16

SUNDAY

16 Job 33.1-33

17 Job 34.1-20

18 Job 34.21-37

19 Job 35.1-16

20 Job 36.1-16

21 Job 36.17-33

22 Job 37.1-24

SUNDAY

23 Job 38.1-21

24 Job 38.22-41

25 Job 39.1-18

26 Job 39.19-40.2

27 Job 40.3-24

28 Job 41.1-11

29 Job 41.12-34

SUNDAY

30 Job 42.1-17

OCTOBER

*Growing in Faith
and Striving for Peace and Justice*

1 Isaiah 42.1-13

2 Isaiah 42.14-25

3 Isaiah 51.1-11

4 Isaiah 51.12-23

5 Isaiah 58.1-14

6 Isaiah 59.1-21

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

7 1 Corinthians 11.17-34

8 Isaiah 61.1-11

9 Jeremiah 7.1-15

10 Jeremiah 22.11-23

11 Jeremiah 23.1-8

12 Psalm 14

13 Psalm 15

SUNDAY

14 Ezekiel 11.1-13

15 Ezekiel 11.14-25

16 Ezekiel 14.1-23

17 Ezekiel 22.1-16

18 Ezekiel 22.17-31

19 Ezekiel 34.1-16

20 Ezekiel 34.17-31

SUNDAY

21 Amos 5.1-17

22 Amos 5.18-27

23 Micah 2.1-13

24 Micah 4.1-13

25 Micah 6.1-16

26 Deuteronomy 10.12-22

27 Psalm 101

SUNDAY

28 Psalm 9

29 Psalm 10

30 Psalm 11

31 Psalm 46

PLEASE PRAY

In August and September, the United Bible Societies ask for prayers for the work of Bible Societies in Anglophone Africa, including:

UGANDA — Production of the Luganda Bible is almost complete. Please pray for breakthroughs in new translation and literacy projects as well as peace and stability in the country.

RWANDA — Give thanks that we can continue our prison ministry in spite of the difficulties in obtaining the Bibles we need. Over the next five years we are hoping to collaborate with Campus Crusade for Christ in offering a copy of Luke's Gospel to everyone in Rwanda, a total of about 8 million people.

BURUNDI — Praise God for a more peaceful atmosphere in our country, despite the ongoing economic crisis, and pray for the success of a revised Kirundi Bible.

KENYA — Pray for the successful revision of the Kiswahili Union Version Bible, for construction work on a new Bible House, for new offices in Kisumuy and Mom-basa, and for economic recovery.

SOMALIA — Our country has been without a government for seven years. Continued fighting among clans makes it impossible to undertake development projects or Scripture distribution in many areas. Please pray that a peace initiative among the clan warlords will prove fruitful.

Opportunity 21

TAKES GOD'S WORD TO JESUS PEOPLE

OPPORTUNITY 21 IS A \$90 MILLION CAMPAIGN funding 375 projects in more than 60 nations over the next three years. Sponsored by the American Bible Society and the United Bible Societies, it is already making an impact in Nigeria.

There the Bible Society of Nigeria (BSN) is working with an indigenous mission organization called Kutaya to take God's Word to northern Nigeria.

Kutaya supports outreach among the Isawa, Hausa, Fulani and Kanuri people of the region.

The BSN plans to support this work by providing the Hausa New Testament on audio cassette, along with other printed and audio Scripture resources.

Hosea Hoga, Kutaya's field operations coordinator, says that the program is vital to the growth of a homegrown church in that region of Nigeria, a country that has been wracked by strife between Christians and Muslims.

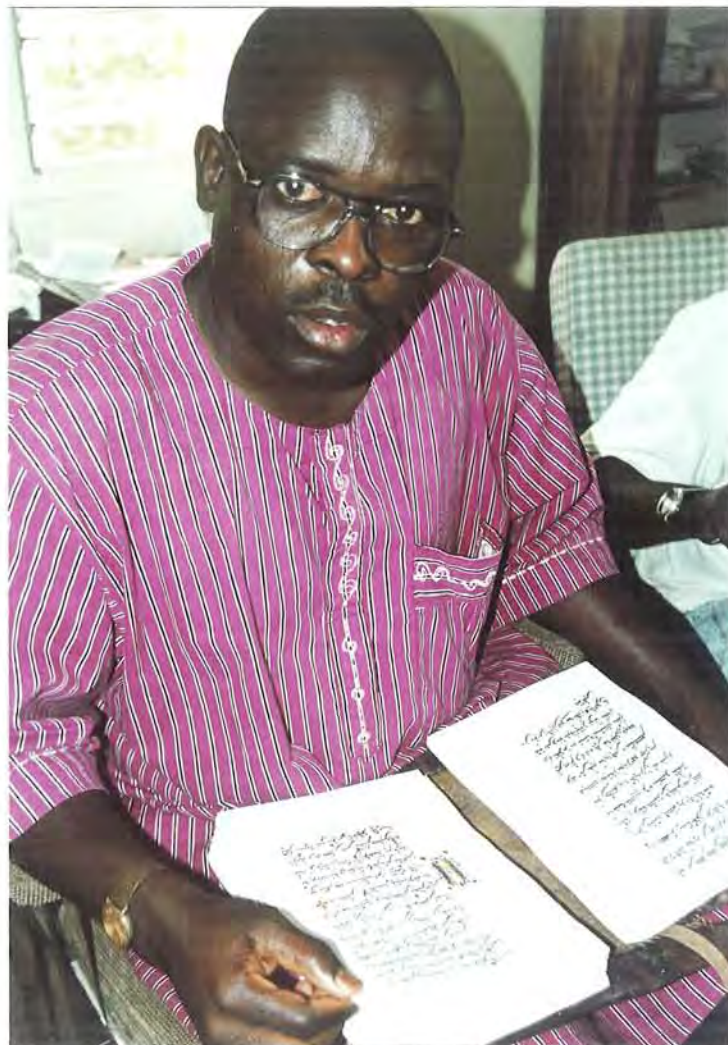
This is especially true among the Isawa people, who, while they are Muslims, their veneration of the Christian Messiah has earned them the name of "Jesus People." They number about 600,000 and, although largely illiterate, they use a handwritten Arabic Koran in their morning worship. BSN is now working to provide Christian Scriptures to these people, including dramatic audio and video presentations that can tell Bible stories to the many Isawa who cannot read.

"One day, in God's timing, we know there will be a growing church among the Isawa people, but we want it to be homegrown and in keeping with their traditional way of life — not imposed upon them and foreign to their lifestyle," Mr. Hoga says.

Christian outreach in northern Nigeria, he says, can best be done through the development of house churches, much like those described in the Acts of the Apostles. More formal churches, he notes, can "symbolize one faith confronting another."

He adds, "People must see the way we live as Christians and how it does not seek to dominate or harm them."

Kutaya's evangelization program lives that challenge.



GEORGEY STAMP

The group has placed four evangelists in an Isawa village where they do not just talk about the Gospel, they live it by teaching literacy and hygiene and providing fertilizer to help grow crops. The aim is to show the Isawa people the Christian way rather than preach it. ■

▲ Hosea Hoga, field operations coordinator for Kutaya.

(This article is based on a story by Geoffrey Stamp, a photojournalist who recently traveled to Nigeria to report on Scripture distribution for the United Bible Societies.)

The Society gathered together a handful of isolated individuals who had been doing translations from the Russian virtually in private, and set about providing them with administrative and material support, including a computer that allowed the translation to be typed rather than hand-written.

■ C U B A

A project to reach young people with God's Word in a dynamic and relevant way is underway here, with thousands of copies of the *Youth 2000 Bible* already distributed to churches across the country.

Funded through *Opportunity 21*, a joint project of the American Bible Society and United Bible Societies to promote Scripture distribution and translation around the world, the project's aim is to provide churches with a powerful evangelical tool increasing the impact of recent Catholic and evangelical celebrations. The celebrations — one of the few public Christian events to be held in communist-ruled Cuba for 40 years — generated a surge of interest in Christianity, especially among young people.

Mario Gomez of the Nazarene Church was among those who attended the 1999 evangelical celebrations in Havana.

"I attended the worship services in parks and stadiums, and I enjoyed the music, dances and poetry. But most of all I enjoyed the Bible teaching. I was fascinated ... later I was given the *Youth 2000 Bible*, which I found very appealing. I am enjoying it more and more everyday."

Elisa Gonzalez, a new member of the Free Baptist Church in Havana, said that she only fully understood the Bible's message when she started reading the *Youth 2000 Bible*.

Church leaders using the *Youth 2000 Bible*

agree that the full-color illustrations and 80 pages of helps for teenager readers are attracting many young people to read God's Word and apply it to their lives.

■ I N D O N E S I A

How do you represent the Bible in a country where Christians represent only a 10 percent minority? How do you present the Bible in public without provoking an uproar?

The solution lies in finding a part of the Bible that is acceptable to the predominant culture. And that is just what the Bible Society of Indonesia did to celebrate 46 years of their activities and the start of a new millennium.

The Bible Society of Indonesia selected the story of Samson and Delilah as a story acceptable for a largely-Muslim culture and one that is challenging and intriguing at the same time. Writers and performers were commissioned to present a professional musical show that ran for a week at a major arts center.

The production focused on Samson's prowess in defeating the Philistines and how, in his desire for Delilah, he was turning his back on his people. In a novel twist, lions were portrayed by human figures in costume who commented upon the story.

"Drama is one way of reaching people with the biblical message that we are only just beginning to discover," says Doktorandus Supardan, Bible Society of Indonesia general secretary. "The Bible is rich in stories and imagery which can be understood across cultural and religious boundaries." ■

▼ Toraja women greet guests arriving at the Indonesian Bible Society millennium celebration meeting.



GEOFFREY STAMP/UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

NOVEMBER 18, 2001

Bible Sunday of Light 2001

*Bible Sunday,
held in participating churches,
raises awareness about Scripture
distribution and the work of the
American Bible Society around the world.*

Crusade
of Light

See article on page 4 for more information

☐ **Yes!** My church would like to participate in *Bible Sunday of Light*.
Please send me information.

☐ My church is unable to participate in *Bible Sunday of Light*, but I will join the effort
by enclosing a gift of:

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