ONE VOICE Bible Missions in Hostile Regions





ONE VOICE is one of the primary tools used by Voice of the Martyrs Canada to engage the Canadian Christian community and bring awareness of believers who suffer because of their faith in Jesus Christ. VOMC's Ministry Purposes are as follows:

- 1. To encourage and empower persecuted Christians to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).
- 2. To give practical relief and spiritual support to the families of Christian martyrs (Matthew 25:36).
- 3. To equip persecuted Christians to love and win to Christ those opposed to the Gospel (Romans 12:14).
- 4. To help believers rebuild their lives and Christian witness in countries where they have formerly suffered oppression (Nehemiah 1:3; 2:5).
- 5. To inform the world of the faith and courage of persecuted Christians, thereby inspiring disciples to a deeper level of commitment to Christ, His Great Commission, and the fellowship of all believers (Hebrews 13:3; Galatians 6:2).

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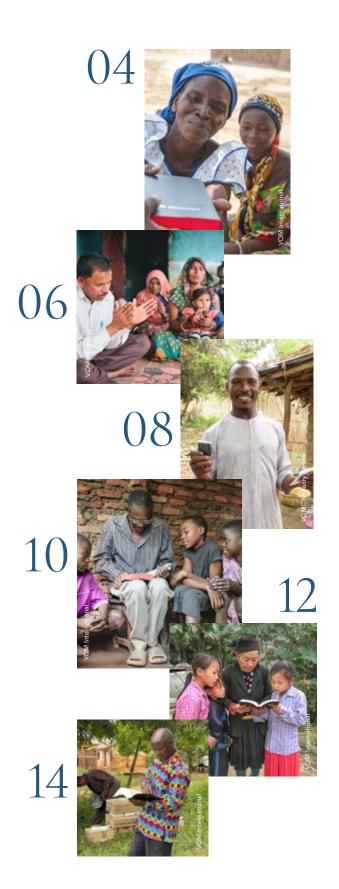
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The Word of God is Not Bound

Bible Missions in Hostile Regions

"Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my Gospel, for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the Word of God is not bound! Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." 2 Timothy 2:8-10 ESV

By Floyd A. Brobbel CEO for Voice of the Martyrs Canada



The Apostle Paul wrote his second letter to Timothy while awaiting execution in a Roman prison. In this epistle, he urges Timothy to be a bold witness and trustworthy preacher of the Gospel. This seasoned apostle recognized that defending the faith requires a life of sacrifice every believer must be prepared to embrace.

Paul served as an example of sacrificial discipleship. In 2 Timothy 2:8-10, he drew an interesting parallel between his life and the Word of God. As a preacher of the Gospel, Paul had been suffering in prison, where he was writing his letter while bound with chains like that of a common criminal. The imagery implies that disciples of Christ will need to endure suffering due to sharing the Gospel message.

German theologian and martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote:



"The messengers of Jesus will be hated to the end of time. They will be blamed for all the division which rend cities and homes. Jesus and His disciples will be condemned on all sides for undermining family life, and for leading the nation astray; they will be called crazy fanatics and disturbers of the peace. The disciples will be sorely tempted to desert their Lord. But the end is also near, and they must hold on and persevere until it comes. Only he will be blessed who remains loyal to Jesus and His Word until the end."

The great news is that Paul did not end his point with the suffering of the saints. He instead made a bold and truthful declaration that should inspire faith and hope in the life of every Christian. In my mind, I can hear Paul's voice almost shout this truth: "But the Word of God is not bound!"

Though we, Jesus' modern-day disciples, may also face constraints, the Bible cannot be silenced.

In his book, *Tortured for Christ*, Pastor Richard Wurmbrand wrote: "God is the Truth. The Bible is the truth about the Truth. Theology is the truth about the truth about the Truth." Pastor Wurmbrand passionately championed the cause of bringing Bibles into Communist countries, believing deeply that the Bible, the only absolute source of

truth, could transform lives and offer hope where truth was suppressed.

Today, the Voice of the Martyrs' missions around the globe continue to bring Bibles into regions where access is illegal or limited. Since many Christians are likewise paying a price for preaching the Gospel, we must remember to pray for them. In the process, we can be encouraged knowing that God's Word is not bound, but rather goes forth through borders of oppression and hate to transform the lives of all who are earnestly seeking spiritual truth.

While exploring VOMC's various Bible distribution projects when reading through the pages of this *One Voice* issue, may you be personally inspired. Whether it's through the use of balloon launches, underground printing presses, online Bible platforms and digital SD cards (to name a few delivery methods), access to Bibles has never been greater. Since God's Word is so powerfully transformative, the outcomes of these distribution efforts are truly remarkable!

Grace and peace,



A Bible to Hide in Their Hearts

During the treacherous drive, which lasted for more than four hours, the road gradually deteriorated from asphalt highway to dirt track – eventually leading to a rocky trail. Before Balhaar and the Bible distribution team reached the remote village, they pulled their vehicle over to the side of the dirt road, switched off the ignition, and then quietly waited.

A short time later, when seeing the familiar face of a local pastor approaching, the team unloaded their precious cargo and followed the church leader for a lengthy trek to a predesignated location in the jungle. Upon reaching the distribution site, they were enthusiastically greeted by local Christians – each one eagerly waiting to receive their first

copy of the Bible that was translated into their own tribal language. The believers, some of whom had walked as far as 40 kilometres, joyfully received their Bibles – along with basic instructions on how to effectively study God's Word. As the crowd dispersed, one or two families at a time to avoid the suspicion of Hindu militants, they carefully tucked their cherished gifts into packages, baskets or bags to keep them hidden and safe during the journey home.

Since the year 2000, Balhaar has helped plant more than 200 churches in India and trained more than 100 other Christian workers to do the same. For the past seven years, he has distributed thousands of Bibles in hostile areas,



delivering more than 5,000 copies of God's Word in 56 villages during a one-year period alone. The majority of these believers belong to house churches. Yet, if any of them happen to be discovered actively practising their Christian faith, they would face harsh consequences from opposing militants. So they secretly meet in the jungles and carefully hide their newly received copies of God's Word.

In remote and impoverished areas of India, access to the Scriptures is otherwise limited. And with no Bibles of their own, these villagers would only hear God's Word during times of gathered worship. "Sometimes the pastor is the only person with a Bible," Balhaar explains. "[The church members] keep in their hearts what they have heard from the pastor, and the whole week they survive on that Word."

Manthan, one of the believers who had trekked through the jungle to receive a distributed Bible, never owned a copy of God's Word before, despite his many years as a Christian. "Along with my family, I would attend church after travelling three hours deep in the forest," he says. "Since we didn't have a Bible, we could only hear the Word at church."

Opposition to Christianity has increased in India. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who took office in 2014, the Hindu nationalist organization, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), has experienced a 20 percent increase in membership. The group's emboldened base seeks to forcibly bring India under Hinduism.

Amid this opposition, Christians are keenly aware of their need for Bibles. "It feels like time is running out to place Bibles in the hands of those who want them," Balhaar adds. Just days earlier, a pastor was martyred by Hindu radicals and Balhaar himself was physically assaulted after his most recent trip. "We get opposition," he explains. "But every time, the persecution results in church growth.... We have our fears and experience threats, but God is giving us more power."

Since receiving the distributed Bibles, local believers have witnessed the powerful outcome that even a single copy

can have on the growth of the church. "One Bible placed in my hands gave birth to a house church in my village," Manthan testifies. Having God's Word close at hand also helps Christians residing in hostile areas to remain faithful. "Pray that we will be strong enough and faithful enough to persevere for the Gospel's sake," requests Balhaar.

Referring to Romans 8:31, he concludes: "I strongly believe that God is for us. But the challenge for all Christians in the world is whether we will stand for God...stand for God's truth...and stand for God's love. That [stand] is the need of the hour."

PERSECUTION RESPONSE

Through the *Bibles for Pastors* project, VOMC recently partnered with Release International to distribute 15,000 copies of God's Word to believers throughout India. One recipient was a 26-year-old Christian woman named Maryam. She has been physically beaten by her husband and in-laws, who openly oppose Christianity and threaten to disown Maryam. On one occasion, she borrowed a Bible to read, but her angered husband tore it apart.

In response, local church leaders gave
Maryam her own copy of God's Word.
However, because the front cover is titled
"First Love," Maryam's husband does not
realize that the book is a Bible. Determined
to remain steadfast in her walk with Christ,
Maryam plans to read the Bible daily, even if it
has to be done in secret.

You can help deliver Bibles into the hands of persecuted believers like Maryam by giving to VOMC's Bible Fund: vomcanada.com/donate

Delivering Bibles Where Faith Costs the Most

Today, in many regions of the world where Christians are experiencing oppression and persecution, there remains a deep hunger and desperate need for Bibles. In 2024, VOMC responded to this need by collaborating with trusted ministry partners to distribute more than 165,399 Bibles in numerous persecuted nations.

In addition, 98,392 copies of God's Word were digitally downloaded via *iBIBLE*, a comprehensive Bible app developed by VOMC's ministry partner, RevelationMedia. These Bibles are not only providing comfort and relief to suffering followers of Jesus; they are also ministering to spiritually needy people who are hungry to learn more about the Lord and His infallible Word.

MEXICO

VOMC partnered with Galcom International to make God's Word available to Mixteco (Na Savi) men and women in their native language. Evangelists delivered 100 audio Bibles to share the truth of the Gospel with those stumbling in spiritual darkness, enabling many more spiritually seeking Mexicans to learn about Jesus' boundless love for them.

NIGERIA

In 2024, we partnered with on-the-ground ministry workers to deliver 1,600 MP3 Bible players into the hands of Nigerians who are not able to read or write, so they can audibly hear the Word of God in their own language.

AFGHANISTAN

VOMC partnered with Pamir Ministries to provide God's Word in a variety of print and digital formats to Afghans who speak the Dari language. As a result of this VOMC-supported project, vibrant underground communities of Jesus-followers are experiencing transformation, sharing their faith and discipling new believers.

NORTH KOREA

Determined Christians continue to work tirelessly to share the Gospel message with the North Korean people, many of whom have never had access to God's Word because of the government's extreme efforts to prohibit it. Praise God that, in 2024, our ministry partners were able to send over 40,000 (digital and printed) Bibles into North Korea via air, land and sea!





The Islamist Who Studied God's Word

ohammed never fully understood the Quran as a boy. Even later in life, after becoming a religious leader at his local mosque in Uganda, he struggled to make sense of the text. "I must admit that even as an imam, I didn't always understand what...I was teaching," Mohammed states.

In 2020, local Islamic leaders sent Mohammed to join a Muslim movement known as "Dawa." This is considered a great honour in his community, for many Ugandan Muslims believe that Dawa upholds the purest form of Islam. Its primary focus involves training students in jihad; in other words, holy war.

"In my heart, I always felt it was wrong to kill other people," he recounts, "and now here is a God who tells His people this very thing."

According to Mohammed, participants are taught how to bomb churches and attack Christians. They are also instructed on how to interpret certain Bible verses in different ways so the manipulated texts could be used to persuade Christians that the Scriptures aren't true. But Mohammed wondered why anyone would need to twist the meaning of the texts in order to argue with Christians. If the Bible was false, he reasoned, it would already be obviously corrupt.

Confused, Mohammed decided to study the Bible for himself. While reading it, he came across a passage that explicitly ordered people *not* to kill others. This astonished the Muslim leader, who had been taught that killing Christians would help him enter into heaven. "In my heart, I always felt it was wrong to kill other people," he recounts, "and now here is a God who tells His people this very thing. At that time, I knew I wanted to follow the God of the Bible."

Mohammed tried to leave his position at the mosque discretely, but many people learned of his conversion. One day, a group of ten men confronted him, asking why he decided to leave Islam to follow Jesus Christ. After hearing how Mohammed arrived at his decision, the men also came to faith in Christ. And soon, word began to spread that Mohammed was converting Muslims to Christianity.

Days later, as this former imam walked into town to buy groceries, an old friend approached him from behind and put his hand on Mohammed's shoulder. "Today, we are going to cut off your head," the man announced. "Do whatever it is that you will," Mohammed replied. Six other men then arrived at the scene and began to beat Mohammed. "They all began shouting 'Allahu Akbar!'" he recalls. "I [thought] it was my time to die. But before one of them could unsheathe a machete to cut off my head, a group of Christians who were passing by on the street began fighting with them, pulling them away from me." When the community's police officers arrived, they took Mohammed and the other injured



Christian men to the local hospital, where the former imam recovered for seven days before returning home. Preferring to show his attackers the love and peace of Christ, Mohammed dropped all charges against the assailants. Christian leaders at his church then sent him to a discipleship training school for six months while tensions subsided in his hometown. "I have learned many things," Mohammed says. "But for me, the biggest thing I took away from that time was how I needed to forgive my enemies."

"I have learned many things.... But for me, the biggest thing I took away from that time was how I needed to forgive my enemies."

After completing the discipleship course and returning home in 2021, Mohammed was surprised by the kind offer of a simple new house that fellow church members had built on a plot of land for him and his family. Having this gifted homestead has enabled him to raise animals and grow crops that his family can sell at the market.

In addition to managing his family's small farm, he has been raising his three children by himself since his wife's passing several years ago. He still winces when he touches his right hip, a painful reminder of the beating he endured at the hands of his former Muslim friends. Despite these challenges, his passion for Christ is evident to those around him, and he shares the Gospel message with as many people as possible.

HEART CHECK

"But I say to you who hear, 'Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.'" – Luke 6:27-28 ESV

God's Word tells us to love our enemies.

If you were Mohammed, would you have been able to forgive those who beat you?

Who do you need to forgive and show love to today?

To Whom Shall We Go?

By Jim Penner

VOMC's "Persecution & Prayer Alert" Researcher/Reporter



"What is truth?" These words spoken by Pontius Pilate to Jesus in John 18:38 have echoed across the world for millennia. Today, in modern North American culture, this question often arises from skepticism about the very existence of "truth," or to express the philosophy that "my truth" is all that really matters.

The question that Pontius Pilate asked Jesus during the first century AD affects all of humanity. While the specifics relating to it may change, this age-old query continues to persist across varying time spans, countries and circumstances.

Several years ago, I had a conversation with a mother from another culture who was struggling to understand why her child was suffering from physical problems. As the parent of a disabled child myself, her question of concern deeply resonated with me. This mother wrestled over the belief that she had done something wrong to cause her child's physical suffering. But is that true?

As we consider the plight of persecution, there are believers in many areas of the world who suffer daily merely because they have chosen to put their faith in Jesus Christ for their salvation. Such questions about "truth" and "suffering" could also be asked by any one of our Christian brothers and sisters who are presently living within the context of persecution: Why am I suffering? Am I not trusting God enough? Is there something wrong with my faith? Did I do something to cause this difficult dilemma? Did I misunderstand what the Christian faith is all about?

These thought-provoking questions relating to the *causes* of suffering may then lead to others during the search for *resolutions*: What am I supposed to do now? How do I live a faithful life for Christ when it results in suffering? How do I practise being a witness for Jesus when doing so can result in mockery, pain or even death? Many of these concerns lead us

back to the initial question: "What is truth?" When we know the truth, we can then more confidently live in the light of that truth.

At one point during Jesus' earthly ministry, things seemed to be going great from a human perspective. Crowds were flocking to Him, the lame were experiencing His miraculous healing power, and the practical needs of many were being met through God's abundant provisions. Yet, as some difficult truths were being unveiled regarding the very nature of the One whose prophetic plan of salvation was soon to be fulfilled on the cross, we learn that performing amazing "signs and wonders" was not the primary point of Jesus' ministry.

Discontent began to breed among those following Jesus. In John chapter six, we read that many of them turned their backs on Him. When addressing the issue with His 12 disciples, Jesus asked, "Do you want to go away as well?" On behalf of the select few, Simon Peter spoke. Note that the latter part of his statement gives us the answer to many of our own probing questions: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life..." (John 6:66-69 ESV).

After all, we have important questions to ponder as well: What is life all about? Why do we suffer? How should we be living? Whenever facing such perplexities, our response should consistently be to approach the only One who can truly help, listening carefully to Him as He alone has "the words of eternal life."

For all sincere followers of Jesus, the Bible – the very Word of God – needs to be the primary source of understanding and comfort. Rev. Richard Wurmbrand, the founder of the Voice of the Martyrs' international mission, believed strongly in helping people to understand what God has to say about suffering and persecution.

Taking Pastor Wurmbrand's vision to heart, VOMC's ministry team has been travelling throughout Canada and around the world for more than 50 years to equip church leaders,

fulfill both the spiritual and practical needs of persecuted Christians, and help these suffering believers to better grasp what the Bible teaches on the subject. While Christians living in hostile and restricted nations know about persecution on an experiential level, digging deeper into the Scriptures helps all of us to embrace the meaning, purpose and hope that accompanies suffering.

We must ask ourselves: "To whom shall we go when encountering hardships and trials? To whom shall we go for comfort in our suffering? To whom shall we go when looking for solutions to life's challenging circumstances?" We can try turning to our friends, but their answers may not be governed by the Lord's sovereign authority. Or we can seek the opinions of the so-called experts, but what is the basis of their knowledge?

While seeking the help of others is not necessarily wrong, doing so should never surpass our need to first turn towards the one true Source – our Almighty God – by picking up His Holy Word, opening its power-packed pages of Scripture, and confidently acknowledging the omnipotence of the Author Himself who assuredly promises us "the words of eternal life!"

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

As you face difficulties in your daily life, where do you find yourself turning for solutions?

Think of times when the Scriptures have provided the answers you needed at just the right time. How can you share these moments with others in order to encourage them in their own walk with God?

VOM Global Reports

TANZANIA: "Pastor's Library" Resource Kits Equip Church Leaders



In Tanzania, many pastors lack access to the Biblical training and in-depth study materials required to help their congregations stand firm in the Christian faith. Recently, ministry workers in central Tanzania handed out 706 boxes of "Pastor's Library" kits. These resource kits contain study Bibles and other Christian educational aids designed to help pastors become adequately equipped so they can serve as effective ministers of the Gospel.

"Even before we can attend a Bible college, it feels now like we have a Bible college at home through these materials," acknowledged one church leader upon receiving the boxed study kit. The complimentary packages were distributed freely to pastors representing several denominational groups. "The pastors are so incredibly grateful," reports a VOM Christian ministry worker. "These libraries and materials are far too high of a cost for them to ever purchase on their own."

LAOS: Prayers for New Bible Answered

After becoming a believer in Christ, Vanh and her children were driven out of their house by her disapproving husband, who officially severed his familial ties with them by filing for divorce. With help from the global body of Christ, a new home was built for the ostracized Christian woman and her children. Although their situation improved, Vanh continued to face harassment from other opposing members of her community.

On December 2nd, 2024, while Vanh was out working in her fields, someone entered the newly built hut and took her most prized possession – the Holy Bible. Heartbroken over the loss of this precious belonging, she prayed to God for a new copy of His Word. When a VOM ministry worker and his wife visited two weeks later, they happened to be carrying an extra Bible with them, which they offered to Vanh. The Christian woman was so ecstatic to again have access to the Word of God that she cried with tears of joy while sharing with the visitors how they became God's answer to her prayers.

In Laos, followers of Jesus face intense pressures and violence from their local authorities, communities and families. Please pray that every Laotian believer who longs to have the Word of God will receive a Bible of their own.

JUNE 2025

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." – John 1:1 ESV

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
PHILIPPINES Pray for Bible schools that continue to equip courageous Christians for ministry in Muslim-majority areas.	COLOMBIA Pray that God will comfort the widows and children of pas- tors who have been martyred for their bold witness.	AZERBAIJAN Praise God that Azeri Christians are faithfully sharing the Gospel despite opposition and possible fines.	MEXICO Pray for Gabriela who was beaten more than 40 times by her opposing husband and neighbours.	NEPAL Pray that Christians in this South Asian country will have their own copy of God's Word.	UZBEKISTAN Pray that Uzbek Christians will forgive family members who have rejected them for following Jesus.	SRI LANKA Pray for Pastor Sam who boldly proclaims the Gospel message in the midst of aggression and opposition.
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
AFGHANISTAN Pray that many Afghans will hear the "Good News" of Jesus via social media and broadcasting sources.	MAURITANIA Pray for the divine protection of those who carry Bibles into the country at great risk.	SOMALIA Pray that the many young people disillusioned with Islam will experience the life-changing power of Christ.	DR CONGO Pray for the healing of Christians who have suffered injuries and emotional trauma due to violent attacks.	CHINA Pray for the release of imprisoned Chinese Christians, including Pastor Wang Yi and Fu Xuanjuan.	MALAYSIA Pray that the Gospel message will advance among the Malay people through increased access to Bibles.	NORTH KOREA Pray that North Koreans who receive smuggled Bibles will grow in their under- standing of Scriptural truths.
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
SUDAN Pray for followers of Jesus who have been displaced because of fighting between Islamic factions.	BRUNEI Pray for the few bold evangelists and missionaries who, despite the risks, proclaim the truth of the Gospel.	TURKMENISTAN Pray that Christians will have access to the Turkmen-lan- guage Bible, even though it has been banned.	SYRIA Praise God for the faithful witness of Christians remaining in the country amid hostile conditions.	MOZAMBIQUE Pray that the practical and spiritual needs of the more than 100,000 displaced Mozambicans will be met.	MALI Pray for wisdom on behalf of Jacques, a former church leader who now provides Bibles to other pastors.	BENIN Although 30 percent of Benin's population follow Christianity, pray that many more will come to know Christ.
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
NIGER Pray for the healing of Jeff Woodke who was beaten and held captive for six years because of his Christian witness.	ALGERIA Pray that Christians whose churches have been closed by the country's authorities will find ways to worship.	RUSSIA (AND AREAS UNDER ITS CONTROL) In the midst of ongoing turmoil, pray that the body of Christ will be "the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14).	BURKINA FASO Pray for the protection and safe release of Pastor Laurent who was abducted by militant Islamists.	PAKISTAN Pray that the restrictive blasphemy laws, which are often used to oppress Christians, will be repealed.	TANZANIA Pray for a strong Christian witness in the archipelago (islands) of Zanzibar, which is 99 percent Muslim.	YEMEN Pray for the continued steadfastness of Pastor Ebrahim who was threatened at gunpoint for testifying of Christ.
29	30					
INDONESIA Pray that Christians living in hostile and remote areas of the country will have ac- cess to God's Word.	CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC Pray that believers who have been displaced by the civil war will find refuge, peace and strength in Christ.					





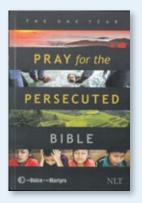
Shop online at store.vomcanada.org

Whom Shall I Fear? 366 Scriptures for Following Christ and Facing Persecution | \$25

Just days before Pastor Richard Wurmbrand was arrested by the Romanian secret police, he discovered that there were 366 references in Scripture that would specifically help Christians to overcome fear – one for each day of the year, including the leap year. This concept further enhanced his own prayerful study of God's Word and gave him the strength to stand strong for Christ in the face of opposition, imprisonment and torture. Featuring testimonies from the Wurmbrands and other persecuted Christians from throughout history, *Whom Shall I Fear?* invites you to encounter 366 Scriptural passages that will take you beyond anxiety, doubt and fear, grounding your faith in God's character as you live obediently for Him amid life's challenges. Hardcover, 493 pages

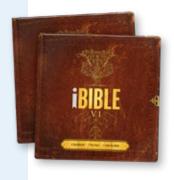


The One-Year "Pray for the Persecuted" Bible | \$18



The One-Year "Pray for the Persecuted" Bible includes unique daily "prayer prompts," covering a wide range of challenges that are facing persecuted Christians today. This special edition of The One-Year Bible is also

designed to help you read through the entire Bible in one unforgettable year, as you prayerfully lift up your petitions to God's 'throne of grace' on behalf of suffering Christians. The additional full-colour pages feature inspiring stories of Christians who boldly witness for Christ amid great risk, a fold-out map of restricted and hostile global regions, a unique Scripture reading plan – along with those daily "prayer prompts" – to help you intercede more specifically on behalf of persecuted believers around the globe. (Available in either the New Living Translation or the Christian Standard Bible version.)



iBIBLE Storybooks Volumes 1 & 2 | \$20 for set

Adapted from the *iBIBLE* video series by RevelationMedia, the world's first visual and interactive presentation of the Bible,

these *iBIBLE Storybooks* are designed to help children and youth encounter the life-changing Word of God. The first volume of this vibrant book series includes the Biblical accounts of Creation, the Fall, as well as the story of Cain and Abel; while the second volume features the stories of the Great Flood and the Tower of Babel.

Alongside each book's engaging renditions of the listed Scriptural accounts are many visually stunning illustrations. Children will be captivated as they read through the superbly depicted pages featured within each volume. Hardcover, 240 pages