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Society

wordinaction



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Happy New Year!

We're excited to be celebrating 20 years of Open the Book this year, to find out how you can join in the celebrations go to openthebook.net/anniversary

We pray you are inspired by our stories starting here at home and travelling to Pakistan, the Sahel, Jordan and Egypt and enjoy sharing our Easter and Lent resources.

We're excited to see what God has in store for 2019, please continue to pray for us as we seek to be bold and courageous as we further the heart of God's mission.

*Every blessing
Larissa
Word in Action editor*

Chat with our Chief Exec



Photography by Layton Thompson

Q: What can we give thanks for in 2018?

A: 2018 was a year when we have an enormous amount to be thankful for. In England and Wales, it's been really exciting to see the continued growth of OTB, now in 16% of primary schools. We've had our most successful Bible launch with the *Good News Bible – The Youth Edition*, a collaborative enterprise with Youth for Christ and it's been wonderful to see how young people are engaging with the Bible in fresh ways. With adults we've launched a new edition of *The Bible Course* which has been incredibly successful. We've had a sell-out tour around the country and we're touring again this year because of demand (see biblesociety.org.uk/tbctour for details).

Alongside that, internationally we've been able to deepen relationships and energy for collaborative mission. We've worked very hard on designing mission strategies around the world, in collaboration with our partners, that are rooted in prayer and come out of our biblical vision.

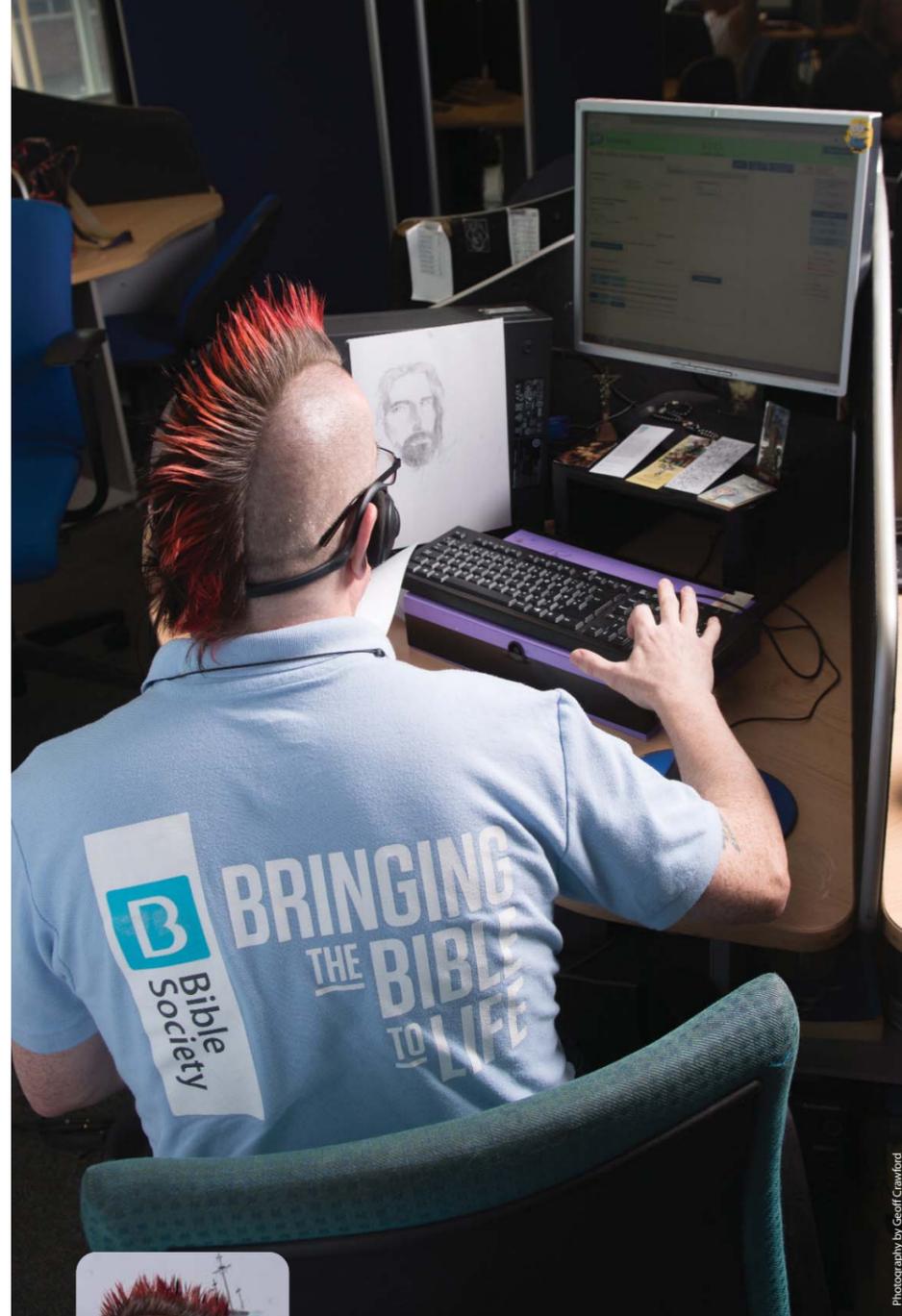
Q: What's your vision for Bible Society this year?

A: This is a year when I think that the Church and our supporters will see more of the hard work we've been doing behind the scenes in 2018

coming into visibility, in the form of some really exciting resources that we're developing. We've undertaken a landmark piece of research to understand attitudes to the Bible and faith across the country – it's a huge survey of over 20,000 people. We'll be making the results of that work available to the church to enhance Bible mission, not simply as something to read but in the form of tools and resources that churches and Christians can use. Our hope is that we will be putting incredible resources into the hands of the Church for Bible mission in this country.

Q: What can our supporters pray for us this year?

A: It's very important as we become more visibly engaged in public communication of the Bible's message in our society, that we do that with a posture of prayer and boldness. I would really ask our supporters to pray for us, that we would be prayerful, that we would listen to what God is saying and how he is leading us and that we would be bold and courageous in the way we act.



Photography by Geoff Crawford



Hello, I'm Keith...

The call centre is frenetic. Section leaders march about barking motivating catchphrases, dozens of people chatter into headphones, there's relentless activity. But to the side of the room, one man is quietly praying with someone over the phone... Meet everyone's favourite *Bible a Month* caller.

Fifty-two-year-old Keith Andrew is not what you expect. A self-confessed punk, a grandad and a Street Pastor-in-training, he attends Bristol's Roman Catholic Cathedral every week where he helps serve communion.

He joined the team at the call centre in Bristol four years ago, and has spoken to thousands of *Bible a Month* supporters since then. In fact, he calls around 45 people every day, and many of you may remember speaking with him.

But for Keith, targets aren't important and this isn't just a job; speaking to people like you is his personal ministry, and he loves it. 'At the end of mass every Sunday, the priest says, "Go in peace and spread the word of God." That's what I'm doing,' said Keith. 'I can't go out to Syria and distribute Bibles, but I can help provide the means for that work to be done. This is an extension of my faith and I totally and utterly love what I do.'

Keith recounts supporters' stories with a mix of admiration and wonder – the former missionary who worked in China, the ex-convict who found faith behind bars – and admits his greatest challenge is keeping the call-length down. 'It's hard to interrupt someone when they are talking about their faith,' said Keith. 'I have had people praying for me, and I have said prayers with them. It's absolutely beautiful.'

Back on the shop floor, Keith's first call of the day is finished. He adjusts his headphones – a special set which go round the back of his mohican instead of over the top – and pauses to flip over the daily prayer on his desk. 'God bless and take care,' he says as I wave goodbye. Then he turns to his screen and leans back in his chair... 'Hello, I'm Keith,' he announces cheerily. 'Do you mind if we have a chat?'

If you would like to join or increase your Bible a Month, please fill out the form enclosed.



Claire Smith
Freelance writer

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Howard Wilkinson



Celebrating 20 years of Open the Book

It's a sunny autumn day at Lakeside Primary School in Cheltenham and the children are gathered for an all-age assembly. Eight-year-old Callum is dressed up and ready for his role as a member of the crowd, in the story of John the Baptist.

Yes, it's time to Open the Book.

Bible Society's principal primary education programme, Open the Book, began 20 years ago when a group of Christians in Bedford wanted to take Bible stories into their local primary school. What began in one town 20 years ago, is now an exciting initiative across England and Wales. Some 16,800 storytellers regularly take Open the Book assemblies in 3,099 primary schools. That number is growing every week with demand from schools exceeding the number of trained storytellers able to go into primary schools.

Callum loves Open the Book assemblies. 'I like being on stage in front of everyone,'



he says, and then adds. 'I have done stuff that I didn't know about. I didn't know much about the Bible.'

His friend Taylen, age 8, agrees. 'It's different to other assemblies in the school,' he says. 'I didn't know much about Christians and now I know quite a lot.'



The RE Co-ordinator for Lakeside School is Caroline Gourley. She's enthusiastic about the impact of the regular Open the Book assemblies in the school. 'The children absolutely love it,' she says. 'They don't want to miss it for anything. They talk about it afterwards. I'm really pleased. I think there's a benefit to the school in doing this,' she adds. 'The children really embrace it.'

Laura Mears is the Open the Book team leader who takes the assemblies at Lakeside. The idea



came about when her children started at Lakeside School two years ago. 'When it comes to principles and morals, we have to be deliberate about teaching children and having stories from the Bible is the best way to do it,' she says.

'They can remember that and hopefully start to act in the way that they have seen through the Bible. The most important thing is to give children a foundation and a knowledge of Bible stories. They are so illustrative as to how to live and live well in community.'

This year, 2019, will see celebrations across the country to mark the 20th anniversary of Open the Book. If your school runs these assemblies, you'll soon be receiving a special pack full of lots of ways to mark this milestone.

But what does it feel like to have made that 20-year journey? Bob Hartman is the author of the Lion Storyteller Bible, now used in 3,099 primary schools. 'I'm a bit overwhelmed to be honest with you,' he says. 'It's satisfying and encouraging as it's



what I'd hoped would happen when I wrote it, but I never imagined that so many children would hear these stories.'

He explains why Open the Book is so important. 'There are so many children in our culture who don't know the stories,' he says. But, whereas 20 years ago there might have been some resistance [to taking the Bible into schools] they now just receive the stories joyfully.'

Across the country, more people are starting to run Open the Book assemblies in their local primary schools. One of them is David Kelly from Nailsea, near Bristol. He joined a group of friends taking Open the Book assemblies at their local primary school in 2017. Since then, the

assemblies have proved so popular, that the team now takes them into four primary schools.

'It's just great,' he says. 'The kids are so good. They love volunteering. The head teacher of one of the schools told us that it's the highlight of their week. We are telling them about the Bible in a way that they wouldn't understand if they just read the story. I love it because it's good fun to do. It's hard work mind you. We're in schools three times a week, but it's so worthwhile.'

Bob Hartman agrees. 'There is something joyful about being part of the story,' he says. That's why we are in our schools week by week, month by month, year by year. We want to clear the way so that the children can hear God's story and find out who he is

through his story.'

Back at Lakeside Primary School that seems to be working out. 'I'm learning stuff I didn't already know,' says Callum, before running off to take part in the assembly.

To find out how your church can start an Open the Book group in your area, or to see Open the Book assemblies come into your school, visit biblesociety.org.uk/openthebook or call us on 01793 418355.



Hazel Southam
Chief reporter

Noemie and Alan visiting our African colleagues, from left to right, Elenorah, Samuel, Christiana, Prince, Mauril and Raymond

Seeing the heart of mission in Africa

Glancing out of the aeroplane window through the parting clouds, I marvelled at the lush green Nigerian landscape racing beneath me. This was my first ever visit to Africa.

Down on the ground the beauty and scale of the scenery was even more astonishing. Travelling the short distance from the airport to our guesthouse in Abuja, I saw towering mountains and wild goats and cows grazing peacefully on their lower slopes.

Nigeria is blessed with tremendous natural resources but its recent history of economic unrest, political turmoil and rebel activity in the North-East has left a scar on its people. Many of the surrounding countries face similar problems, including increasing religious tension, with extremist groups trying to exert ever-greater influence. Needless to say, Bible work in this region is difficult.

The purpose of our trip was to fully

grasp the region's challenges and the opportunities for Bible mission which we can support. We attended a conference with representatives from eleven Bible Societies across the Sahel region which stretches along the breadth of the African continent immediately to the south of the Sahara Desert.

Most of the countries face urgent infrastructural needs. In Chad, Bible distribution is slow and laborious because of the lack of vehicles. In Niger, the Bible shop roof recently collapsed creating hazardous conditions for staff and visitors. In Mali, the lack of solar-powered electricity means there's no air conditioning to combat the unbearable 40-degree heat. The list of practical needs is long.

But I was amazed at the courage and hopefulness of our staff. Despite their difficulties, in the last few years their work has actually developed and diversified. On top of Bible translation and distribution they are facilitating literacy classes, multiple kinds of

outreach in primary schools, work with teenage-mothers and support for Muslim-background believers as well as running trauma healing projects with refugees displaced by Boko Haram.

I was deeply moved by my African colleagues' unwavering faith in the power of the Bible to transform lives in their communities. They embody the heart of our mission: to provide God's word to the nations and reach out to the toughest, hardest places.

After the conference we travelled to Sierra Leone. Having supported intervention efforts after the terrible mudslide which occurred in 2017 we wanted to assess how we can continue to support people as they cope with the aftermath.

First we visited the site of the disaster in the capital city Freetown. Visible from a considerable distance was Sugar Loaf Mountain, marred by the wide, bright-orange streak of rock and earth exposed by the mudslide. It was a

horrifying sight, standing out in stark relief against the green vegetation covering the rest of the mountain. Three days of torrential rainfall in August 2017 caused flash floods and triggered the massive landslide, as part of the mountain collapsed sending a tidal wave of debris down into the valley. It completely submerged hundreds of houses and structures, killing a reported 1,141 people and leaving another 3,000 homeless and destitute.

We met Elenorah, the head of Regent Village, one of the communities most affected by the mudslide. She remembered the event vividly:

'I heard a thunder-like noise at 6.30 am, followed by the sound of something being dragged down. The mud was still moving when I arrived on site just before 7 am. The accident happened in a matter of seconds, and people were unable to escape because it was a

valley. Everything disappeared instantly. And those who survived lost all they had.' Desperate to help, Elenorah hired a van to rush people to the local hospitals for the rest of the day, until the ambulances and rescue team arrived to remove bodies.

It was humbling to hear first hand of our efforts after the disaster too. Generous emergency donations meant we could provide trauma healing and essential resources (food, clothing, toiletries and mattresses) in emergency camps for survivors. We also distributed Creole and English Bibles and Scripture portions as well as audio-Bibles for those who couldn't read.

Recalling the moment Bibles were handed out, Raymond from our team in Sierra Leone said, 'All hope was gone. We thought they needed clothes and food, but when we came to the camps a second time with the Bibles, people were clapping their hands and singing for joy, saying:

"This is the best gift that has been given to us." And it wasn't only Christians desperate for Bibles. Muslims were eager to receive them too. Now, every Sunday before church, Elenorah leads a study group for both Christian and Muslim women, focusing on the hope they have even in the midst of despair – God's message of redemption and healing.

Leaving Africa I felt encouraged knowing God is at work in these most difficult situations. I also felt a deep sense of gratitude and fellowship with our African colleagues and a determination to support them in their vital Gospel work in the Sahel region. Please pray for God to protect and heal them and give them strength and courage in their work.



Noemie Smith

Strategic Partnerships Officer

Mission on the cricket field

If you know anything about cricket, you'll know that in Pakistan, it's a national obsession. Even the country's Prime Minister, elected last year, is former international cricket hero Imran Khan.

So if you're engaged in mission and you want to reach all levels of Pakistan society, including huge numbers of young people, where do you need to be? On the cricket field.

For the last 17 years, Bible Society in Pakistan has been running a national sports tournament. Around 30,000 competitors, aged from 13 up to 30, take part in football, badminton, athletics and basketball tournaments.

But the real draw is the professionally-run T20 cricket competition.

Anthony Lamuel, who leads our team in Pakistan and admits he'll still swing the bat if he has the chance, says, 'Sport brings everyone onto a common platform. You forget everything when you are playing out there. The only thing is wanting to win, full stop.'

Teams of Christians, Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus all take part, and there's widespread positive media coverage (see photo below). It's fiercely competitive, with balls flying down the wicket and each six loudly cheered. But there's a spirit of friendship and sportsmanship.

Crucially, before every match, the teams listen to a 15-minute Bible talk.

A pastor is assigned to each game, and before a ball is allowed to be bowled, they pray. Last year, 30,000 Scripture booklets, wonderfully entitled Jesus is an Ideal Captain, were also handed out.

But it's not just the scale and professionalism of this ministry that's extraordinary, it's the fact that it's taking place at all...

Pakistan is in the top five most dangerous countries in the world in which to follow Jesus*. Only 1.8% of the population are Christians, and there have been a number of brutal terrorist attacks on churches. Indeed, one of Anthony's nephews was widowed when nine people were killed by gunmen who stormed a church in December 2017.

More recently, the release of Asia Bibi, a Christian who spent eight years on death row after being accused of insulting the Prophet Muhammed, triggered violent protests and death threats.

Anthony has been leading Bible work in Pakistan for two decades and has learned to live with the risk – but he said, 'Islamic fundamentalism is very dangerous. It's something to be scared of. In the back of our minds, we always have a fear.'



But on the cricket pitch, for 40 overs, that can be put to one side.

'The beauty of sport is that you come together,' said Anthony. 'We don't go wanting to convert people, we just want to share the love of Christ and share that as Christians, we love human beings, we are made in God's image, and we need to respect each other. It's the way we present ourselves, the way people look at us, that's the witness.'

* Open Doors watch list 2018 – Pakistan is number 5



Claire Smith
Freelance writer



Testimonies from players

'I always felt threatened by senior players because I was the only Christian in the team. I am very thankful to Bible Society for providing this sports tournament to help young players develop confidence in their faith.' – Stephen

'I never went to church because my parents never asked me to go with them. But last year I took part in the cricket tournament, and the pastor preached very diligently. He asked if we go to church, and said God would shower his blessings. Now I regularly attend church and I'm also a choir member.' – Samuel



Get your new Pass it On booklet



Almost 1,000 people have now passed on the Bible verse that matters to them, sending in stories of how God's word has brought comfort, hope or guidance.

We received so many inspirational stories from you that we decided to produce a booklet of our favourite stories, and we've analysed more than 600 responses to find out just what the Bible means to our supporters.

56% of your favourite verses came from the New Testament, but in total 42 books of the Bible were mentioned – which shows that all of Scripture speaks to us.

Around a fifth of verses mentioned were from the book of Psalms – and this was the top book referenced, followed by John and Romans. People chose verses for a variety of reasons; some were significant in childhood, such as a school motto, and some were selected as a one-line distillation of the Christian faith. However, the majority, almost a quarter of people, chose verses that brought comfort and courage often in life's most difficult moments.

The favourite verse, cited by 28

people, was Proverbs 3.5–6: 'Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.'

If you don't already have a copy of the *Pass it On* booklet, we'd love to send you one (we'd really appreciate a small donation to cover the cost of production and postage). Simply tick the box on the covering letter and post it back to us.

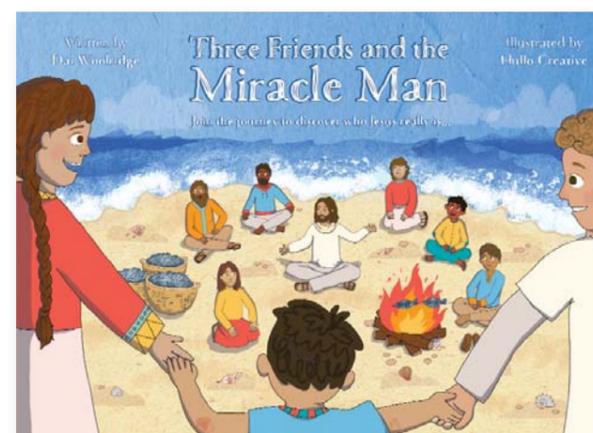
To read more *Pass it On* stories, visit biblesociety.org.uk/passonmyverse If you haven't already, you can submit your story online too, and pass on the verse that matters to you.

Sharing our stories with the Bible is a great way to pass on God's word, but many people also choose to leave a legacy gift in their will to support our work. If you'd like to learn more about this, contact Howard Barker on 01793 418222 or email howard.barker@biblesociety.org.uk

Proverbs 3.5-6 (x28 mentions)



Gerald Andipatin, a lifelong Christian who grew up in South Africa, has chosen to pass on the Bible to future generations by leaving a gift in his will. He said, 'I'm not gifted at standing up in a pulpit to speak, but I can do this, I can leave a legacy to help people get to know the Lord. It's not a huge amount, but as they say, many drops make an ocean. Nothing you do for the Lord goes unnoticed!'



Share the miraculous news of Easter

Ever wondered what Jairus' daughter or the boy with the five loaves and two fish made of what happened to Jesus after their miraculous encounters with him?

Why didn't everybody love the miracle worker who could feed 5000 families with one boy's lunch? Why did the man who brought people back to life die on a cross? What does it all mean?

Based on the gospel accounts, our brand new story for 2019, *Three Friends and the Miracle Man*, follows three children as they ask these questions and journey to discover who Jesus really is.

These story booklets could be the perfect way for you to share the miraculous news of Easter with a young family member, or your church. And we've developed lots of accompanying free resources to help you. Download the free video animation of the story to show in your church and if you're thinking of doing an all-age Easter service, check out our resources including a drama script and suggested activities.

Visit our website biblesociety.org.uk/Easter or call 01793 418222 to get your copies of *Three Friends and the Miracle Man* and download your Easter resources. Together we can help bring the Bible to life for the next generation.



End of the Road?

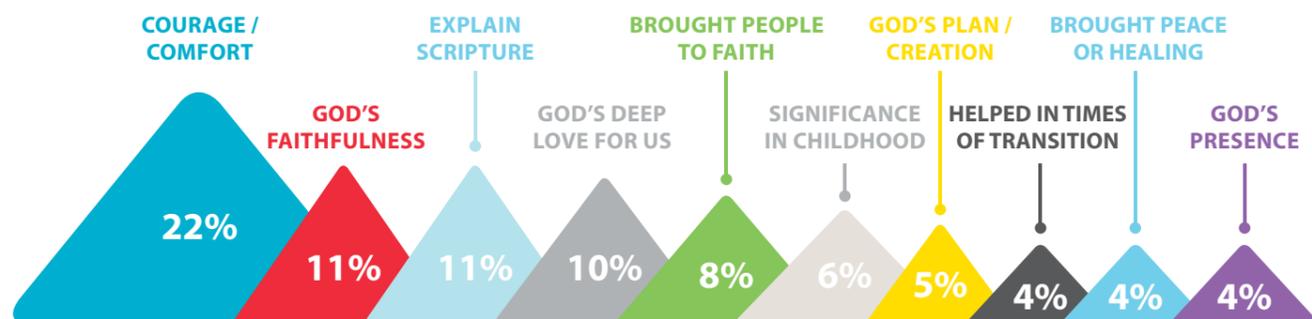
End of the Road? is our new book that goes behind the scenes of the crucifixion and resurrection to look at the religious and political turmoil that influenced those world-changing events.

The Jewish leaders and people of the time all struggled to know how to stay on the right side of their Roman overlords without abandoning their faith. During the time of Passover, the most important Jewish festival, tensions were especially high.

In the midst of all this unrest, Jesus was arrested, tried and sentenced to death.

But that wasn't the end of the road, because Jesus was seen alive again, and the religious and political clashes continued as his followers formed the Christian Church, with Jesus, not Caesar, as its head.

To order your copy go to biblesociety.org.uk/road



Lent 2019

Journey with us this Lent to discover what the Bible has to say about loneliness. Join with Krish Kandiah to explore six messages of great hope and great challenge in weekly radio services, podcasts and small group resources leading up to Easter. It begins on Sunday 10 March with 'An invitation to forgiveness'. To find out more go to biblesociety.org.uk/lent2019

Seeing hope restored in Jordan



Amena (left) and Maya (right) welcoming us to their home in Jordan

Photography by Tom Newbold

There's nothing quite like seeing the impact of your support through hearing first-hand testimonies of changed lives. This was my experience in Jordan, where I recently went on a trip with a group of Bible Society supporters and staff. As a *Bible a Month* supporter myself, it was incredible to witness the impact on people's lives made possible by the generosity of our supporters.

I met an amazing refugee from Syria. To protect his identity, we'll refer to him as Omar. He had made a commitment to Jesus, although he had other beliefs. Our team provided him with aid when he first arrived as a refugee, and over time they helped him explore the Bible.

Sitting in Omar's bare apartment on a hot, dry day, it was a stark reminder of the incredibly simple lifestyle he was living in his new country. He had been forced to give up his wealth and all his possessions in order to escape Syria. Yet in some ways, he told me he now feels more content than ever before.

'After I (came to) know Jesus, I also had hard times, but I felt God with me. This was the first time I've felt God with me and that he cares for me,' he said.

He explained how he started to practise the teachings of the Bible and now his wife saw a different person in him. This led her to come to know Jesus too.

Omar said 'I was practising the Bible and she saw this. Many people said that I'm a different person. I used to face the bad things with bad things, but after knowing Jesus I am turning the other cheek. I have learnt a new thing and thank Jesus for it.'

Our team in Jordan work with many refugees, like Omar, from Syria and Iraq. I was also able to meet two Iraqi refugee ladies, who had been helped through our Bible-based trauma healing programme.

They told me how the trauma healing sessions had helped them talk through their experiences of

being forced from their home in Iraq by ISIS and fleeing to Jordan. One lady, Maya, told me her favourite Bible verse was Matthew 7.7 'Ask and it will be given to you...'. This was so reflective of their attitude. Despite their circumstances, they clearly relied on and trusted God for all things.

There are millions of refugees in Jordan. Many are being helped by our team in Jordan. Omar, Maya and her mother, Amena, all showed me their Bibles and told me how much God's word means to them.

Despite some of the toughest of circumstances for refugees in Jordan, I witnessed hope restored, comfort and trust in God's word, and faith in Jesus. It was a humbling and inspiring experience.



Tom Newbold
Fundraising
Manager

Insight into Egypt

An interview with Ramez Atallah who runs the Bible Society in Egypt

Q: How did you come to faith?

A: I was born and brought up in Egypt in a wealthy family, my grandfather was very wealthy. But in the late 50s the socialist regime began nationalising big businesses and the government took over my grandfather's business.

My grandparents escaped to Canada and I was smuggled out to go and live with them, but my parents couldn't leave. A few months after I got there, my grandfather died and my grandmother went back to her family in Lebanon, so I was on my own at 16.

My parents then escaped Egypt, but couldn't get to Canada, so I had to negotiate with the government and eventually we were given asylum. During that summer when I was alone, through the witness of the local church, I came to know Jesus and had the burden to share the Gospel with the people of Egypt.

It took me 18 years to go back, but I planned it very carefully. I got a degree in social work as a councillor and then went on to do theology, so I could be equipped to teach the Bible. During that time I met my wife at university.

We moved back to Egypt in 1980. The Bible Society was very small when I joined it, we had 3 bookshops and 13 staff and now we are one of the biggest Bible Societies around the world. We have 220 staff, 17 bookshops on the streets, endless activities and many publications. We have 45 fundraising staff, doing more than 800 Bible Sundays per year.

Q: What's the church context in Egypt and how do you work with them?

A: Egypt has about 100 million people, between 10-15% are Christians, the majority belonging to the Coptic Orthodox Church. All the churches in Egypt can only accommodate 20% of the Christians at one time, churches are packed. Most churches are thriving, Christians are increasing in population, and we have some Sunday schools with 10,000 children.

As young people get older the church attendance numbers decrease, so at Bible Society we're focusing on engaging teenagers through big events like You've Got Talent contests and Bible quiz competitions around the country.

Church leaders have found in Bible Society a way of reaching young people so churches are very supportive of our work as we seek to serve them.

Q: The Christian community is thriving in Egypt, what can we learn from you?

A: When you face opposition, you need a reason to be a Christian. Living as a minority makes you more committed to your Christian identity. When you are discriminated against you have to work harder at university, you have to make a greater effort. I believe that being a minority in a Muslim majority makes you more attached to your faith, or you quit your faith. There's no middle road.



YOUR LETTERS & COMMENTS

What can I say, I salute you all for the very difficult work you do in so many difficult countries, you have my heartfelt love and respect to all of you both here and overseas. It cannot be easy, God's blessings to all of you.

EUSTACE, LONDON

We want to say a huge thank you for your recent gifts to our China appeal. Over 4,000 of you have generously sent £225,000 to provide Bibles to the people of China, amazingly this was a match appeal so a very generous supporter is matching every pound sent in which means we have £450,000 to help change lives in China, we are so grateful to you all!

LARISSA, WORD IN ACTION EDITOR

How moving to read of how God is using Bible Society's programme My Second Chance in detention centres in Guatemala to transform young men like Eduardo and Jefferson from criminals to pastor and chef. Thrilling, too, to hear of hundreds of Malawian children longing for a children's Bible, we mustn't disappoint them.

ANNE, WARRINGTON

Colourful, vibrant, informative. Great article on Ellen Ranyard, who I'd never heard of! Good to see well-attended Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast. One Verse an encouragement for memorisers, too. Algeria, Malawi, Latin America – signs of hope and hard work everywhere, *Word in Action!*

THEODORE, ASHFORD

The *Good News Bible – The Youth Edition* has been very useful to a couple of young women who have teenagers who are asking them questions. I have been able to talk with them but the Edition has helped tremendously – just at the right time.

MARGARET, MIRFIELD



Jenny Newman has been volunteering for Bible Society since 1975, having joined the Exmouth Action Group because her friend was involved. In 2017 friends from the community recommended Jenny receive a British Empire Medal in The Queen's Birthday Honours List for her services to the Exmouth community. We were delighted to add our support to this important nomination. Jenny was very surprised to receive a letter in May 2018 and she received her honour in October last year. Jenny is still at the heart of the Action Group in Exmouth and we count it a privilege to be able to serve alongside her.



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



'We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.' Psalm 78.4 (ESV)

These are the Scriptures that call me to action! This is the Psalm that reminds me of the importance of sharing the Bible with the next generation, the children yet to be born. I'm from the Sunday school generation, but we are a thing of the past. There are many generations of children who have never been in a church or heard the amazing Bible stories.

Maybe as you are reading this the Holy Spirit is calling you to share the Bible

through our Open the Book programme in your local primary school. All you need to do is watch the video at openthebook.net, pray, share your passion with your church and then have a look on the website for training near you. We would love you to join us in sharing the Bible with the next generation!

Julie Jefferies
Head of Open the Book

Biblepeople:

I became a Christian in 1995 and have been compelled by Christ, his cause and his Church ever since. Alongside my Bible Society role I lead Hub Church in South Woodford, London. It started three years ago in our lounge with a handful of people. We prioritised eating together, worshipping, reading the Bible, praying and being generous to our local community. We now have eleven Hubs or small groups all doing the same thing. There are activities through the week and two monthly

gatherings when we all come together to remember that we are part of something much bigger than ourselves. In 2019 we will be looking to plant two churches and expand on our current work. It is a privilege to be a part of this call and to see how it complements my work with engaging the local church on behalf of Bible Society in England and Wales.

Nigel Langford
Head of Church Relations



We are delighted to announce that Bible Society is now an accredited Living Wage Employer. This means that every member of staff working for Bible Society will earn a real Living Wage. The real Living Wage is higher

Celebrating our Living Wage accreditation

than the government's minimum, or National Living Wage, and is an independently calculated hourly rate of pay that is based on the actual cost of living.

Over 4,700 organisations voluntarily choose to pay the real Living Wage because we believe that a hard day's work deserves a fair day's pay.

This commitment applies to not only directly employed staff but also to our third party contracted staff. We are really proud of this commitment.

The Living Wage movement has benefited hundreds of thousands of families by enabling them to earn a wage they can live on. Find out more by visiting livingwage.org.uk

Join us.

9 – 10 April 2019



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