

PRESS RELEASE

March 2008

MPs receive first *Poverty and Justice Bible*

Members of Parliament were presented with the first Bible to highlight more than 2,000 verses reflecting God's attitude to poverty and justice.

Thirteen MPs were presented with the Bible by David Landrum, Bible Society's Parliamentary Officer. This comes ahead of the official launch of *The Poverty and Justice Bible* at the Christian Spring Harvest festival from 25 March – 20 April.

Andy Reed, MP for Loughborough, said, 'This is the Bible I've been wanting for a long time. It highlights God's heart for tackling poverty and establishing justice. It's vital for us in the public square because it shows that Christians have always, and will always be, involved in these issues.'

'The publication also represents a challenge to us all about how we live our lives as Christians. Can we genuinely say that we put poverty and justice at the heart of our mission?'

The Poverty and Justice Bible is the first to highlight more than 2,000 passages in the Bible that speak of attitudes to poverty and injustice. Challenging the notion that the Bible is an outdated rulebook, it shows that, on the biggest issues of our day, the Bible got there first.

Alistair Burt, MP for North East Bedfordshire said, 'This is a highly significant edition of the Bible reminding us of God's commitment to those affected by poverty and injustice. It deserves to be widely read by old and young alike and cannot help but give us a fresh perspective on God's eternal word.'

The publication includes a 32-page study guide with a focus on 'doing', to give practical expressions of what it highlights. Topics range from equality to education, farming to fairtrade. The studies show how that concern for the oppressed is foundational to faith, and encourage action – from giving, to praying, to living responsibly.

Northavon MP, Steve Webb said, ' *The Poverty and Justice Bible* is a timely reminder of God's priorities. This Bible highlights the fact that God is concerned about all aspects of our lives, and that 'true religion' must involve action to address the gross injustices that still scar our world and our nation.'

Bible Society's Chief Executive James Catford said, 'Poverty and justice have always been on the heart of God. The Bible is not full of rules, finger-wagging and old-fashioned ideas. It

has something to say about life and, in fact, there's nothing on earth that we can experience that the Bible doesn't tackle.

'It's important that Christians in Parliament not only know what God says on these issues, but also allow it to influence their politics.'

Also commenting on *The Poverty and Justice Bible*, The Rt Revd Dr Tom Wright, Bishop of Durham and Bible Society's president, added, 'Before the Make Poverty History movement, before Sir Bob Geldof's Live 8 and before politicians began debating these issues, the Bible spoke loudly and clearly on poverty and justice.'

Further details and a press pack are available at www.povertyandjusticebible.org where *The Poverty and Justice Bible* is available at the special introductory price of £9.99.

The 13 recipients of *The Poverty and Justice Bible* include;

- Alistair Burt MP – Conservative, North East Bedfordshire
- Andrew Selous MP – Conservative, South West Bedfordshire
- Andy Reed MP – Labour and Co-operative, Loughborough
- Claire Curtis-Thomas MP – Labour, Crosby
- David Drew MP – Labour and Co-operative, Stroud
- Gary Streeter MP – Conservative, Devon South West
- Jim Dobbin MP – Labour, Heywood and Middleton
- John Battle MP – Labour, Leeds West
- Lord Hastings of Scarisbrick – Crossbench Peer
- Sharon Hodgson MP – Labour, Gateshead East and Washington West
- Steve Webb MP - Northavon MP Liberal Democrat
- Stephen Timms MP – Labour, East Ham
- Tim Farron – MP Westmorland & Lonsdale

About Bible Society

Bible Society founded in 1804 as the British and Foreign Bible Society, is a Christian charity that exists to make the Bible heard throughout the world. The majority of its work is overseas, making the Bible available in a language people can understand and at a price they can afford. Here in England and Wales, the Society works to build bridges between the Bible and people's everyday lives, as well as to rebuild confidence in its enduring message.

Contact information

For an interview, to request an article, or for more information please contact;

- Claire Smith, Head of Communications, Bible Society, Stonehill Green, Westlea, Swindon SN5 7DG T: 01793 418290 M: 07771 505063 E: claire.smith@biblesociety.org.uk

- Yemi Folayan, Public Relations Officer, Bible Society, Stonehill Green, Westlea, Swindon SN5 7DG T: 01793 418255 F: 01793 418118 E: yemi.folayan@biblesociety.org.uk

***The Poverty and Justice Bible* can be ordered at www.povertyandjusticebible.org at a special introductory price of £9.99.**