



YOUR MONTHLY MEMBER'S REPORT **FEBRUARY 2024**

# EGYPT

In Egypt, the foundation of Bible Society's ministry lies in its network of nineteen bookshops, spanning from Luxor in the southern regions to Alexandria, in the north. These bookshops are termed "ministry centres" by Ramez Atallah, Senior Advisor to the Bible Society of Egypt (BSOE). According to Atallah, they provide vital interfaces with the community, offering individuals a welcoming and secure environment to engage with and purchase Bibles.

Positioned strategically on bustling streets and within marketplaces, these bookshops play a crucial role in fostering dialogue about faith, allowing people from diverse backgrounds to pose questions to knowledgeable staff. And given that most Egyptians prefer in-person transactions with cash the bookshops align well with prevailing cultural practices.

However, many Egyptians are struggling financially as they experience a cost-of-living crisis which has seen inflation reach forty percent and food and drink prices rise by 72

percent! The economic crisis is due to the Ukraine war, which severely disrupted crucial wheat supplies for this import-dependent nation. However, prior to that, 60 percent of the population was already living near or below the poverty line.

In times of crisis, individuals often turn to Scripture for solace and direction. In response, the BSOE, in collaboration with churches and individuals, aims to provide subsidised Scriptures in 2024. This initiative includes distributing 25,000 missionary edition Bibles, 20,000 medium-sized Bibles, 100,000 New Testaments, and 100,000 Selections.

Your contribution to Bible a Month Regular Giving this month will play a crucial role in making subsidised Scriptures accessible to Egyptian people during these challenging times.



Photo Credit © Bible Society of Egypt



**PRAYER  
POINTS**

Give thanks for the ministry of the Bible Society in Egypt, recognising its extensive Bible distribution efforts and innovative approaches to maintaining a prominent public presence.

Pray for the Coptic Church, a significant community of Christians in the Middle East and a crucial force for spreading the Gospel throughout the region.

Pray for Christian leaders in Egypt as they navigate challenges, praying for wisdom and grace in leading their congregations effectively.

Pray for the establishment of a stable government in Egypt, which will address pressing issues such as the economic crisis, poverty, corruption, and a water crisis.



Scan to get a look at our latest Prayer Booklet!

## FURTHER BIBLE MISSION PROJECTS



### ISRAEL

In Israel, two Bible Societies operate in distinct regions. The Bible Society of Israel (BSI) is based in Jerusalem, and the Arab Israeli Bible Society (AIBS) is based in Nazareth. The BSI is currently printing a sizable number of Bibles as the demand for Scripture soars due to the mental and emotional anguish people are experiencing due to the war between Israel and Hamas. In addition, they are distributing pocket Bibles and Modern Hebrew Old Testaments.

In the north, the AIBS is reaching out to people through digital initiatives, such as a Bible Devotion for Youth video series. They have created a Scripture portion for women to help them cope with anxiety, as well as continuing with their regular programmes of trauma healing and bullying in schools.

Photo Credit © Bible Society in Israel



### PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

The Palestinian Bible Society (PBS) was formed in 1993, and its mission is based in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. There are around five million people living in these areas, 98 per cent of whom are Muslim.

The PBS is currently involved in relief efforts to help people living in the Gaza Strip, providing aid and spiritual support to war victims through the distribution of food, blankets, medication, clothing, and family Bibles. They have launched social media campaigns offering spiritual and emotional support to people. Despite tensions and movement restrictions, they are continuing their work with children, young people, and the underprivileged and marginalised communities in the West Bank.

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### CHINA

In the 20th century, China experienced a period of government upheaval beginning with the Chinese Revolution in 1911 and ending with the fall of mainland China to communism in 1949. During the Cultural Revolution (1966 – 1976), the Communist Red Guards persecuted Christians, and destroyed church buildings.

In the 1980s, China lifted the ban on Christianity. In 1986, the Amity Foundation and the United Bible Societies (UBS) opened the Amity Printing Press in Nanjing. Since then, it has printed eighty-seven million Bibles for distribution to Chinese Christians. Today, there are officially forty-six million Christians, but unofficially there are one hundred million Christians! The UBS China Partnership is working to bring free and subsidised Bibles to poor, rural Christians.

Photo Credit © United Bible Societies China Partnership



### LAOS

In the 17th century, Italian missionaries brought Christianity to Laos. In 1893, Laos became a part of French Indochina, which included modern-day Vietnam and the Kingdom of Cambodia. In the 20th century, Laos experienced a long-running civil war (1959 – 1975) between the Royal Lao Government and the Communist Pathet Lao, with the country eventually falling to the communists.

Today, Christians live under intense scrutiny and the authorities consider most church meetings to be 'illegal gatherings'. The number of Christians numbers around 300,000, with most belonging to ethnic minorities such as the Hmong, Mien, and Bru. The biggest church is the Lao Evangelical Church which has 200,000 members. The Laos Bible Society is providing Scriptures to poor, ethnic rural communities, and it is translating the Bible into ethnic languages.

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