



YOUR MONTHLY MEMBER'S REPORT **SEPTEMBER 2023**

TURKEY

Modern-day Turkey appears many times in the Bible. In the book of Acts it is known as Asia minor. After the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 many Christians fled there to escape persecution. The first time the word "Christian" was used was in the city of Antioch. Saint Paul, Saint Peter, and Saint John all travelled there. Saint John is said to have taken the Virgin Mary to Ephesus, near present-day Selçuk.

But despite its Christian heritage the percentage of Christians in Turkey has declined from 25 per cent in 1914 to less than 0.5 per cent or between 200,000 and 320,000 people today. Although modern Turkey is a secular country Christians have experienced discrimination.

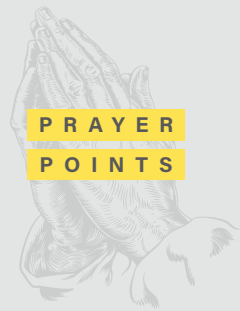
It is in this environment that the Bible Society of Turkey is reaching out to people with the Bible through its two bookshops, which serve as Bible hubs, and by attending Bible book

fairs. The bookshops are in Istanbul on a busy thoroughfare where there is a lot of foot traffic and in Izmir. The bookshop in Izmir opened in 2022 and is a joint project between Bible Society, the Catholic Church, and the Evangelical Church.

The bookshops attract people from all walks of life who may have a curiosity about Christianity. For example, a man visited the shop in Izmir. He said that he was curious about Christianity but had never find a way to learn about it. He was happy to find a Christian whom he could talk to. Your gift to Bible a Month Regular Giving this month will help to support Bible hubs in Turkey.



*Primary source: CIA World Factbook
Photo Credit © Deborah Basmaci



**PRAYER
POINTS**

Pray that people will come to know Christ even though it is culturally accepted that to be Turkish means to be a Muslim.

Pray that barriers of mistrust and dislike of Christianity will be broken down in Turkey, which for 1,000 years was a bastion of Christianity.

Pray for government leaders of Turkey who will act justly and wisely, focusing on the welfare of all Turkish people.

Pray for the Bible hubs that many will be drawn to them and have their first encounter with a Christian and with the Bible.



Scan to get a look at our latest Prayer Booklet!

FURTHER BIBLE MISSION PROJECTS



KUWAIT

Over 70 per cent of Kuwait's three million residents are foreign workers. Due to harsh living and working conditions, abuse from employers, and non-payment of wages they suffer from high levels of mental health issues and suicide rates. In this environment many become Christians joining migrant churches whose leaders are also converts from other faiths.

Because their leaders often lack theological training, Bible Society is providing seminars for church leaders to help them to understand the basics of Christianity. In 2023, Bible Society is training leaders from Telugu, Amharic, Tagalog, and Sinhala churches and it will distribute 1,000 Bibles in these languages.

Photo Credit © Bible Society in the Gulf



EGYPT

Christianity was first brought to Egypt by Saint Mark in the mid-first century AD. Since then, Egyptian Christianity has given much to the world, including great theologians such as Origen, the "Father of Theology" and the monastic movement which began in the deserts of Egypt. For 1,000 years Egypt was a Christian-majority country.

Today, Coptic Christians make up 10 per cent of the population. Through its network of nineteen Bible bookshops Bible Society is serving churches and communities by providing Scriptures. It is hoping to establish a new ministry hub in Egypt's new capital city, which is being built 40 kilometres west of Cairo in the desert to alleviate congestion and which will be in use by 2025.

Photo Credit © Alan Davidson



JORDAN

In Jordan, Christianity has been a part of the culture since the first century AD. Jordanian Christians enjoy a more stable life than their counterparts in other Middle Eastern countries. However, in the 20th century the number of Christians began declining from 30 per cent of the population in 1930 to only two per cent today.

The Bible Society of Jordan is reaching out to people through bookshops, book fairs, book exhibitions, and Bible stands. In April this year, it participated in the first Ramadan book fair. In May, it achieved a significant milestone when it opened a Bible bookshop in the capital city of Amman. The shop will offer a range of Bibles and Christian books for sale.

Photo Credit © Bible Society in Jordan



IRAQ

The Bible Society of Iraq is working to support fragile Christian communities whose homes and churches were destroyed by the Islamic State (ISIS) in 2014. The challenges of working in Iraq means that it is imperative that it maintains two offices – one in the north in Erbil, Kurdistan, and one in the south in Baghdad. This means that it incurs twice the cost of paying high rentals, utility bills and other operating expenses.

The leader of the Bible Society of Iraq is based in Erbil from where he visits church leaders and oversees the projects being run by the staff in the Erbil and Baghdad offices. The projects include supporting churches, Bible distribution, trauma healing programmes, and running children's programmes.

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