

# THE BIBLE SOCIETY IN ISRAEL

**"Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her...prepare the way for the LORD...and the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." Isaiah 40:2-3, 5**

## ***Dear Friends and Partners in Ministry,***

Jerusalem and her people are thirsty and yearn for the only message that can truly restore her to the glory that God has prepared for her. How important and urgent it is, therefore, to speak tenderly from a loving heart, and proclaim to Jerusalem the comfort of God, the Shepherd of Israel, the promised Messiah. Isaiah 40 begins with a double call: "comfort ye, comfort ye"—emphasizing the calling and the need to comfort His people. In a beautiful similar way, by a double confirmation, Isaiah 51:12 reveals who the Comforter is: "I, even I, am He that comforteth you." It is God Himself - through Yeshua the Messiah. In Him we have forgiveness of sins—true comfort.

"He tends His flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them close to His heart; He gently leads those that have young" (Is. 40:11). Speaking tenderly does not mean that our voice is hesitant and efforts indecisive. "...You who bring good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, 'Here is your God!'" (Is. 40:9b).

Our message is true and good, our message brings peace and everlasting life. Our message is not our own, but the Word of God.

We therefore ask you to stand with us on this high mountain and together proclaim to Jerusalem: "Here is your God!"

## **The first Hebrew Cross-reference Bible is now being printed!**

After three years of hard work and prayers, the first full Hebrew Cross-reference Bible is completed and will be available beginning of 2011. In addition to over 90,000 cross-references, it also contains other features that together make it not only an excellent scripture study tool, but also especially effective for outreach.

It is the optimal tool to learn and see how the New Testament is rooted in the Old Testament as well as fulfilling and illuminating its Messianic prophecies and promises. Among its additional features are:

- ***Yearly reading plan and a proposed process for Bible study***
- ***God's plan of salvation revealed in Old Testament Messianic prophecies and their fulfillment in the New Testament***
- ***Rabbinical references to Old Testament Messianic prophecies***
- ***Index of topics***
- ***Biblical timeline chart***
- ***12 color maps***

Our heart's desire and prayer is that the Lord will use this tool to deepen the knowledge of His word among the Hebrew-speaking believers and also lift the veil from the eyes of many non-believers so they may see Him and His salvation through Christ.

As part of our distribution strategy, we are seeking for congregations or individuals abroad who are willing to adopt an Israeli congregation or individual and help provide them with this Bible. Every gift of \$18 will supply one Bible.

The majority of Israeli congregations number between 30-80 people. For a donation of \$900, a church can adopt a local congregation of 50 people and bless each member with this unique Bible that will be a tool to deepen their knowledge and study of God's Word, and further their outreach to others. We will also be glad to connect the giving congregations with the recipient Israeli congregations for prayer support and mutual encouragement.



# Speak to the Heart of Jerusalem



## EVERYDAY MIRACLES A Testimony from Our Engagements at the Bookstores

A couple from South Africa recently visited our bookstore. They looked around and noticed our table of scriptures for free distribution and told us that they are evangelists in Africa. After sharing with them about our ministry, they asked, "How can we pray for you?" We answered, "Please pray that the Lord will touch the hearts of the many who receive scriptures and Bibles so that they will be saved, and that we will be able to continue providing scriptures."

They asked, "Can we pray now?"

"Of course!" we answered. We prayed together and following the prayer, the man took out a shofar that he had, and blew a few blasts. Immediately after he finished, an elderly woman rushed inside our bookstore, and told us, "Two weeks ago I came here and asked for a Bible for a friend of mine who was very sick and you gave me one. I want to tell you that she passed away, but the day before she died, she received the Lord and now her husband is reading this Bible, and I wanted to thank you." We were so thrilled and encouraged by this direct answer to our prayers. We are sure that this is also an encouragement to all who prayerfully serve the Lord. He touches lives through His Word.

One of the new ways we are proclaiming God's Word to the people of Jerusalem is through a large, 42-inch screen placed in our storefront window facing Jaffa Road, one of Jerusalem's busiest streets, just opposite the municipality headquarters where our main offices and Bible bookstore are located. On the screen is a scrolling display of many different Bible verses, each one paired with a beautiful photo taken in Israel. It is a joy to see people from all walks of life stop and take in a bit of God's Word. This beautiful presentation also draws some of them to come in and ask questions, giving us the opportunity to share the gospel. Among them are also religious and Orthodox Jews. Please pray that the Lord will continue to bless and use this ministry tool to bring His message to the people of Jerusalem.



## The Messianic Psalms—in Russian

About 30,000 copies of the *Messianic Psalms* in Hebrew have already been distributed. In this outreach edition of Psalms, we highlight in red the Messianic promises. What an excellent tool it is for revealing God's plan of salvation through Christ to a Jewish audience. It is by divine wisdom that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews chose to quote mainly from the Psalms when revealing and explaining to a Jewish audience how God's promises and salvation are fulfilled in Christ. Of the ten quotations in the first three chapters of the epistle, nine come from the Book of Psalms. In the entire epistle there are 36 Old Testament quotations, 20 of which come from the Psalms.

We rejoice therefore to hear of three people who came to the Lord through reading this booklet, and we continue receiving strong, positive feedback from those who share it with others.

Here is just a small sampling of verses highlighted in red:

...The Lord has said to Me, you are my son....Kiss the son (Psalm 2) ...they pierced my hands and my feet...they divide my garments among them (Psalm 22) ...Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, My ears You have opened. Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require. Then I said, "Behold I come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me." (Psalm 40) ...Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me. And of course we have the promised hope that "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone" (Psalm 118).

The Russian edition which is now in the printing stage will be a blessing to many. We ask you to partner with us in this effort. You can join us in making it available through your donations. For every \$2 that you donate, we will give one as a gift. Please pray that the Lord will continue to reveal Himself to many through this booklet.



## SECURITY...inthePromises!

*God's message to the Hebrews, new outreach material*

The Epistle to the Hebrews focuses on the promises of God and reveals how they are fulfilled through Christ. It tells us to hold firmly through faith to the promises because God is faithful. This relatively short epistle contains 36 quotations from the Old Testament. It is the highest number of Old Testament quotations for this amount of text in all of the New Testament.

Therefore, we have produced a special edition of the Epistle to the Hebrews followed by a selection of Messianic prophecies from the Old Testament and their fulfillment in the New Testament. We've entitled this booklet *Security in the Promises*. Security is a major concern in Israel due to the political situation. We chose this title to draw attention to the One who gives the only real security.

"...for He who promised is faithful." (Heb 10:23b)

## A Walk in the Park

In the book of Acts we read that Paul reasoned (in the original Greek, *dialogued*) with the Jews in the synagogue (e.g., Acts 17:2, 17:17). Sadly, in our day it isn't usually possible to go to the synagogues for this purpose. But we can go to the parks, where we regularly distribute scripture portions, and we often have good conversations with people. At times, we also encounter opposition. A common argument is that Jesus cannot be God, or to put it more bluntly, that to say so is idol worship. On these occasions we try to share from the scriptures that the Messiah really is God Himself. We are aware that it is astounding that the Son of God took on human flesh, in fact it is the greatest miracle of all. It is understandable that this concept is difficult to grasp. To present the scriptural case for this we recently published a booklet in Hebrew called *The Divinity of the Messiah: A Consideration of the Claims of Jesus of Nazareth*.



**An experience in sharing:** "Recently, in one of the local parks, I met a young religious man. He declined to accept the gospel of Matthew that I offered him, but a conversation developed between us. He asked if I believed Jesus was God. I affirmed that I do. He said it was impossible that the holy God would take on dirty human flesh. I explained that we believe Jesus took on human flesh without becoming sinful. I tried to explain that Jesus taking on human flesh is perfectly in line with Psalm 113: 'Who is like the lord our God, the One who is enthroned on high, who stoops down to see.' Here, *seeing* means that God is coming down to become involved, to look after people (see Exodus 2:25, 3:7-8). This is exactly what happened with Jesus. He stooped down, He humbled Himself to look after us (Philippians 2:6-8). He is Immanuel—God with us (Isaiah 7:14).

In the end, our friend decided to take the gospel of Matthew after all. Though he said he would probably find it to be wrong, he wanted to read it! Then our conversation turned to the beautiful weather in Israel. This is how *dialogue* goes in the park."





## Reaching the World...in South Tel Aviv

Since the summer of 2008 the Bible Society in Israel has partnered to bring much needed aid and encouragement to many among the thousands of Sudanese and Eritrean refugees who have entered Israel via Egypt. In addition to providing them with scripture in their own languages, about 500 families receive small subsidiary parcels of food on a weekly basis. Our goal is to demonstrate God's love to them, and to make God's Word available. Due to the growing numbers of refugees from Eritrea, we recently printed 4000 NT's in their language, most of them have already been distributed. The rest will be distributed as part of a Christmas outreach in a jail where 1200 refugees are being kept.

Tel Aviv's old central bus station area is where many of the refugees gather. We occasionally arrive there on Shabbat afternoons to provide Bibles and scriptures in different languages. On one Shabbat, we were a team of ten. We thought we had found a good place for our table, but we were chased away and went from place to place trying to find a suitable spot. Finally, we decided to simply set our display of Bibles and other books on the ground.

Within minutes things started happening: people from all the nationalities and religions represented at the street market were attracted to our site. Others passing by wanted to know why so many people were gathering around us and what was in the big boxes. It took some effort to control the situation as we assured the people that we had enough books and Bibles for everyone. As we talked to the many people who came to our display, we were struck by their spiritual hunger.

In total, we gave out over 800 scriptures in various languages including Hebrew, Arabic, Russian, Amharic, French, English, and others. Please pray for our next outreach engagements that the Lord will provide both laborers and resources, and above all, openness and hunger for the people to receive the Word in their hearts.

## DVDs as a Ministry Tool

Many Israelis face insurmountable struggles due to injuries sustained either through accidents, war, or terrorist-related hostilities. They need a voice of hope. Our latest DVD, *Joni*, subtitled in Hebrew and in five other audio languages, is helping to meet this need. *Joni* is the true story of Joni Eareckson Tada who, at age seventeen, became paralyzed from the neck down in a diving accident. Despite her severe limitations, through Joni's own faith and the assistance and prayers of many others, today she is a well-known Christian celebrity with an international ministry helping and encouraging handicapped people. We have distributed thousands of copies of this movie. It remains a popular choice on a website where it is offered free of charge within Israel.

Another DVD, on the life of Jesus and based on the Gospel of Luke, is distributed among the thousands of Asian contract workers in Israel and also among African migrants. One man from Sri Lanka upon receiving the movie said, "I am very interested to know more about Jesus as I am searching to become a Christian." A lady from India who saw the movie was greatly moved and returned asking for a Bible in her native Hindi language. She seems very eager to learn more and to pursue the true path to peace.

We are grateful to be able to produce a number of movies that deliver a heart-warming message, encouragement and a challenge to believe. The results are seen in the testimonies of those who were moved to make a decision of faith after viewing one of these films.



**May the Lord bless you  
and use this update to encourage you  
to pray and to financially support this  
ministry for His glory.**

We invite you to contact us at:

**[BSI@netvision.net.il](mailto:BSI@netvision.net.il)**

and visit our website:

**[www.biblesocietyinIsrael.com](http://www.biblesocietyinIsrael.com)**



### THE BIBLE SOCIETY IN ISRAEL

P.O. Box 44, Jerusalem 91000 Israel  
Mercantile Discount Bank,  
35 Shivtei Israel, Jerusalem  
Bank number 17  
Branch number 621  
Account number 018430  
Account name:  
The Bible Society in Israel  
SWIFT: BARDILIT  
IBAN: IL09017621000003018433