



Bible
Society

word in action



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Chat with our Chief Exec

Q: How are we supporting Bible Societies around the world who are struggling from the effects of Covid-19?

A: As the coronavirus pandemic spread, we knew there would be a significant impact on many Bible Societies around the world. So we met with other members of the United Bible Societies movement and decided to start a special Rescue and Recovery Fund with a target of raising \$5 million to support those Bible Societies who would face closure, or significant loss of capacity as result of the virus. We want to ensure that Bible mission will not be permanently damaged by the impact of the pandemic.

There's been an incredibly positive response to that fund from supporters around the world – including supporters like you who have generously have given over £500,000 here in England and Wales. We have already been able to help a number of Bible Societies in Africa, Latin America, Europe and Asia in their mission to make the Bible available, accessible and credible.



Q: How can we pray for our brothers and sisters around the world as they seek to keep Bible ministry alive?

A: Firstly, we can pray for the health and safety of our Bible Society teams around the world, that God would be merciful and that the virus would not claim the lives of people in these countries.

Secondly, that God would give the Bible Society staff courage and fill them with hope, that they would be able to convey a message of hope in Christ, through the scriptures, to their staff and to all those who they are seeking to serve.

Thirdly, that they would be able to continue in the work of Bible mission and that God would give them the creativity and resources to overcome the barriers that they face as a result of the pandemic.

'I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.'
(Philippians 1.3-5 ESV)



How are you, our wonderful supporters? Here at Bible Society we regularly pray for you and give thanks for your partnership with us in sharing the good news of the Bible. We are so grateful for your prayers and support, particularly as we seek to continue in our mission throughout Covid-19. On pages 6-7 you can read how your support is helping to keep Bible ministry alive around the world and on pages 12-13 you share your pandemic poems with us.

Although Christmas may be different this year, we have a brilliant range of new resources to help you celebrate. Find out more on pages 10-11.

Every blessing
Larissa Morava



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Front cover: Photography by Alan Kember – (L to R) Pastor Williams and Clapperton from the Bible Society in Malawi presenting Loveness with a Bible.

BIBLE SUNDAY

To find out how you can easily download the resources for FREE please go to biblesociety.org.uk/biblesunday2020

Celebrate the BIG STORY on BIBLE SUNDAY 2020 with FREE resources

Every Sunday is special, but 25 October is Bible Sunday, and we want to invite you to join Christians throughout England and Wales to celebrate it.

Bible Sunday is a day to focus on the great and precious gift of God's word, whether you are worshipping alone, with family or friends, or in a church.

We've put together an inspirational package of free biblical resources to help you, your small group, or your church celebrate this day. Using the resources will be a powerful reminder that no matter what troubled times we live in, one thing remains unchangeable – the Scriptures and God's promises contained within them.

This year's resources for children, youth groups and adults will focus on the passage of scripture where Ezra reads the law to the people in Nehemiah 8. It was a special day to be joyful because everyone was attentive to the reading and

understood the words that were spoken, and afterwards they went off to celebrate. In essence, it was what a true Bible Sunday should be all about! The walls of Jerusalem had been finished, the people had celebrated by marching around the walls, praising God for keeping them safe from enemies, providing them with the means to rebuild the walls and restoring to them honour among the nations that surrounded them.

We're really happy to announce that this year's Bible Sunday sermon has been written by Dr Andrew Ollerton.



Andrew Ollerton will draw from Nehemiah 8 in his Bible Sunday sermon.

For children and youth groups, our Open the Book team have generated a small mountain of fun and intriguing resources that will encourage children to engage with Scripture. These resources also focus on Nehemiah 8 meaning both adults, young people and children will all be on the same page.

The material for ages five to nine includes a starter game, an engaging story written from the point of view of Ezra's grandchild, a memory verse and activities to learn it, a craft, colouring page and more! For children aged 10 and over and youth groups, we've provided interesting background information and discussion questions. A short video describing the Bible mission you are supporting, dynamic stories of people that have been helped through Bible mission work, and suggested prayers round out your Bible Sunday package.

If you're looking for an engaging service for the whole family, then this is the pack for you. As you will see, the resources enable you and your church to enjoy an entire service of worship plus resources to engage the children too.

Joy of becoming literate – thanks to you

In Malawi, your support has helped teach illiterate women to read and provide them with a Bible. For this overlooked community, it's a sign of God's love and care – and it's changing lives, for good.



Photography by Alan Kember

Twenty-year-old Loveness (pictured left) opens up her Bible at Luke 15 and begins to read. She's brimming with excitement to share this. It's the story of the Lost Sheep, about a shepherd with 100 sheep who left 99 on the mountain to find the one that went astray.

Loveness carefully enunciates each word, her finger slowly moving across the page – and this moment is significant for two reasons.

Firstly, Loveness has only just learned to read. Growing up in rural Malawi, she never had the opportunity to go to school. But having been part of a Bible Society literacy class for six months, Loveness is now able to read basic text in her first language, Yao. Her faith has come alive since – and she is overjoyed.

Secondly, this simple parable is Loveness' favourite Bible story. Why? Because even though she was illiterate in a world of readers and writers, God had not forgotten her. Thanks to your support, Loveness was able to attend a literacy class, free of charge, at her local church. Under the guidance of a trained leader, using specially-prepared Bible-based workbooks, she gradually learned this vital life skill.

'God doesn't just care for the ones that are already with him,' said Loveness, as she closes up her precious Yao New Testament. 'He reaches out for the ones who are lost!'

Loveness is one of around 900 people, mainly women, who benefited from our Malawi literacy programme last year*. More than 70 per cent of people who joined classes with no ability to read or write at all can now read basic text.

Students join classes of 30 and are expected to attend a two-and-a-half-hour lesson every week, for six

months. There's homework too. For some, business, sickness, caring duties and household chores hamper their progress in class. But the majority of 2019 participants completed the course, and received their own copy of the Yao New Testament.

The programme in Malawi is part of an ambitious Bible Society project to teach 20,000 women and girls to read, in five African nations, by 2022. Two out of five people in Africa are illiterate and most are women. For Christians, illiteracy means the Bible remains a closed book – even if it's available in your language – so it's vital that people can read in order to grow in faith and discipleship.

Among Loveness' Yao community, the literacy classes are also proving to be a way of connecting with local Muslims.

There are around two million Yao people in Malawi, northern Mozambique and Tanzania, and 80 per cent are Muslims. The community has a strong cultural identity and are proud of their language and customs – but only around four out of 10 people can read and write.

Wilfred Ngalawa, who oversees the programme, said, 'We go into a predominantly Muslim area and work with local chiefs. We tell them we are a Christian organisation and they are very positive. At a recent graduation, led by the example of their chiefs, all the Muslims who attended took away a New Testament. These good relationships, of understanding and respect, prepare the way for churches to reach out to Muslims.'

The classes were scoped in 2015, piloted in 2016 and launched in 2017. The inclusive nature of the programme is a strength – and anyone who wants to learn is welcomed into the sessions.

For Yao church leaders, the impact of the literacy classes is clear. People's faith is growing, they immerse themselves in God's word, and they're more engaged in church life. Earlier this year, for the first time ever, Pastor William Tambo was able to ask someone to read the Yao Bible aloud in a church service. Now, he regularly preaches in Yao, rather than Malawi's main language Chichewa.

For Loveness, this new skill is life-changing. She can read the Bible for herself, and understand God's message and love. Tucking her Bible into her bag, she sets off for home under the hot Malawian sun. 'Asigale Cenene,' she calls, in Yao, as she strolls away: stay blessed.

*Literacy classes in Malawi are currently on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic

Almost 4,000 children's Bibles and Scripture activity books have been provided to churches in Malawi in the last 18 months – for use in Sunday schools. It means more than 12,000 children now have access to God's word, as they study the Bibles in church and borrow them to read at home.



Claire Smith
Freelance writer

Bible work at risk in 88 nations

Your support is keeping Bible ministry alive

Hama Yaye watched the news slowly unfold ... on 19 March, the Niger government announced restrictions across the nation. Then a curfew from 7 pm until 6 am. Finally, a complete lockdown of the capital city, Niamey.

Sadly, Hama shut up the Bible Society office and bookshop, suspended the literacy, Bible listening and trauma healing programmes he was running, and sent his six staff home. The situation took its toll. 'My feet swell in my shoes every night, my back and shoulders hurt, I can't concentrate my thoughts and sometimes I forget I haven't eaten,' Hama told us by email.

As Niger's economy ground to a halt and unemployment rocketed in what's already one of the poorest nations in the world, Bible sales, the only source of local revenue for Hama and his team, dropped by 80 per cent. 'We have no economic reserves,' he told us. 'The truth is, we cannot cope.'

Over in Syria, it was a similar story. Our Bible bookshop in Aleppo never closed its doors once through nine

years of war, siege and food shortages. But when the coronavirus pandemic hit, the team had no choice. 'I cannot describe the feeling when we closed Bible House,' said programme coordinator Nabil Saad. 'We still need to deliver hope to our community through the word of God!'

In Central America, where the coronavirus is rife, our teams have partnered with churches of all denominations to deliver meals and Bibles. 'Food for the body and for the soul,' says Mayra Ugalde, who leads our team in Costa Rica.

Today, Niger, Syria and Costa Rica are among the 88 nations where Bible ministry is most at risk – and where urgent action is being taken to keep the doors open.

Thanks to your support, critical funding is being redirected to pay staff and rent. Struggling Bible Societies are being helped with things like online Bible sales, to generate some income. And in the long-term, we're supporting staff to be ready to hit the ground running with Bible ministry as soon as restrictions lift.

Your support is helping to save Bible work in 88 nations, including almost 500 projects

248 Bible engagement ministries such as literacy, prison ministry, youth work and trauma healing

82 Bible distribution programmes

164 Bible translation projects



In Guatemala, prisoners from our Bible study groups have made more than 1,000 masks for healthcare workers. 'In the past I hurt my country,' said one inmate, Jason. 'Now I can make up for my mistakes.'



In Jordan, more than 2,500 families have received gospel booklets and essential supplies. One mother told us, 'We are so thankful for the food, but the biggest joy for me was seeing my son open up his new Bible.'

In the Gulf, Gospels and Scripture booklets have been provided in Nepali, Tagalog and Telugu – languages spoken by the region's millions of migrant workers. One worker, Jessy, said, 'It is only the word of God that can sustain us and console us at this time.'

In China, we printed 100,000 copies of our Beyond Disaster booklet, a Bible-based resource to help people recover from a traumatic experience. These are being distributed free to churches, for use within their congregations.

Already, with your help, Bible ministry has continued right through the global pandemic – and people have received God's word when they have needed it most.

Thank you for standing with Bible Society during the coronavirus pandemic. Your support has shared the Bible and touched people's lives in the toughest of times.

To find out more go to [biblesociety.org.uk/rescuefund](https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/rescuefund)



In the Holy Land, our team distributed Scripture, medication, masks and food parcels to those in desperate need. Across the West Bank, many families have been hit by unemployment – and the help you've provided has been a lifeline. Nashat Filmon, who leads Bible work among Palestinians, said, 'Together, we can reach the unreached and be light in the midst of darkness.'

In Syria, thousands of children's Bible books were distributed over Easter. And our team have been coordinating the provision of Scripture and food parcels to Christian families in desperate need. George Andrea, who leads our work there, said, 'You are helping to provide comfort, prayer and confidence.'

Joining forces for Prisons Week

11-17
October 2020 –
Prisons Week



70,000
Prisons Week
prayer leaflets
printed



95,228
Children with a
parent in prison
(Oct 2019)



83,533
Prisoners in England
and Wales (Oct
2019)

1975
Prisons
Week began

Ever since our founding in 1804, Bible Society has been involved in prisons. Founder William Wilberforce was a vocal campaigner for prison reform, and for decades we've provided Bibles to prisoners in their first language.

But 2020 marks the first time we've joined the national week of prayer for prisons – and we hope you will be inspired to join in.

Prisons Week is a time for Christians to pray for all those connected to prisons: prisoners and their families, victims of crime and their communities, people working in the criminal justice system and the many people involved caring for those affected by crime. It's been going for more than 40 years, and starts on Prisons Sunday, the second Sunday in October.

'People are quite wary of prisons and prisoners,' said Revd Bob Wilson, Chair of Prisons Week. 'It's easy to think of prisoners as 'other'... the monsters over the wall. But they are people who sit beside us through life. And it's hard to feel biased against someone if you are committed to praying for them.'

This year, the theme of the week is: You are not alone. As Bob said, 'The word lockdown comes from prison. And we've all experienced that lately. So we're united in lockdown, and united in prayer.'

Bob, a regular visitor to prisons, says the service has coped admirably during the coronavirus pandemic. But the crisis has taken its toll. Thousands of prisoners and staff caught the virus in England and Wales, and there have been a number of deaths. Many of the 80,000-strong prison population

have been locked in their cells for 23 hours a day to limit the spread.

Now, more than ever, those involved in prisons need prayer – and each day of Prisons Week focuses on a different group of people. Bob added, 'There's something very powerful about Christians in the community praying alongside prisoners, for families, children, staff and others.'

For Bible Society, our involvement in Prisons Week signifies a step-up in our commitment to reaching a marginalised, overlooked community with God's word.

Last year, thanks to supporters like you, we gave out more than 2,500 Bibles to prisoners in 51 institutions, including prisons, young offenders' institutions and secure training colleges.

One in eight Bibles were in English, and other languages included Polish, Romanian and Hungarian. Working with the network of prison chaplains, our aim is to increase distribution so that every prisoner who wants a Bible can get one, free of charge.

This year also saw the launch of *The Bible Course: Prisons Edition*. This eight-session course explores the big story of Scripture, and has been specially adapted for prisoners. Before lockdown, 700 prisoners in 26 prisons had already taken part in the course in small groups. From July, we re-edited the material to create a 16-part Bible TV series which could be broadcast directly into prisoners' cells during their confinement. The series is screened in around 30 jails, with the potential to reach up to 15,000 prisoners.

And a specially-written gospel booklet, *Matthew: A Message of Mercy*, has been provided to 2,000 prisoners in 52 prisons – with more orders in the pipeline.

Chris Auckland, who oversees Bible Society's prison ministry, said, 'In the last few years we've made a more concerted effort to be involved in supporting prison chaplains. We have a vision to see the Bible change people's lives, for good, in prisons, and we're delighted to be working alongside other amazing organisations to achieve that.'

And it's clear the Bible can, and does, change the lives of prisoners. Bob said, 'Prisoners are always open to discussing faith. Someone who would never speak to a vicar outside prison will happily chat to a chaplain in prison. We regularly see the effects of someone accessing faith, in their behaviour and attitudes.'

If you'd like to get involved – or get your church involved – in Prisons Week, visit prisonsworld.org to download prayers for 11-17 October.

'They went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good.'
Matthew 22.10

Join us in the Prisons Week prayer:

Lord, you offer freedom to all people. We pray for those in prison. Break the bonds of fear and isolation that exist. Support with your love prisoners and their families and friends, prison staff and all who care.

Heal those who have been wounded by the activities of others, especially the victims of crime. Help us to forgive one another. To act justly, love mercy and walk humbly together with Christ in his strength and in his Spirit, now and every day.

Amen

Celebrate Christmas with us!

We know Christmas may be a bit different this year and we may not be able to meet together in person, but we can still celebrate our gift from God – the birth of Jesus. We have some brand new, brilliant resources for you and your church which we pray will be a real blessing to you, your churches and communities.

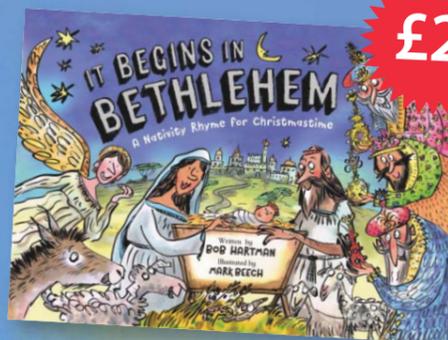
You can check out all the resources at biblesociety.org.uk/christmas or call 01793 418222

It Begins in Bethlehem – A Nativity Rhyme for Christmastime

Our new Christmas children's booklet *It Begins in Bethlehem – A Nativity Rhyme for Christmastime* gives us a fresh perspective on the nativity with glorious rhymes from Bob Hartman and lively illustrations by Mark Beech. Discover God's Christmas present to you! The booklets are available to buy for £2 each and we offer ministry discounts to churches buying multiple copies to give away to children in their church and community.

There's a great video animation of the booklet, perfect to show at your church service, either online or in person.

Both the booklet and video animation are available in English and Welsh.



£2



Christmas Stickers

Based on the theme of Jesus as the light of the world, our new stickers are the perfect way to brighten up your Christmas card envelopes and Christmas presents. Available to buy for £2 for four sheets.

Christmas Cards

We have brand new, beautiful Christmas cards designed by Emma Skerratt, celebrating Jesus as the light of the world. Available to buy in packs of 10, with five great designs. The cards are also interactive – you can cut out the bauble shape on the front and hang it on your Christmas tree! Available to buy for £4.50 a pack.

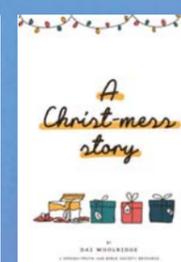


Charity Gifts

We often struggle to choose a gift to give to someone. So how about providing them with a truly life-changing gift this Christmas. By choosing a Bible Society charity gift for a family member or friend you are supporting worldwide Bible mission.

Your friend's gift, through you, will have a massive impact. A stranger far away could access God's word for the very first time – all thanks to you purchasing the gift on behalf of your friend or family member. A bit of a change from socks.

Charity gifts are very easy to order. Just visit biblesociety.org.uk/charitygifts and your friend or family member will receive a special card from Bible Society telling them all about the gift you've chosen for them.



A Christ-mess Story

'A Christ-mess story' is a down to earth book which unwraps the good news of Christmas through poetry, playfulness, honesty and humour. Written by spoken word poet Dai Woolridge to complement the 'Mess Spoken word' film, this little book explores the journey of the nativity through three key words, 'mess, message and messiah'.

If you're over familiar with the story of Jesus, or if you don't know your 'magi' from your 'wisemen', this is the perfect messy Christmas gift for adults and young adults alike. May this book point you to the one born in the mess, for our mess. Available to buy for £3.99.



Instant Nativity

Looking for a fun and interactive, rehearsal-free nativity to perform in your church? Look no further! Adapted by Bob Hartman from the children's booklet, this energetic (and free!) script will be enjoyed by all ages at your Christmas service. The script is also available in Welsh.

We've also created an online friendly version, so even if you can't be together in person at church you can still dress up and perform the script together online!



In the last edition of *Word in Action* we featured a poem by Dai Woolridge called *'Do not breathe lightly into that tight chest'* and asked you to send in your poems and reflections written during lockdown. It has been inspiring reading your creative responses. Some of your poems are featured on these pages, either in full or part, and you can read all the entries at biblesociety.org.uk/covidpoems

Thank you so much, enjoy reading!

Lesley Floyd – an extract from 'Safe Haven'

Please stay at home, secure in your safe haven,
Enjoy the day, and don't forget to smile.
And in the evening, rest in quiet contentedness,
Remember this – it's only for a while.
May God protect you through the hours of darkness,
And keep you safe from lurking fears within,
And bring you through the night of doubt and wakefulness,
Until you see the next new day begin.

Doris Townsend – an extract from 'The Answer'

Each day we awaken with hope in our heart.
We know we must do our part.
Is there an answer to this world-wide infection?
After much reflection
Words are suddenly pouring out. I have got to shout – Listen!
Underneath this stifling darkness something is beginning to glisten.
What is that spark on the distant horizon –
A glimmer of light? This seems surprising
For we have been smothered by black clouds and gloom
As depression and loneliness left little room
For laughter or a smile along each solitary mile.
Can we cope with a hope that seems so fragile and uncertain?
We will need God's help to draw back faith's curtain.

Oliver Halls, age 12

When in lockdown because of Corona
We must stay on our own-er.
Although we must consider our needs,
We must follow the health decrees.
Make our voices heard – take a stand,
Help with the little things, like washing our hands.
Fight as a community, fight as one,
Until lockdown is over and done.

Zillah Sykes – an extract from 'Rainbows of Hope'

We read about a rainbow at the end of a very familiar Bible story, that of Noah and the ark. After a whole year of being cooped up with his family and a whole zoo-full of animals, Noah stepped out into a world that was sparkling, fresh and fragrant. Together with his family he worshipped God, thanking Him for bringing them safely to this place of new beginnings. It was then that God spoke to him, as clouds filled the sky and a rainbow stretched across it, radiant with colour. 'I have set my rainbow in the clouds,' He said, and then, knowing that Noah and his descendants would always fear another deluge, God promised that He would never again destroy the earth with a flood. He also promised that all generations would live their lives in harmony with the rhythms of the seasons.

'As long as the earth endures,
seedtime and harvest, cold and heat,
summer and winter, day and night will
never cease.' (Genesis 8.22) So,
whenever we see a rainbow we can
remember that God is faithful to keep
His promises.

Mary Mills – an extract from 'Spring in my Steps'

During the Coronavirus pandemic we were all 'walking through the valley of the shadow of death' – yet I did not 'fear evil' – I knew, without a shadow of a doubt, that my Good Shepherd was with me, guarding, guiding all the way. A feast of beauty was provided in the presence of the Covid-19 enemy. Peace that 'passes understanding' – that should I be taken Home to heaven, or be spared, 'I will dwell in the house of the Lord, forever.' What an amazing truth for every believer!

Malcolm Carter – 'Replacing the Gloom'

Sadness, bleakness unprecedented!
Who could have schemed or invented
A reeling world in total lockdown?
Even drones are now employed in town
To halt thoughtless journeys on the street;
Police force folk to their home retreat.
Cars, trains and buses 'unembarked',
Planes at airports permanently parked.
Restaurants closed, boarded-up shops,
Pubs, theatres, everything stops.
Long food queues, shoppers filled with despair,
Most supermarket shelves stripped bare;
Empty shelves scream 'Every little helps!'
Frustration soon many envelops.
City centres remain weirdly still,
Hospitals with patients overfill.
Brave doctors, nurses at breaking point,
But their dedication does not disappoint.
They sacrifice themselves, without masks,
Proper clothing, they meet urgent tasks.
Mortuaries with bodies jammed,
Crematoria with coffins crammed.
The world's in the grip of pandemic virus,
Who will help, uplift, inspire us?
Though this virus seems untreatable,
Our aim must be: beat the unbeatable!
Vast numbers hunker down for the long haul,
While rising worldwide deaths appal;
And thousands shut in, depressed, can't cope,
Who'll supply those overwhelmed with hope?
Countless jobs lost, fear stalks, dreams shatter,
Loss of life, trauma, what really matters?
Christ's first disciples too shared lockdown,
In that Upper Room, scared to leave town.
The Risen Christ entered their locked room,
His Presence still brings hope, replaces doom.
We have to navigate a new world dawning,
With Christ on board, we'll share Easter Morning!

Rachael Loescher – an extract from 'Life in Lockdown'

I've been reading of folk isolating
From accounts in God's wonderful Book
It's been an interesting discovery
I recommend you take a look

In great fear Moses isolated himself
Elijah became thoroughly depressed
Two Emmaus walkers in deep disappointment
And Jonah in rebelliousness.
John was forced onto Patmos,
Daniel used his time to pray
The exiles in Babylon couldn't sing
They just did not want to stay.

YOUR LETTERS & COMMENTS

It is very encouraging to read that Bible Society continues its work in so many countries affected by war and Covid-19 in spite of the difficulties and dangers. Hopefully as schools re-open, Open the Book will be invited into more of them so that Bible stories will be made known to the rising generation, our hope for the future.

JANET, ALNWICK

WIA is very encouraging and informative. It is good to know where our donations are being used and how much joy it is bringing. Thank you.

GWEN, DORSET

Colourful, clear and readable with encouraging articles and testimonies which show the work you do is vital, needed and appreciated. Love the Open the Book testimony and how Cyril loves what he does for Jesus with the children he meets. Several of our Church home groups have done *The Bible Course* and found it very helpful.

DIANA, NOTTINGHAM

It is a wonderful, inspiring magazine. I pass it on to an elderly lady who was born to a mission family in China. Her godmother was Gladys Aylward.

MARGARET, WATERLOOVILLE

It is a great joy to read WIA and to know that the wonderful work of Bible Society continues in these difficult times.

ROGER, CORNWALL

It's so inspiring to read about the joy Christians are finding now as they read and receive their Bibles. It's good to hear about the Amity Printing Press still going strong. News from China, the land of my birth, is especially dear to me. Thank you.

SALLY, CAERPHILLY



This is a particularly poignant edition, covering so many ways in which the needs of millions worldwide are being helped during the coronavirus pandemic. Every article/picture tells a story, with amazing illustrations to bring real situations to life and lead to prayer. Dai Woolridge's poem is a masterpiece!

MARGARET, CROYDON

WE LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU

Email us your thoughts and comments at wia@biblesociety.org.uk or use the comments form attached.

We reserve the right to edit letters for style and length.

The views expressed do not necessarily represent those of Bible Society.

One verse



Verses that stick with me in a big way are some I remember being taught in school from Matthew 25.31-46. The Sheep and the Goats is well known and as theologian Charles Ellicott put it, it's 'beyond the region of parable, into that of divine realities.'

The image of 'the righteous' throwing up their arms and saying 'what do you mean we saw you and didn't help?' is surprisingly contemporary. As is Jesus' timeless response: 'Just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' Though interpretations vary from tradition to tradition, for me it serves as a constant reminder that I need to strive to respond to Jesus'

missional challenge, every day, because as St Teresa of Ávila is thought to have said, 'yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world.'

So, as I watch TV, flick through social media, or walk in my community, I ask myself, am I being the hands and feet of Jesus? For he was being suffocated by a police officer – did I stand up for him? She was a migrant in a dingy – did I welcome her? They were prisoners – did I treat them with love and respect?

Chris Auckland
Social Engagement Manager
at Bible Society

Biblepeople:



are hugely grateful for the enormous contribution that Paul has made to the work of Bible Society over the last 15 years, he will be greatly missed by us all. Please see a message below from Paul:

'As I prepare to leave Bible Society and lead the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC), I've been reflecting on the impact Bible Society has had, not only on my work, but my life!

'It was at a holiday club, aged just six, that I was given a Bible Society Luke's Gospel, followed by the other Gospels

in subsequent years. It was on leaving school, aged eighteen, that I was presented with a Bible Society pocket edition of the New Testament and the Psalms. And it was in my first year at college, aged nineteen, that I was given the New Testament in Greek, also published by Bible Society.

'I leave Bible Society profoundly grateful for the way its mission changes lives. In the course of my life, Bible Society has helped me experience the Bible, not just as great literature (which it undoubtedly is), or as the story of God and the world into which I am invited to play my part (which it certainly has), but as revelation, where God speaks and is encountered.'

We are sad to announce that Paul Woolley, our Deputy Chief Executive, is leaving Bible Society this month. We

Running online services? Looking for fresh resources?

One of the great responses from churches during this Covid-19 season has been the huge rise in the number of online/livestream services taking place on Sundays. However, we recognise there may be fatigue and tiredness due to the immense level of resource and energy that can go into putting together these services.

In response to this, we are offering free content for you to use in your online services, based around key themes. You can view and download these resources from our website.



For all the content go to biblesociety.org.uk/sundaystreaming



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This Christmas you can give the gift of



Every Bible Society charity gift can make a life-changing difference to someone in the world. **Send a special gift to your friends and family this Christmas.** You will receive a delightful printed card with space for your own personal message or you can choose to send a personalised ecard.

[. biblesociety.org.uk/charitygifts .](https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/charitygifts)

A testimony from China we'd like to share with you to show how special your gift is:

When one elderly worshipper at a church in Beijing, China, received his Bible he said, 'Now I feel I am not alone, not forgotten. I now know there are brothers and sisters across the other side of the world who have been supporting us for so long.'



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