



# BAM

## Bible A Month

A Bible Society  
supporter's  
newsletter

JULY 2017

### CAMEROON

## Hope and healing for the vulnerable

Sexual exploitation is heartbreakingly common in Cameroon. Many girls as young as 12 are victims of sexual abuse, and it's not uncommon for girls to be pregnant by 15. Teens who fall pregnant often face a horrible choice: abort the child or marry the abuser. Some communities have been known to murder illegitimate babies and their mothers.

The Bible Society's *Esther Project* is working to restore young women who have experienced trauma like this, teaching them vital life skills, and allowing God to heal their emotional wounds.

Celeste (name changed to protect her identity) found peace and redemption through the project. She says: "The gospel message that was preached there really touched me and helped me get my spirit back."

'Leonie' has also benefited from the Esther Project. She finds it hard to express the extent of the gratitude she feels towards donors who have supported her: "My mouth is too small to say *Thank You*."

Tragically, this project has been underfunded for years. Last year more than 1300 girls missed out when the money dried up. Thank you for your kindness, which will prevent this happening again and make a world of difference in many broken lives.



### CHINA

## Thousands received a Bible, but millions are waiting.

Bible Society donors like you in several countries subsidised the cost of paper to print over 470,000 Bibles at Amity Printing Press in the first few months of 2017. This means hundreds of thousands of Chinese Christians who otherwise couldn't have afforded Bibles now have their own copies, helping them grow in faith and reach out to others too.

Yet millions more are still waiting.

Since the reopening of churches in China in the 1980s, the number of Christians has expanded from 2.7 million in 1949 to 46 million today. As the number of Christians swells, the demand for God's word grows.

Chinese Christians recognise the Bible as the key basis for wisdom in daily life and their strongest weapon against false teaching, but without your gifts they could never have access to it. Most of China's Christians live in poorer rural areas where few have the means to pay for a Bible.

With your support, more Chinese will be able to buy their own copy of the "affordable" Bible. The global goal shared by several Bible Societies is to raise funds for 2.5 million Bibles this year, opening the way for more lives to be transformed and have their faith strengthened.



### ARAB-ISRAELIS

## Seeing themselves in Christ

Arab-Israelis are a people lost between Jewish Israelis and Arab Palestinians. They are a double minority: only 20% of Israelis are Arabs (1.2 million), and of this group only 120,000 are Christian.

The Arab Israeli Bible Society (AIBS) has been actively developing programmes among the Arab Israeli population since 2008, but without your financial support it would be impossible for them to continue operating.

Despite the unique potential and freedom for Christian service and ministry here, there is no way AIBS could survive relying on domestic sales and fundraising alone, especially considering Arabs generally earn a lower income than the broader Israeli population. Most local churches struggle to support their priests and pastors, with nothing left over to support Scripture initiatives.

Your gifts allow Bible Society to maintain its strategic presence in Galilee, helping Arab-Israelis engage with God's word.

Thanks to you, thousands of Bibles and Scripture portions were distributed in 2016, including a DVD reproduction of the Peace Bible which reached children in Israel and in refugee camps in the West Bank. 100 audio Bibles were also provided for patients in the Hospital of Nazareth.

Several conferences and workshops also brought women and their families up close with the Bible and its relevance to the challenges of daily life.



## MONGOLIA

# Equipping the young church on the Steppe

Mongolia's vastness is well-known, but these huge spaces are far from empty. Mongolia's young church is growing fast. When communism made way for a democratic form of government in 1990, there were just a few known Christians. Now, at least 50,000 believers (some say 100,000) meet in around 600 churches across the country.

Having access to the Bible is crucial to the Mongolian church becoming strong and deeply rooted, but distribution is a challenge. Outside the cities of Ulaanbaatar and Darkhan, isolated communities are spread out over 21 provinces across 1.56 million square kilometres. Reaching people out in the hinterland involves travelling over rugged terrain in the most extreme weather imaginable. And outside of the cities, most roads are unsealed — sometimes little more than dirt tracks. That's made it vital for the Mongolian Union Bible Society (MUBS) to have a reliable, sturdy 4WD vehicle to deliver Bibles to churches, and thereafter into the hands of Christians and those who are seeking. In a land where a third of the population is on the move, the vehicle is key to Bible distribution and outreach.

This year, MUBS aims to distribute 10,000 Bibles across all Mongolian provinces. "Our mission is to provide a Bible to every family," says the team.



## SOUTH PACIFIC

# Fresh start for eight island nations

Praise God with us for the amazing progress made translating the Tongan Contemporary Old Testament. The translation work which began in 2015 is almost complete, and reviewing of the draft starts soon.

This is just one of many Scripture translation and revision projects currently underway across the South Pacific. With your support, Bible Society is working to give Christians in eight island nations a fresh start by producing contemporary Scripture resources that will speak to a new generation.

Young people are benefiting from an exciting focus on creating cutting-edge digital resources and creative presentations of Scripture such as Bible comic storybooks.

In the Solomon Islands, brightly coloured 'Abraham' comics in various languages encouraged readers to learn about God's love in a fun-filled way. For some, this was the first Scripture they had ever seen.

South Pacific nations have a rich heritage of Christian mission, but many churches struggle because people find it hard to connect with the old-fashioned Bible translations available to them. There are also many languages that have no Scripture translation at all, and low literacy rates in some parts of the region also block the way to engaging with God's word.



## PORTUGAL

# Introducing children to Jesus

Imagine your child going right through school without ever hearing about Jesus. This is the reality for many children in Portugal, where the Bible is an almost forgotten book. This European nation is becoming increasingly secularised, and only a quarter of children attend religious education classes.

The Bible Society of Portugal needs your help to reach children at the age when they are most open to the gospel and its values.

Your gift will reach one million children in Portugal with God's word.

In partnership with local churches, we are distributing 16-page Action Bibles in schools. These graphic style booklets tell the story of Jesus in a way that connects with children up to age 14.

Bible Society has also produced a series of resources to help churches engage with young audiences. These include teaching tools and games to be used in public schools, as well as an online course and a mobile app.

Portugal's next generations may never discover Jesus, unless we act now. Pray that many children's lives are changed through a relationship with him.



**BIBLE  
SOCIETY**  
1817-2017



Thank you for supporting our projects

GPO BOX 9874

In Your Capital City

**Phone:** 1300 BIBLES (1300 242 537)

**Email:** [bibles@biblesociety.org.au](mailto:bibles@biblesociety.org.au)

**Website:** [biblesociety.org.au](http://biblesociety.org.au)