



BES news

The Americas and Australasia

Winter 2020

Resourcing you to reach the next generation - www.besweb.com

A Church Leader news article, written in August 2020, highlighted that during a study of over 187 million American churchgoers, attitudes towards God and attending church are changing. Notable trends include an increase in church hopping, a decline in church membership, and many young people are questioning God's relevance today. Barna president David Kinnaman, who commissioned the study, said that based on trends both before and after the Covid-19 outbreak, American churches will look significantly different after the pandemic—and a fifth of them could close. He stated that the digital church was here to stay, and that the Covid-19 situation has revealed to some believers that their relationships with God and with others in their churches are not as deep as they thought they were.

Despite these changes of attitudes towards God, in the two years since the last BES news covering The Americas and Australia, there has been significant developments in all areas, as the reports show. The use of Bibletime in South America has been almost entirely in Portuguese-speaking Brazil. It is a great encouragement to see how the way is opening for the use of Spanish Bibletime lessons in many other South American countries. The global pandemic has caused an increase in requests for Bibletime from prisoners and home students with many churches and Sunday Schools accessing the BES website and downloading their studies from there. We praise God for His continued provision.

Contents

- 1 Welcome
- 2 Canada
- 3 Canada - Emmaus USA
- 4 Sunscool
- 5 Jamaica
- 6 Brazil
- 8 Argentina
- 9 Fiji
- 9 Australia
- 10 BES Trustees & Appointments
- 11 Other News
- 12 Final Thought
- Prayer Diary
- Contact Information

Canada

Pete and Elaine Smith

During these uncertain times we can say of our God – **“great is Thy faithfulness” (Lamentations 3: 23)**. Whether it be financially, preserving the team, overcoming border closures or the increased interest in the BES material, we have truly witnessed His hand overruling in many ways!

The day after returning from St. Lucia, we had a new outreach opportunity in February. We attended for the first time Mission Fest Manitoba, where many Christian organisations were brought together to promote their ministries. We were thankful to the Lord, that our newly upgraded and freshly designed website was able to be launched in time for this weekend event. We also had a new outreach leaflet printed that focused on how the lessons could be used by camps, ESL groups, prisons, etc. as well as to families and individuals. A German schoolteacher from a Hutterite colony that we know was asked if he would be interested in using the German Bibletime translation. He was very excited at this prospect and has been using the lessons since February.

Following last year's International BES Conference, we have been looking at more ways of promoting BES material across Canada and we felt that we should seek to get more Hutterite children exposed to the Gospel. We would appreciate prayer as we plan to contact the German schoolteachers on over 100 colonies in the coming months in both Canada and USA.

The Spanish NewLife project is now ready to be launched on both our own website and on the BES website and we trust the Lord will bless all who will study the Scriptures with it. A NewLife student (raised in the Mennonite church) recently wrote the following comment after completing GOD Unit D (English): ***“I feel they are worthwhile, they get me thinking harder and deeper ... we never have Bible Studies etc ... we just go to church hear a sermon and go home and forget maybe what we heard ... I feel barren and dry and too often depressed these days and it's been that way for a while, so I am hoping to some way regain the peace and joy ... some things I know in my head but HOW does it become HEART knowledge?”*** Please pray for this student.

Since July, we have had over 650 new applicants, mostly online and from the USA. (Some families were shared with PBS Houston.) Please pray that many will become regular students and that new teachers will be raised up to mark them. Please also pray that the closed border, with its effect on the mail, will not discourage them. Thankfully, we now use a courier to bring our mail from the USA every other month and to ship the new lessons across once a month. July 2019 marked the 20th anniversary of PBS in Canada. Truly our God has been faithful, as over 13,000 students have received lessons!

POINTS FOR PRAYER:

- Nearly 14,000 VIA Magazines have been mailed through Canada Post across our province since mid-September as part of an effort to promote PBS in Manitoba.
- We have produced a Teachers' Handbook that we will be circulating in November. Please pray this will be an encouragement to our faithful team and a help to new teachers in the future.
- Our December mailout will include a 2021 Gospel Calendar and a Christmas tract, which we hope will speak to many of the nearly 1,900 students we have and their families.

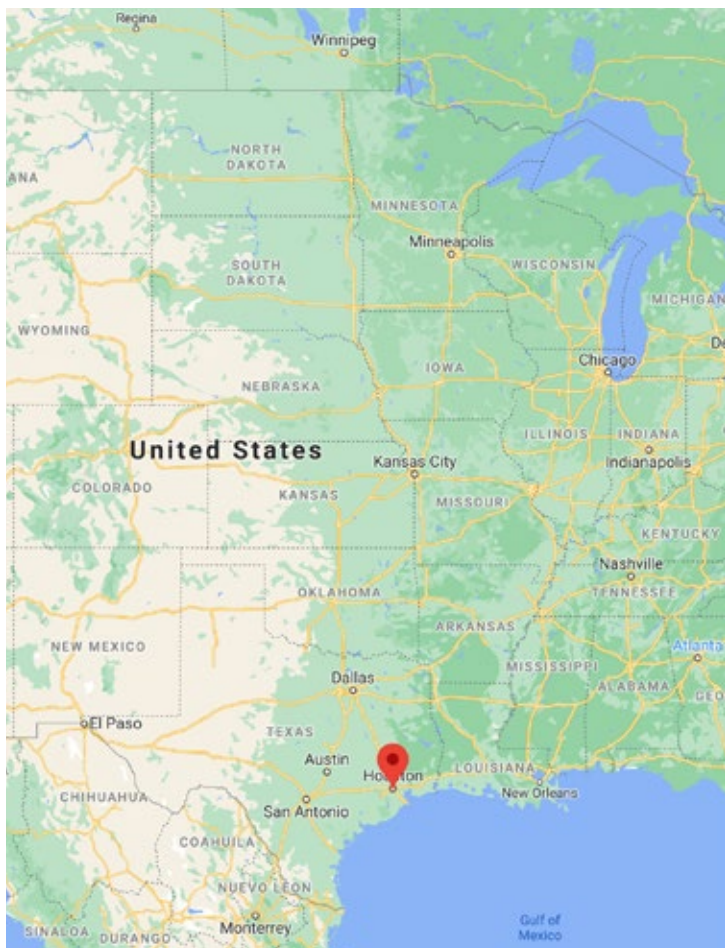


Canada - Emmaus

Sue Ellery

What an interesting time it has been with Covid-19 taking centre stage in everyone's lives. There has been a slight increase in registration during April to June resulting in our highest number of students so far. Still, there is a lot of room for more students and the work in North America seems to grow very slowly. I believe strongly that the Lord is at work in the hearts of families as they slow down and take stock of where they have placed their energy. I hope and pray that they realise their lives are empty without God at the centre. Personally, I enjoy the work of PBS and I have had several interactions with parents over the last year that have been fruitful and insightful. One such family has a father that is very ill with cancer and he is unable to work. The mother has a difficult time getting the lessons done with her children, but every three months or so I get a large envelope with many backlogged lessons which is so encouraging, as the family is going on with the Lord even in such hard times.

I have invested in a custom filing cabinet for the three years of PBS materials and various mailout items that round up the PBS programme. I have also created a space in my home dedicated to PBS. Currently, I am in the process of moving and am planning a better space to accommodate the work. What a blessing it is to be involved in the lives of children and their parents.



Houston PBS, USA

Philip and Mary Kuruvilla

Houston PBS was formed in 2014, and for the past year has been coordinated by Philip Kuruvilla and his wife, Mary, who have taken responsibility for printing, posting and coordinating the Bibletime booklets each month. Prayer is appreciated for Houston PBS especially for energy, passion, and wisdom as they balance their PBS work alongside full-time jobs.

Philip writes, "There are currently just over 440 registered students with 9 teachers marking Bibletime. It has been encouraging to see this huge growth in numbers from just over 150 students a year ago. A 'lifestyle blogger' shared about the availability of the Bibletime resource for preschoolers on social media, and PBS Canada redirected their students who were living in the USA to PBS Houston. As a result, there has been a spike in Level 0 and Level 3 students. This is so encouraging to see! Pray for these students and their parents as they study God's Word with Bibletime which would bring spiritual meaning to their lives, and that they would continue with the course. Please pray for our teachers and others helping in this ministry as they take time out of their schedules to serve these kids".

SunScool App

Nikolay Abkairova

Most of the team are scattered across the globe, and many of them work remotely and rarely see each other but we praise the Lord for this opportunity to work together on the SunScool App project, which is coordinated by Nikolay in California.

Over the last 4 years, the core team has grown to more than 12 people, but there is an extended network of 20 people who work on the whole process from translation, editing, data input, design, graphics, images, animation, gaming and voice overs. To date, the SunScool team have added all the A and most of the B Series Bibletime in English, Russian and Ukrainian to the App. They are working on a set of 5 new themed introductory lessons like Who is God? What is Sin? The plan of Salvation and Christian Life and will then develop a further series for children addressing Jesus' life and teaching. Prayer would be appreciated for them to complete and release these modules in all the current languages.

The team are presently working on more content and languages and are constantly looking at how to engage children in a new and exciting way to bring the Bible to life. The aim is to translate all Bibletime material in 20 languages within 4 years. At the moment SunScool supports 13 languages. Praise God for the children who use the App, which is still attracting new users every day.



#sunscoolapp

SunScool App offers:

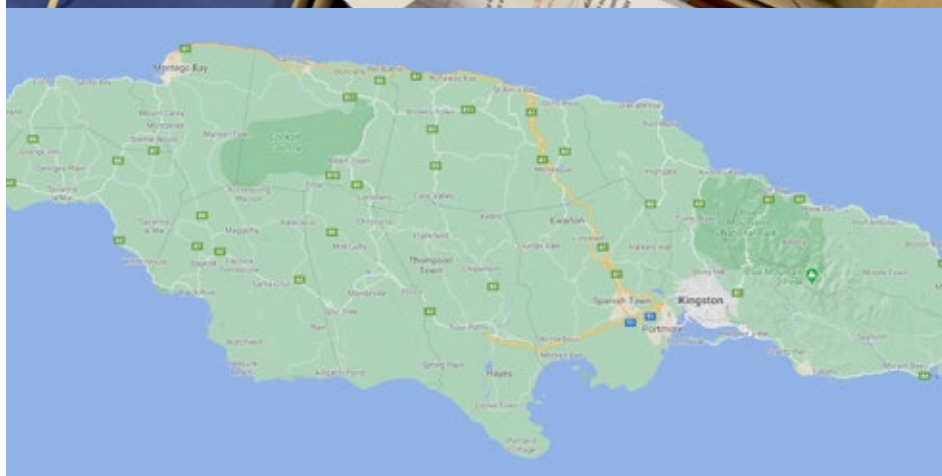
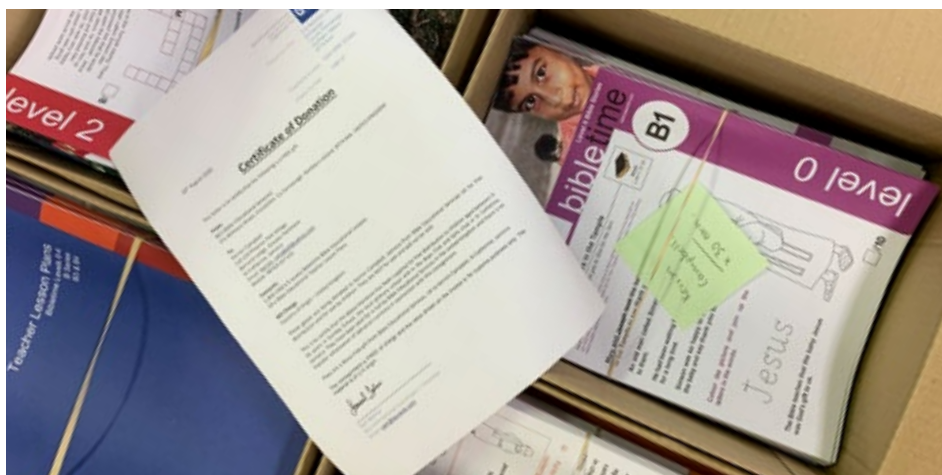
- 4 DIFFICULTY LEVELS**
- 12 FOREIGN LANGUAGES**
- 18 ANIMATED BIBLE LESSONS**

sunscool.org/app

你对马利亚有什么了解？
在单词迷宫中寻找并选择答案。

亚	亚	马	亚	拿
加	利	利	亚	撒
百	亚	亚	亚	勒
列	亚	亚	亚	亚
亚	约	瑟	亚	亚

马利亚的城市所在的地区：加利利
城市名称：拿撒勒
年轻处女的名字：马利亚
她要结婚的人：约瑟 - 天使的名字：加伯列



Jamaica

Kerron Campbell

Kerron attended the BES International Conference in April last year, and upon his return to Jamaica began to promote Bibletime throughout his community. A small amount of material was sent from the BES office in Northern Ireland and it is now being used by the community "Boys Club" and "Girls Club" and in the Assembly Sunday School with children aged 3-16 years. The local school has started to use the Level 0 English lessons with the nursery children. Please pray that the children will enjoy completing the booklets and learn more about God's Word in a fun and exciting way which will impact their lives.

St Lucia

Pete and Elaine Smith

Last autumn, over 6,000 PBS booklets were shipped to the Caribbean, where they were used by 20 schools in St. Lucia and three in Antigua. This January, Pete and Elaine were encouraged when a brother they met from Dominica offered to take 50 sample booklets and to contact schools on his island. However, the pandemic stopped this opportunity and has also delayed any supplies being shipped for the current school year. Prayer would be valued as Pete and Elaine seek to maintain their links with these schools.



Brazil: Interlink and HoraBíblica

Alexandre Torres

Bibletime in Portuguese was first distributed in Brazil by the Interlink Missionary Agency and HoraBíblica in late 2014. The translation work is coordinated by Alexandre Torres and his wife, Geovana, from HoraBíblica. They have a team of translators, who are young believers, and all very enthusiastic in wanting to serve the Lord. Geovana makes a lot of corrections to the translated text before it goes for design, but also gives practical guidance to teachers to help them use the Bibletime booklets more efficiently during their classes. Sueli, an Interlink director, co-ordinates the distribution centre of Gospel literature and helps with getting the Bibletime material through customs. Aramis DeBarros, a designer, does the graphic work for Bibletime. He also works as a missionary for Revival Movement Association. The team are working on getting the B Series Bibletime booklets prepared and ready for printing in 2021.

With a population of almost 210 million people, the task of distributing the Bibletime booklets and reaching many communities has been a challenge. Alexandre and his small team have two distribution centres within Brazil; one in their house in Pirassununga, São Paulo state and the other in a rented storage facility in Manaus, in the Amazon Basin, where he and his family hope to move. From each of these strategic locations they can serve many diverse communities, reaching children in the dangerous favelas (slums) of Rio de Janeiro, street children in São Paulo city, Indian children in the Amazon region, and middle-class families living in the richest cities of Brazil.

Jeanne Lipse, who lives in nearby Campinas, works in 5 schools, teaching “morals and values”. They are not allowed to teach religion to children in the South of Brazil. Jeanne and many others are using Bibletime to teach children about God’s Word and the Biblical principles of life.

Daniela, who lives in Bauru, the very centre of Sao Paulo state, has an internet Bible Class called “Voice of Love”. Many children throughout Brazil watch her class and attend virtually. As a reward, she sends children the Bibletime booklet through the post as a special gift.





Brazil continued...

Growth in the Bibletime work and usage has been enormous since 2016. Bibletime is now being taught in public and private schools in the states of Paraná, Minas Gerais, Espírito Santo, Goiás, São Paulo, Ceará and the Amazon. For example, in the Amazon, over 8,000 Indian children, complete the Bibletime booklets at school, and there is increasing interest in the material every day. Schools in the Northern states of Brazil are more open to receiving the Bibletime material and so Alexandre sends BES material to 3 Christian schools, 11 public schools and 6 rural schools in Manaus and to the surrounding areas like Bom Jesus, where Jenair uses Bibletime in the schools he visits. Sergio and Debora serve in Santarém, which is a very large city next to Manaus. They have introduced Bibletime to 11 assemblies in Santarém, and 7 others in the surrounding towns. They also have 5 preaching points in Para State, where they regularly present the Bibletime material to the people. They have recently got permission from the mayor of Vai-Quem-Quer, who is a believer, to distribute Bibletime booklets to all 20 schools in the towns and rural areas, which is very exciting.

There has been unforeseen demand from prisoners who use the Bibletime during their Bible studies. Alexandre now distributes the Bibletime booklets and tracts to prisons in 34 cities! He has had to recruit 3 brothers to help him answer correspondence from prisoners who want help and answers to their spiritual and Biblical questions.

Here is an example of a letter received from one of the prisoners in his own words:

Iracy writes, ***"You cannot imagine how I felt when I received your letter! I enjoyed a lot the Bibletime lesson you have sent to me. Many thanks you wrote to my son in another prison and for the Bible you have sent to him. Please, send another Bible for me, with giant letters, because I barely see. I have many doubts, and I need your help. First- baptism, second – spiritual gifts, third – healing, fourth - forgiveness...I need to know everything very well!"***

Alexandre says that there are so many places where he would like to work, and prayer is needed for permission to introduce Bibletime into Nhamundá, Terra Santa (Holy Land), Iranduba and Manaquiri. Praise God that thousands of children and adults have been reached, instructed, and transformed through the Word of God by using Bibletime.



Argentina

Eduardo Schuster

Eduardo attended the 2019 BES International Conference and went away determined to bring Bibletime to Spanish-speaking South America. Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, Bibletime material has not yet reached Argentina, and therefore Eduardo has dedicated his time and efforts to promoting the BES materials in Spanish. He has attended virtual promotional events, engaged in social networking, and talked about Bibletime after preaching to churches using the digital platform ZOOM. Sam Balmer participated in the Patagonian Missionary Conference in September via ZOOM helping with the promotion of the BES resources. This created great enthusiasm, excitement, and expectations for partners in Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia, and Peru who are all eager to use Bibletime. Since the Conference, some have requested the PDFs downloaded from the web for family use and others have distributed it among their Sunday School students who are at home. Attached is a photo of Eduardo's granddaughter who has downloaded, printed, and nearly completed the Level 1 Spanish Bibletime booklet. Andres Aimaretti, who lives in Buenos Aires, has been a huge asset to the team as he translated during the Conference and several meetings for Eduardo with BES. Eduardo asks, ***"Please pray for strength and wisdom in all the tasks to be developed in relation to BES, for the provision of a warehouse in Buenos Aires to store the material, that the Lord will open doors for the BES team to promote Bibletime, for the smooth procedure in the printing and shipping of the Bibletime booklets and that the Lord will place the right people in the right places for all of these procedures."***

Fiji Islands

Nilesh Goundar

Religious Education has been taught in schools in Fiji for the last 50 years, and the search for new material to incorporate into the current school curriculum led to BES. Last year, Bibletime lessons were shipped by BES to the islands. However, Covid-19 delayed the planned training which was to take place by some of the BES (UK) representatives. As a result, the resources have yet to be distributed to the schools. Prayer is required for training of the teachers to take place in 2021, and that the material will be well received by students once it is used.



Australia: PSSM Mailbox Club

Terri Good

Due to the sheer size and lack of communities in central areas of Australia, the nearest Church may be several hours drive from a person's home. PSSM Mailbox Club started in 1933 as the Postal Sunday School Movement to share the Bible with isolated students throughout Australia and it is grown into what it is now; an inter-church organisation that is reaching people with Biblical material by correspondence, via post or online.

After many years of using the same material, PSSM Mailbox decided to look for new courses for their students. The BES booklets have been in circulation since the beginning of 2018 in Australia and there has been a great response from their students.

Terri Good, who coordinates the Bibletime material and works in the office, says, ***"Covid-19 has had effects on most people around the world in some way. In my work with PSSM Mailbox Club we received a letter today from a prisoner in South Australia (SA). He said that since Covid-19 hit, no Chaplains have been allowed to visit in his prison and they have been unable to have any religious services. This man was telling his PSSM teacher that he and another Christian prisoner took it upon themselves to start a small prison fellowship. Initially there were three men meeting once a week for a prayer meeting and within a month this grew to a group of about 10 people who now meet every second day at 12 noon for an hour of prayer and worship. This has been an unexpected benefit of the Covid-19 restrictions! Please pray for these men and Christian prisoners everywhere. PSSM Mailbox Club currently has around 100 prisoners completing their lessons, and just this week three of the men who are meeting to pray in this prison in SA applied from them."***

Terri also asks for prayer for their postal situation. She says, ***"You may have seen in the news during Covid-19 that Australia Post is giving priority to the HUGE volume of packages (due to a dramatic increase in online sales with stores closed and limited stock). Now PSSM mail that used to take days is now taking weeks to arrive. Let's join in praying for that, but also in praising God for the blessing of receiving postage stamps (to the value of \$1,000!) from a gentleman in Western Australia. We thank God for those who have come to know Jesus through the lessons, and for the opportunity for people of all ages to understand what the Bible has to say using the BES Resources. In the past 3 months, we have had 23 new students, including some from New Zealand and a family from Samoa. Over 20 students use the material online."*** Terri says, ***"We give God our praise, and have the confidence that He hears and answers our ongoing prayers."***



BES Trustees and Appointments

Stevie Walls

International Development Manager

With the increased expansion in the translation, design and use of BES resources across the world in over 40 languages and 65 countries, the BES Trustees are delighted to announce the appointment of Stevie Walls as our International Development Manager. Stevie will be mainly involved in training and development, working alongside the current BES staff, Stephen Gillham (BES Trust Secretary) and Sam Balmer (International Director).

Stevie will be salaried by BES three days per week. As a faith-based ministry BES continue to look to the Lord to meet this need. Stevie and his wife Claire are also being Commended to the work of the Lord by their local church in Castlereagh, Belfast, and they will be looking to the Lord to meet the remainder of their financial and practical needs. Please pray for them in the days ahead. As a paid member of staff Stevie will no longer be a BES trustee.

Please join with us in praying for Stevie, Claire, Reuben & Naomi especially as Stevie enters this new role with BES, that the Lord would guide and bless in every aspect of the ministry.



Pam Harknett

New BES Trustee

Richard and Pam have lived in Bishop's Stortford (about 45 minutes north of London) since 2017. Pam works with three different groups engaged in school's work in the Bishop's Stortford and Harlow area. This covers over 30 primary schools. Her work includes assemblies, puppetry and special children's events. Richard and Pam are members of Bishop's Stortford Christian Assembly where they serve as missions co-ordinators. Both teach in the Sunday School, and Pam is part of the women's ministry team. They have two children, Lucas and Emily.

DJ Watts

New BES Trustee

DJ is married to Heather and has two adult children, Tom and Rachel. Tom is married to Becca and is involved in church youth work, and Rachel works in Durban with children at LIV. Village. DJ is a Consultant Psychiatrist, specialising in mental health addiction. Both DJ and Heather have had a long association with Postal Bible School, helping in Postal Sunday School camps in Southern Ireland and involved in the development of and leadership of the Living Word Postal Bible School in Stoke on Trent

We are blessed to have dedicated trustees who give of their time freely to guide and advise the work of BES. Please pray for Pam and DJ as they join the board, that they will feel very much part of the work and that their expertise will prove to be a great asset.



Andy Street

In June 2020 Andy Street finished his work as a Trustee. He was a tremendous help in supporting Vicky Gawn, our Finance Officer, in working on and presenting the monthly accounts in the best possible way. His wide knowledge of international missionary work was also a great blessing to all the Trustees. We wish Andy and Lis well as they seek God's guidance for future service.

Update on Bert and Wendy Gray

BES Ambassador

Many of you sent prayers and well wishes to Bert in response to news that he had suffered a stroke and had been in hospital earlier in the year. He was greatly encouraged and thankful for your prayers. He is back home with Wendy and is making progress in his recovery.

We continue to praise God for His protection over them.

As many of you know Bert & Wendy Gray, as founders of the ministry have been great ambassadors for BES visiting various shows and conferences promoting the BES resources and ministry. Due to limitations of age and health recently, we are pleased to announce that David & Liz Bahakiaraj have agreed to assist Bert & Wendy in the area of BES promotion. They currently work with Tamil churches in the Cardiff area encouraging them to use Bibletime materials.



Pray for Revival Movement

Printing and Shipping

Please pray for Revival Movement who have been affected during the Covid-19 Pandemic with staff illness and shutdown. They are now back in production, but they are facing many issues including assessing demand and printing priorities and the continued closure of international borders. BES are thankful that Revival Movement has already printed containers of material for The Middle East and DR Congo and will print French Bibletime booklets for Burkina Faso by the end of the year. Please pray for wisdom and guidance from God for the next projects: Spanish booklets for Argentina, English booklets worldwide, Swahili booklets for Tanzania, Kinyarwanda booklets for Rwanda and Portuguese booklets for Brazil. Each container of material costs approximately £30-35,000 to print and ship and we pray that the Lord will continue to provide sufficient people and finance for this amazing ministry.





A Final Thought

by Alexandre Torres (Brazil)

"...wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

Luke 2: 49

We are in a very dangerous world! Each day we wake up and ask ourselves, "What will happen today?". Then we hear the sweet voice "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." And "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." We, who work with children, should be inspired by our Lord, at the age of twelve, when He was among the academics. Children have great potential. Saved children more, because they will make a difference in this very bad world. May we look at each child who is willing to study the Bible, as a true potential servant of the Lord, shining the light of the Gospel, among the doctors and scholars of this world!

BES Prayer Diary

Last year, we produced the BES Prayer Diary giving details of the countries where BES is working. Free copies are available from the BES office in Enniskillen. We suggest that this Winter News edition is read with the Prayer Diary to give background, context and an understanding of the progress being made in each of the nations since the Prayer Diary was originally written.



Silver Servers

Are you a grandparent? Could you help change the fact that many children don't know about Jesus? Silver Servers has been designed to give you everything you need. Through this website, there is on-line access to all of the Bibletime Resources free of charge! Register your interest and sign up to our online newsletter via the website: www.silver-servers.org.



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How to support BES

You can make a one-off donation or choose to support us regularly by cheque, standing order, or any other means. You could also consider leaving a legacy to BES, so we can continue bringing the Good News of Jesus to the next generation. For more information, contact vicky@besweb.com

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will be from Asia.

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