



# EQUIPPING BELIEVERS IN EGYPT AND JORDAN WITH THE WORD OF GOD

**“The whole plain of the Jordan toward Zoar was well watered, like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt.” — Genesis 13:10 (NIV)**

The rivers and land of Egypt and Jordan, are central to Bible stories. Egypt first appears in Genesis 2:13 where one of the four primeval rivers that divide outside Eden is named as the Gihon. According to first-century Jewish historian Josephus this may have been referring to the Nile River.

Jordan, too, appears early in the biblical narrative. In Genesis 13:10 (NIV) Lot discovers, “that the whole plain of the Jordan toward Zoar was well watered, like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt”, and he decides to settle there.

During the Exodus when Moses and the Israelites are fleeing from Pharaoh's army,

Moses, at God's bidding, parts the waters of the Red Sea allowing the Israelites to miraculously cross over to safety. Then, after 40 years of wandering in the wilderness the Israelites encounter one final obstacle they must negotiate before they enter the promised land: the Jordan river.

Once again God delivers a miracle stopping the flow of the river so the Israelites can cross over. Of course, the Jordan River is also the site of Jesus' baptism, an event which marked the beginning of his ministry.



**Biblical resources are enthusiastically unloaded.**

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## EGYPT

In Egypt, tradition states that Christianity was first brought to Egypt by Saint Mark in AD 42. Despite the Arab Muslim conquest in AD 640 it remained a Christian-majority country for over 1,000 years. Today, although Egypt is a Muslim-majority nation (90%), it is home to the largest body of Christians in the Middle East - the Coptic church.

Senior Advisor Ramez Atallah is the former General Secretary of the Bible Society of Egypt. Here he comments on the work of Bible Society in Egypt and Christianity in that country.

**“There is an almost insatiable demand by Coptic Christians to have the Bible. We have 10 million Christians in Egypt, and the Coptic church is very committed to the Bible,” he says.**

Recently, Bible Society participated in a Christian festival run by the Coptic

Church and attended by thousands of young people. It had an events tent where along with selling Scriptures it ran Scripture competitions and ‘talent shows’ on biblical themes for the young people to take part in.

In Egypt, the summer vacations are long running from May to September. To keep children off the streets, churches run clubs which they spend the whole day at where they play games, study Scriptures, and attend services. Altogether, thousands of children attend these clubs.

**In the midst of this, Bible Society is working to reach out to people through its 16 bookshops, book fairs and events. It is providing subsidised Scriptures which include 40,000 Bibles, 90,000 New Testaments, and 100,000 selections.**

The Bibles and New Testaments are small paperback versions which are easy for people to keep in their car or bag. They also are suitable for distribution to other people, such as at memorial services for loved ones, or as gifts for young people in poor churches who do not have Bibles. When Bible Society recently opened a new bookshop in a city



## People browsing at Bible Society's stand at the Cairo international book fair.

PHOTO CREDIT: © BIBLE SOCIETY OF EGYPT

in the Delta, within the first month, a man came and bought a large quantity of New Testaments for distribution at a memorial service.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic this work has become even more important as churches are struggling to meet the needs of their congregations.

Book fairs such as the Cairo international book fair also play an important role as they represent an opportunity to provide Scriptures to people who would otherwise never enter a church or a Christian bookshop.

**Every year people come to the Bible Society stand, often very defensive and aggressive but with many earnest questions about biblical matters.** Some come because they want resources for doing comparative religious studies, still others want to purchase a study Bible.

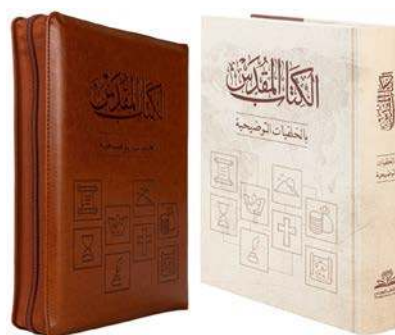
This year, Bible Society had a very special study Bible to offer. Since 2002 it has been working to create an Arabic Study Bible (AVDSB) to accompany the Van Dyke Arabic Bible (AVD), first printed in 1865, which is the world's most widely used Arabic Bible. A large team of contributors, reviewers, and editors

all worked on the Bible, with extensive reviews being made by representatives of all the major churches in Egypt.

In May, Bible Society received the first printed copies with 4,000 sold within two weeks and the remainder being sold at the Cairo international book fair between June 1 – 15th. Already, Bible Society is working on a new project, the Egyptian Arabic Bible, which will enable millions of Egyptians to read the Bible in their mother tongue for the first time.



**PRAY THAT GOD WILL PROTECT CHRISTIANS IN EGYPT AND STRENGTHEN THEM IN THEIR FAITH. PRAY THAT BIBLE SOCIETY MAY BE A LIGHT TO ITS COMMUNITY THROUGH ITS BOOK FAIRS.**



## The Arabic Study Bible.

PHOTO CREDIT: © BIBLE SOCIETY OF EGYPT

## Man riding a camel, Jordan.

PHOTO CREDIT:  
© BIBLE SOCIETY OF JORDAN



# JORDAN

Meanwhile in Jordan, another Muslim-majority country (97%) where Christians make up two percent of the population Bible Society is seeking to make Scriptures available to both Jordanians and visitors from other Arab countries.

Comparatively speaking, Christians in Jordan live in relative safety with a good level of religious tolerance. However, they may still experience difficulties in employment and there are restrictions against public preaching.

The Bible Society of Jordan distributes Bibles through churches, book fairs, and Christian organisations, and participates

in events. Through its showroom it has Bibles available in 24 languages including all the major Arabic translations.

On Independence Day on 25th May it hung 17 banners from bridges and in different locations around Jordan with the Bible verse, "But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace", Psalm 37:11 (NKJV). Unfortunately, this created some controversy but that has only made The Bible Society of Jordan more determined than ever to bring the Word of God to Jordanian people.

**This year, it aims to distribute 3,500 Bibles, 4,000 New Testaments, 8,000 selections, 5,200 portions, 100 audio Bibles and 500 children's Bibles.**

Nine year old Samer was one of a group of 35 children who have received a children's Bible from Bible Societies children team. They spent the day with the children in their village of Ma'in, which is in a remote and isolated area.

They read Bible stories to the children whom were excited to continue reading more to see what God did with his people and to learn about every character and event.

Samer's family invited the team to visit their house as a sign of generosity and hospitality.

**"I am overjoyed about Samer's excitement to learn about a Bible story and see how it had helped with some of the questions he has been asking about God and the Bible", Samer's father shared.**



**PRAY THAT CHRISTIANS IN JORDAN WILL HAVE THE COURAGE TO BE OPEN ABOUT THEIR FAITH DESPITE OPPOSITION. PRAY THAT THEY MAY BE FED BY THE SCRIPTURES AND RAISE A GENERATION THAT SEEKS GOD ABOVE ALL ELSE.**



**Children with Scriptures at the Amman book fair.**

PHOTO CREDIT: © BIBLE SOCIETY OF JORDAN

Mrs supporter, in both Egypt and Jordan, both Christians and non-Christians urgently need Bibles to strengthen their faith and to allow people who do not yet know Jesus Christ to have a life-changing encounter with Him through the Bible.

In Egypt, your gift will help to provide subsidised Bibles, New Testaments, and selections to many through churches and other ministries. In Jordan, your gift will help to provide Bibles and New Testaments to Jordanians, young and old, from all walks of life.

As they encounter the many challenges they are facing, will you prayerfully consider to help us enable people from Egypt and Jordan, ancient Bible lands, to have access to the Bible bringing them the hope, comfort, and peace of God's Word? Thank you and God bless you!

Yours sincerely,



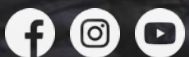
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Neels Janse van Rensburg'.

Neels Janse van Rensburg  
CEO

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Young men drawn in by a  
book fair in Egypt.

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