



# Word **in** Action

Your letters  
and comments  
**SPECIAL**



How you're  
feeding an amazing  
hunger for Bibles  
in Egypt.

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Embracing  
Iranian migrants  
with the love  
of Jesus.

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Christmas gifts  
with meaning  
for you and  
your family.

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# Welcome to the Winter Edition

## EDITOR'S NOTE

### Brothers and sisters

You will see that the 'Your letters and comments' page has been expanded for this edition.

Since I took over as *Word in Action* editor a couple of years ago, I've been trying to make the magazine a little more informal, with an even warmer tone than it had before.

I've done this by replying to some of your comments and generally trying to include more of YOU in the magazine.

For example, we ran a quiz in the last edition, and the winners are named on page 11. A reader also appeared as a guest contributor for the One Verse section recently.

As Claire from Malvern says on page 11, we 'belong to one another in Christ'.

The story that made me cry with joy is that of the Iranian migrants arriving here (pages 6 and 7). Migration is a tricky subject. It was probably the same a few thousand years ago when Jesus was a migrant in Egypt. But I know the Lord will be very pleased with the warm Christian welcome being given to migrants at many churches here.

Anyway, I'll let you go. Darius from Iran, Auntie Zhao from China and many grateful Egyptians await you inside. Keep those comments flooding in and have a great Christmas.

God bless you all.

Simon Bartz, Editor



## LETTER FROM OUR CEO

### The life cycle of the Bible

The range of articles in this edition of your magazine illustrates the breadth of activities that Bible Society is involved with, which we call the 'life cycle of the Bible'.

It begins with translation into a language that people understand. The article on page 14 illustrates how that work is always ongoing because languages change over time and there are new textual discoveries, in this case from the Dead Sea Scrolls. We always want to translate those findings to keep the text up to date with scholarship, presented in understandable wording and fresh for each generation of readers.

Then, the Bible needs to be printed and distributed. It's the world's best-seller and there's always demand for more. Quite often, moments of extremity see people drawn to the Bible. We see that in the story about Iranian migrants. Migrants coming to the UK and being given a Bible by a church can be a special thing, especially when these people come from countries where the Bible may not be so easily available.

After that, when communities of believers settle down, whether in England, Egypt or China (see the featured stories from those countries), there is a need for teaching and for leaders and Bible communicators to be trained to help others read and understand the Scriptures.

And finally, it is only when the text goes from being in our hands to being in our minds and hearts that transformation takes place.

So, all of our work is aimed at that goal of a deeper encounter and engagement with the Scriptures for each person that we reach.

Paul Williams, Bible Society's Chief Executive

Cover photo: A mother and her child at one of the thriving Bible study groups in Cairo. Your support helps train the hundreds of church leaders in Egypt who are leading these groups. Photo credit: Alex Baker/Bible Society

Word in Action design: Katie Tang

Online ordering: [shop.biblesociety.org.uk/wia](http://shop.biblesociety.org.uk/wia)

For all enquiries call 01793 418222



## Flowers in the desert

### Your provision of Bibles and training of leaders is emboldening Christians in Egypt.

WORDS BY STUART FORD

Mira, 20, went to church in Egypt hoping to win a prize, but thanks to your help she was given a free Bible. Within the pages she encountered Jesus and is now training to be a church worker. 'The Bible is the greatest prize ever,' she says. Photos: Alex Baker/Bible Society

**Egypt. Just the name has incredibly alluring power. Close your eyes for a moment, if you would, and see what comes to mind when you think of that place.**

My mind conjures images of a blazing sun, shifting sands, glittering gold artefacts, and pyramids as old as history itself. Perhaps we also think of bustling markets and exotic Middle Eastern food, and (for the modern Brit!) relaxing days by the beach in Sharm el Sheikh.

But Egypt has another side, one which can be largely hidden beneath those better known and more visible layers. You see, Egypt has a rich and enduring Christian heritage. Your support today is vital in growing and maintaining the many amazing Bible projects that build on that heritage.

I visited Cairo this year and saw some of those projects

first-hand. I was moved by the dynamism and the boldness of our Bible Society of Egypt colleagues as they share their love for the Bible with as many people as they can. They particularly focus on reaching out to young people and do so through innovative digital work, making the Bible accessible through apps and audio, a hugely successful programme that has been supported by you for many years.

### Growing in faith

Egypt is not a majority Christian country. There are believed to be up to 15 million Christians in a population of 111 million. These Christians have a deep love for Jesus and a real hunger for the Scriptures.

With your support, Bible Society of Egypt hopes to distribute about 115,000 heavily subsidised Bibles and New Testaments in 2025. Vast amounts of these

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**Carol has learnt to lift the Bible stories off the page and make them real to her. She told us: "Now I know God."**

affordable Scriptures are purchased by church leaders, evangelists and others, and given to people for free. Last year, just over 115,000 were distributed.

This is critical because Egypt's economy has suffered a lot in recent years. Without that discount many people couldn't afford a Bible at all.

### More Bibles needed

Wherever I went in Egypt, ministers spoke of the incredible need for more Bibles. Last year, the demand for Bibles was nearly three times the supply!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4





Marica and Mira, both 7, display their precious Children's Scripture books at a Bible study group supported by you at Abusaifayn Coptic Orthodox Church in Cairo. Photos: Alex Baker/Bible Society



## A thank you from Egypt

'Thank you for providing the Bible Study programme in Egypt. It has had a big impact, and made such a difference, in my family, the church, and me personally,' said Pastor Hany of Sarry el-Qobba Presbyterian Church in Cairo.

'Young people are now going from a shallow knowledge of God's word to a much deeper understanding. The Bible Study programme has completely changed the way the young people read the Bible. They are happily engaging with their Bibles much more. This was my dream! Without your prayers and support this could not have happened. Thank you.'



To directly support Bible Society work in Egypt go to [biblesociety.org.uk/wia-egypt](https://biblesociety.org.uk/wia-egypt) or scan the code

One amazing Christian hub where this distribution takes place is known as the Cave Church complex in Cairo, where we met Sara who was a recipient of one of those Bibles. I was moved by how she clutched her Bible to her chest in one of the vast cave churches and eagerly opened it to show us each of the passages that meant so much to her. Her fingers moved effortlessly through the pages, knowing instinctively where to find the words that gave her so much life. It was clear that the Bible she had received was much more than just a book; it was a companion that she had become deeply familiar with.

'The Bible is bringing life in the midst of poverty,' she told us. 'So ensuring we have the supply of Bibles to meet the demand is more important than ever.'

### Lives transformed

And the work doesn't stop when people receive a Bible. One of the most successful Scripture initiatives in Egypt has been the training of men and

women to lead inductive Bible study groups. This has spread throughout the country and led many people to deepen their engagement with Scripture through a simple contextual reading of Bible passages. These Bible studies have been especially attractive to young people, helping them to see how ancient stories can make sense of and transform their lives today.

Carol, aged 20, has engaged with the Bible study programme and learnt simple techniques that help her to read the Bible in context and apply it to her life, lifting the stories off the page and making them real to her. She told us: 'Now I know God.'

Later, I was in a room full of people who were from one of the Bible study groups in a Coptic church. I asked them a question that I often ask groups: 'What is your favourite Bible passage?' If I'm honest, there are a few passages that come up again and again, and they often come from the gospels. I was humbled, though, when

“**One person came forward with their Bible and handed it to me. I opened it and let out a quiet gasp.**”

almost every hand in the room shot up and for the next half an hour or so, people came forward to share passages from across the whole Bible, from Leviticus to Hebrews, from the Psalms to Song of Songs. The Bible study process had opened up the riches of God's word for these people in deeply profound ways.

'The way I read the Bible has completely changed,' Demana told us in a Bible study group at Abusaifayn Coptic Church. 'As I apply the word to my life I have become a different person,' she added.

'Before, I had no explanations,' added Mahir. 'I was shallow in my faith. Now I understand and I have grown in my faith,' he said.

### Living through the Bible

My most memorable moment happened at the same event when one person came forward with their Bible and handed it to me. I opened it and let out a quiet gasp. Without exaggeration, every line of every page of her dogeared and well-read Bible was full of highlights, underlining and personal notes. She lived in and through her Bible, a life given birth through the study she followed thanks to your generous support.

Now, when I close my eyes, the image of pyramids bathed in a golden sun recedes and is replaced by that little Bible full of underlining and the person living out its words. Your support helped that to happen, and your continued support transforms more and more lives by the power of God's word.



Stuart Ford, Catholic Engagement Officer



You are strengthening the faith of entire congregations in Egypt by helping to train their leaders.



**10-15 million people identify as Christians in this Muslim-majority country of 111 million.**



**115,000+ subsidised Bibles were distributed last year by Bible Society of Egypt. A similar amount is planned for 2025 if £70,000 is raised, the amount needed to print and sell the Scriptures at vastly discounted prices.**



**520 Bible study leaders set to be trained in Egypt in 2025.**





## Embracing migrants with the love of Jesus

WORDS BY JAMES HOWARD-SMITH

Darius (left, speaking to Bible Society staff) and other Iranians received Bibles thanks to you and told Bible Society it makes a huge difference having God's word with them on such a hard journey.  
Photos: Alex Baker/Bible Society

**At a small church in the South West of England, a young man who recently arrived from Iran receives his first Bible. He almost can't believe what he's touching. 'If they see you holding a Bible like this in Iran,' he says, 'They'll kill you.'**

You'll find churches at the forefront of welcoming new arrivals – wherever they've come from. The charity Welcome Churches, a Bible Society partner that now has more than 1,300 member congregations, has been working since 2018 to see every refugee welcomed by a church.

A great example of a welcoming church is the small congregation in which the young man quoted above was one of many to receive a free Bible.

The church asked us not to name it because they're concerned for the safety of their Iranian members. (The British government's latest sanctions

against Iran were introduced in response to violence and threats against Iranians in Britain and their families in Iran.)

More than two-thirds of the people attending this church on a Sunday are now Iranian.

### A welcoming church

'Hotels around here are filled up with asylum seekers,' the church's minister said. 'Word got around that this was a welcoming place in an otherwise hostile environment. And we've gone from a congregation of thirty people to a hundred in three years.'

And the Bible is turning curious visitors into church members. Migrants are coming for the welcome, and then staying for the word.

Chantelle Baker, Bible Society's Community Engagement Manager, says, 'We work with churches and detention centres

to make sure that Bibles are supplied, free of charge, to those who want them.'

For a refugee to read the word of God is one thing, but for God to speak the language they grew up with is a great blessing.

The Iranian government prohibits the printing and distribution of Christian resources in Farsi, Iran's native and official language. So people leaving the country in huge numbers means huge numbers of people suddenly gaining free access to Scripture.

'It's so wonderful to read and pray in my own language,' said an Iranian at the church. He'd been curious about the Bible and read bits online, eventually receiving an easy-to-read edition of the Bible in modern Farsi.



James Howard-Smith,  
Digital Fundraiser



**'I used to chant, "Death to America," but now I pray for peace.'**

### Darius' story

'My father had a stroke and one of my best friends came to the hospital and prayed. I said, "Why are you praying like that? Have you become a Christian?" He said, "Yes". Soon after, my father got better.

'It's really dangerous to introduce someone to Christianity in Iran. My friend invited me to his Bible class in his home, but he had to be careful because the security services try to infiltrate such meetings.

'I only went to watch. I didn't accept new things easily. But they said God is love. I thought in religion there was a lot of war, but Jesus says when somebody hits you, turn the other cheek. For me that's really amazing. Forgiveness rather than revenge.

'Love your God; love your neighbour. It really touched my heart. At the class one day, I told them I want to be Christian. They said, "We don't baptise in this country, but read this prayer." I prayed and became a Christian.

'I'm applying for asylum here because my life is at risk. After I left Iran, they found Christian resources in my home. If I went back, I'd be arrested, and they'd use me to track down the Bible class.

'I have been given a free Bible in Farsi, which is amazing. My favourite verse is 1 John 4.16. God is love. Jesus said forgive your enemies. He sacrificed himself. I used to chant, "Death to America," but now I pray for peace.'

## In Iran ...



**It's a criminal offence to convert from Islam to Christianity.**



**Christian resources (including the Bible) cannot be published in Farsi.**



**Some estimates suggest the number of Christians in Iran could be more than a million, ten times what official figures show.**



## Migrants at your church?

Bible Society partners with Welcome Churches, a charity working to see every refugee in Britain welcomed by a local church.

Your support means Bible Society can provide Bibles in a range of languages to asylum seekers.

The modern Farsi Bible is expensive, but if you need copies of this or any other Bible (or the trauma healing resource *Beyond Disaster*) for asylum seekers you're serving, contact us directly and ask about the Mission Support Fund.

**Email [contactus@biblesociety.org.uk](mailto:contactus@biblesociety.org.uk) or call 01793 418222.**



The new Farsi Bible.



## ‘Sharing the good news at Christmas’

Do you love good stories? Christmas has become the season for telling impactful stories that take less than two minutes of our time. Millions of people across the UK tune in to see what stories will be shared in the Christmas campaigns of companies like John Lewis, Sainsbury’s, Disney and Coca-Cola.

We believe in an even greater story with an everlasting impact: the story of the Nativity. Share the good news of Jesus’ birth with your friends and family this Christmas through our next generation of Good News Bibles and all of our new Christmas resources.

Order now from [biblesociety.org.uk/christmaswia](http://biblesociety.org.uk/christmaswia) or call 01793 418222.



Scan here for more info or visit [biblesociety.org.uk/christmaswia](http://biblesociety.org.uk/christmaswia)

### 1 *The Shiny Bright Sparkling Light*

(primary age booklet). Once upon a time in a galaxy far, far away, there lived a Star – a bright, shiny, ever-so-sparkly Star who couldn’t wait to complete his Star training. Follow this sparkly journey as Star becomes the STARnav that leads the wise men to Bethlehem. As Star reaches his destination, he discovers someone who shines even brighter than him – Jesus, the light of the world, the very one who came to be a light in the darkness. £3.70 per copy; bulk discounts apply.

Accompanied by a wonderful, free Pop-up Nativity and brilliant video resource from the author, Dai Woolridge.

### 2 *Who Can It Be? A Christmas Wait and See!*

(toddler age booklet). It’s that special time of year and our nursery is buzzing and fizzing with Christmas glee. The little ones are practising their nativity to surprise their families and friends as they knock on Christmas doors together: Rat-a-tat-tat! Rat-a-tat-tat! Who can it be? We will have to wait and see! £3.70 per copy; bulk discounts apply.

Accompanied by lovely, free prayer and craft activities for your toddler group to engage with during the Advent season.

### 3 *Come and Sing the Christmas Story*

Back by popular demand – our revamped carol booklet with all of your favourite Christmas carols. Featuring explanations of uncommon words and Bible passages throughout to help explain what the Bible says about Christmas. Perfect as a giveaway at your Christmas carol service or for merry carol singing! £3.60 per copy; bulk discounts apply.

### 4 *Festive Christmas stickers and Christmas cards*

Based on the beloved carol ‘In the Bleak Midwinter’ these colourful stickers and cards will brighten up your Christmas season! £3.20 for a pack of four sticker sheets, £6 for a pack of ten Christmas cards.

### 5 *Good News Bibles*

Give the ultimate gift to the next generation this Christmas – the Good News Bible.



**Good News Bible – Children’s Rainbow Edition**

**RRP: £18.99**

‘Their first Bible is precious; the good news is priceless.’



**Good News Bible – Family Edition**

**RRP: £34.99**

‘Grow closer to God with the Bible together.’



**Good News Bible – The Youth Edition**

**RRP: £22.99**

‘An award-winning favourite, created for young people, with young people.’



## Your letters and comments

### Special extended edition



Thank you for my recent copy of Word in Action. I love Ethiopia and have strong family links for over 100 years with such a beautiful, mysterious Christian land. So my attention was unusually drawn to

the picture on the recent WIA cover summer 2024, the 220th Anniversary edition.

First, the cross is Ethiopian, then the colour, complexion and high cheek bones suggested an Amharic beauty, and finally the script on the book seemed clearly Amharic. So I was curious to find the description of the cover photo as being 'a housemaid in Bahrain'. All I can say is these Ethiopians get everywhere, and so does God's word – at home or abroad, in work or out, for young and old, for men and for women, no barriers of place or people. Two verses have always stood out for me about the power of God's word: Isaiah 55.10-11 and 1 Thessalonians 2.13. Keep well, and keep going.

#### David, Romford

Simon: Migrant workers flock to the Gulf to work as housemaids or construction workers but often end up enduring terrible living and working conditions. Bible Society in the Gulf publish Scriptures in more than 60 languages thanks to support from England and Wales. You are introducing these people to the love and hope found only in Jesus.

Thank you for your extraordinary effort to reach the lost. It's so exciting to learn of the Bible being given to those who have never had a Bible in their own language.

#### Peter, Truro



Dear Margaret from Cumbria, thank you for the recipe printed in the Bible Society's winter edition of Word in Action, which I have just cooked. (Only now do I have enough space to publish this letter. Margaret had sent in a Scripture-inspired recipe she called 'Abraham and Sarah's Happy Meal' – Simon.)

I am 85 and have been widowed for over ten years and this is the most ambitious meal I have ever done. My wife had the kitchen as her domain. After my wife died, I received so much church hospitality that I partly returned it by cooking this meal for three friends. I did all the preparation including digging up and slicing my own leeks.

I have a PhD in Chemistry and cooking is chemistry, so my new role wasn't as difficult as it might have been. Chemistry, at its simplest, involves mixing weights of A and B, and heating at a certain temperature for a certain time. What my wife's hand-written cookery books lacked was temperature and time (the information was presumably in her head). That was the primary obstacle to overcome.

This was my first main meal in about four months as I have had a series of minor operations. One of my friends had seconds and there are three generous meals in the fridge and freezer for future days. The centre of my biggest casserole dish was piled about two inches higher than the rim, and golly, what a lot of washing up!

#### Paul, Nottinghamshire

Simon: You can see Margaret's recipe here: [biblesociety.org.uk/happymeal](https://biblesociety.org.uk/happymeal). And there's great news for fans of the Scripture in the Kitchen column. A return is planned for spring 2025!

Dear Simon, Thank you for your magazine, very informative and it touched my heart! God's word is a seed that will produce great harvests of souls, pastors, leaders, teachers, intercessors, etc. and we will all see each other in heaven for eternity. Love in Jesus. You are HUPERNIKAO.

#### Peter, Western-Super-Mare

Simon: Thanks Peter for teaching me a really cool Greek word! I've taught it to all my colleagues.

An excellent read, but the Andrew Ollerton-mountain article seemed to bypass your proofreaders. He may have journeyed with God to a summit 4,067 m high, but not one at 4,067 km – that would really be a trip to heaven!

#### Jane, Sherborne

While initially puzzled by Andrew Ollerton's remarkable feat of not only locating but climbing this hitherto unknown peak (of 4,067 km), I then remembered that 'with God, all things are possible.' A breathtaking height indeed. Thanks for all the news of your wonderful work. It is truly inspirational.

#### Simon, Coulsdon

Simon: In the next issue Andrew goes to the Moon. Maybe.

In the summer magazine, both Simon and Noemie refer to that great sense of 'belonging,' as the Body of Christ. Simon talks about 'being a community of believers' and Noemie reminds us that we are all 'one in Christ.' That creates a warm feeling, because although we may be far removed geographically, we all 'belong' to one another in Christ.

#### Claire, Malvern

My niece is dyslexic and so I was especially touched by reading about the dyslexia-friendly Bible. Word in Action is excellent. Here's to the next 220 years!

#### Mary, Sunderland

Email us your thoughts at [WIA@biblesociety.org.uk](mailto:WIA@biblesociety.org.uk) or write to Word in Action, Bible Society, Stonehill Green, Swindon SN5 7DG

We may publish your comment together with your first name and your town, city or county. If you do not wish your comment to be published, then indicate this by writing 'not for publication'.

We reserve the right to edit letters for style and length. The views expressed do not necessarily represent those of Bible Society.



## Mountain quiz winners

In the last edition we asked you: 1. On which mountain did Jesus sweat blood? 2. On which mountain does Jesus speak to the Samaritan woman? 3. On which mountain did the animals inside Noah's ark disembark? The answers are: 1. Mount of Olives 2. Mount Gerizim\* 3. Mount Ararat

The first five winners drawn out of Andrew Ollerton's Roman helmet were Ann from Pontypridd, Alun from Chorleywood, Corinna from Swindon, Heather from Doncaster and Isabel from Buckhurst Hill. Each will receive a free pack of Bible Society prayer cards.



\*One winner, Corinna, said, 'Jesus speaks to the Samaritan woman on Mount Gerizim (assumed but not definite as it could have been Mount Ebal)'. As quite a few entrants put Ebal as their answer to that question, we decided to accept both answers as correct.

Photo: Alun, one of our quiz winners, enjoys climbing mountains and walking trips. Here he is at Masada, site of King Herod the Great's palace.



## Window into China

WORDS BY SIMON BARTZ

**There is only one ordained minister for every 6,700 believers in China. That's why your support of our pastor training programmes is vital.**



'It's unimaginable to have our own pastor. Having our own pastor would be an inexpressible joy,' said Yu Mei Ping (right). Yu's church in a small village near Nanjing in Eastern China is visited by Revd Liu Xiaofan (pictured) once a month. Liu can't visit more than that because he shepherds a number of churches. Photo credit: Clare Kendall/UBS-CP

**Longtan in rural south-eastern Chongqing is an ancient town rich in history and diverse ethnic cultures, especially those of the Tujia and Miao ethnic minority groups.**

In Chinese, Longtan means 'ponds in the shape of dragon's eyes' as the old town is located between two such bodies of water. The town might be famous for its mutton noodles washed down by hot, spicy tea, but it is also home to a community of steadfast Christians.



The cross of the new building of Longtan Fuyin Church stands tall in Longtan Ancient Town.

It's not the richest town in China by any means, but these people are content. If you look at their Bibles you'll get an indication of why. The books are battered as the pages have been turned so many times.

Our Chinese colleagues recently visited Longtan and each photo reveals its own little story.

### Blessed with a leader

The Longtan Christians are blessed with a leader to help guide them through the Scriptures, but did you know that in China it's estimated there is only one ordained minister for every 6,700 Christians.

And no matter how many leaders are trained, the need remains great, because so many people are coming to faith. Your continuing generosity means more and more young people can be trained as pastors and lay preachers.

Over the years millions of Bibles have been distributed

in China, but these Christians need leadership. There are many reports of cults taking advantage of the situation and leading Christians astray. One way of stopping this is to train more and more ministers.

### Training young ministers

The training of young, energetic Chinese ministers will not only be a massive blessing to Christian communities in rural areas such as Longtan, but will also help our Bible mission in China make greater inroads into the cities to connect with young people who often migrate there to work.

### Bible engagement

The Church in China is growing with an average of 500,000 baptisms and more than one million people joining local fellowships every year. All these new believers need Bibles and trained ministers to lead their churches and help them engage with the Scriptures.



### Zhao's story

**'I used to feel like the most shameful person – being poor and looked down upon by others,' says Zhao Pingxian. 'Now that I've studied the Bible, I'm not afraid of others' judgment. I just want to follow Jesus. Jesus is my only Saviour.'**

Zhao, 75, grows vegetables in Longtan for a living, but she often wondered about the true meaning of life. She got sucked into a cult that offered empty promises of redemption and also put her trust in fortune tellers. None of it worked out.

When she was confined to bed by illness and unable to tend her crops, she despaired. Then she was visited by members of the Christian community.

They shared the gospel with her and Jesus healed her wounded spirit. She started attending church.

Zhao recently received a Bible from her church's pastor and every morning as the sun rises she can be found reading it.

'The burden of my past struggles started to lighten, replaced by a newfound sense of joy and contentment found in God's word,' she says.



Simon Bartz, Word in Action editor



Zhang Meizhen (with her husband and son) prayed for healing and was cured.

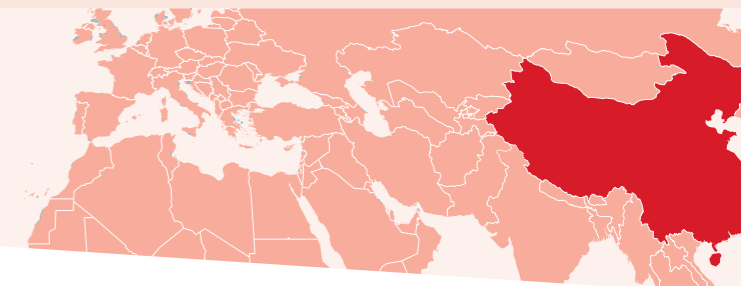


A joyful Bible study group.

**Longtan is famous for its mutton noodles but is also home to a community of steadfast Christians.**



A preacher ministers in a believer's home, where the phrase, 'God Loves the World' is painted on a wall.



## China in numbers

✝ 46 million Christians live in China according to the authorities, but unofficial estimates put it at more than double that.

🏠 6,700 believers in China share just one ordained minister, on average.

📖 90 million Bibles have been printed at Amity Printing Press in Nanjing, China for distribution in China since 1987 (when Bible Society helped establish the printing press).

🗣️ 56 ethnic groups are officially recognised by the Chinese authorities. Many different languages are spoken. Your support means the Bible is currently being translated into five more of those languages.



## Important new edition of NRSV is now available

WORDS BY NEIL REES



The New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition (NRSVue) British edition is a brilliant tool for Bible students and church leaders.

**Bible Society has produced an updated edition of the New Revised Standard Version that takes into account new information collected from studying the Dead Sea Scrolls.**

'A revision was needed because a lot has changed in how we use the English language, and in Bible scholarship since the NRSV came out in 1989,' said Derek Hill, Managing Director of Bible Society's Resources Ltd.

He described the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition (NRSVue) British edition as 'an excellent resource for Bible students, preachers and those preparing Bible study groups.'

The NRSV is very popular and is often used in Bible colleges. It is the Bible with the broadest range of scholarship and the widest ecumenical acceptance.

The Society of Biblical Literature\* was asked to create an updated edition of the NRSV. About fifty scholars from different denominations reviewed the text.

“The revision of the NRSV is a great resource for Bible students, preachers and those preparing Bible study groups.”

It includes updates made as a result of decades of scholarship of the Dead Sea Scrolls. As a result some words and phrases had been added from the scrolls, mainly in the early books of the Old Testament, where there is consensus that it helps the text make more sense.

They also added in more scholarly notes and a lot more cross-references.

The NRSV is published in the UK by four publishers: Bible Society, Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), Oxford University Press and Cambridge Bibles. These four agencies

worked together to adapt the NRSVue from American to British English.

The four publishers also produced a common table of weights and measures so you can compare ancient biblical, imperial and metric measurements, which is not in the American edition.

The Bible Society edition is the same text as that produced by SPCK, Oxford and Cambridge, but also includes a free concordance. You can get it from our online shop.

\* The Society of Biblical Literature is a US-based society dedicated to the academic study of the Bible.



Neil Rees, Digital Publishing and Translation Advisor



To visit our shop go to [biblesociety.org.uk/nrsv-wia](https://biblesociety.org.uk/nrsv-wia) or scan the code.

## One verse



Susan (left) in Cairo at the Cave Church complex. Photo credit: Bible Society

**Susan Mears**  
*Director of People at Bible Society*

**'I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly' (John 10.9–10, NIV).**

When Jesus says, 'I am the door,' he is inviting us into a life of salvation, abundant grace, and unending protection.

Once, despite being a Christian, I found myself spiritually adrift. It was through an Alpha course that the powerful message of John 10.9–10 transformed my life. I realised I was like a lost sheep, aimlessly wandering without the guidance and protection of Jesus. That revelation was a game changer, reshaping my entire existence and making Jesus the central focus of all I did.

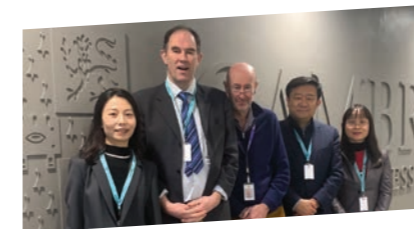
Later, I was blessed with the opportunity to work with Bible Society. I've witnessed first-

hand the transformative power of the Bible. In May of this year, I travelled to Cairo, where I saw the incredible impact our supporters' generosity has made (see pages 3–5).

In Cairo, I joined Bible studies with young leaders, witnessing the profound difference the word of God is making in their lives. It was inspiring to see how sharing the Scriptures could bring others to the same life-changing relationship with Jesus that I have found.

Through Jesus, the door, I have found purpose, direction, and an abundant life. And by sharing this message, we can open the door for others to experience his love and salvation.

## Bible people



Neil (second left) with staff from China's Amity Press, the world's biggest Bible publisher, and Cambridge University Press, the world's oldest Bible publisher. Photo credit: Bible Society

**Neil Rees**  
*Digital Publishing and Translation Advisor*

I live in a village in the Chilterns, where my family attends a small village church, and we help to run the youth work. I have always been interested in history, languages, the Bible and technology, and I combine these together in my job.

**Tell us about your history with Bible Society.**

I started working for Bible Society in 1997, when I was recruited as a programmer to develop software

for indexing and typesetting. I went on to develop and improve software and digital solutions to help Bible translation and publishing. Often, people access the Bible on their phones these days, so I have helped make apps for the Scriptures in many different languages. For example, I look after 'ap Beibl', the Welsh Bible app, and recently I worked on apps for translations into Scots Gaelic and Irish Gaelic.

**What's your favourite Bible verse?**

Micah 6.8, which tells us that what the Lord requires is that we act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God.

**I heard you were doing a degree in digital theology.**

I am now doing a part-time MA in Digital Theology, which is the overlap of technology and Bible mission. A lot of things like AI are now hot topics and it is worth considering their applications in the context of Christian ethical values.

**What are your favourite English translations of the Bible?**

The King James Version which, 400 years on, still sounds magnificent. However, we no longer speak like that, so to really understand the Bible, I like the Contemporary English Version. It's the only English Bible ever to be awarded the Plain English Society Crystal Mark award.

I also greatly admire the EasyEnglish Bible. This was translated for the millions of people round the world who may speak English as an additional language.

**Favourite Bible stories?**

In the Old Testament I love the story of Zelophehad's five daughters in Numbers 26, who felt that a law was unfair and persuaded Moses to change it. I am sure they were the first recorded women's rights activists. I also love the practical, down-to-earth advice in the letter from St James, who was probably Jesus's own brother.

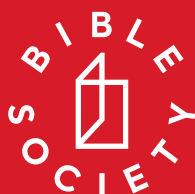


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