

Biblical Wisdom

A Storehouse Of Scriptural Spiritual Power

(NAPS)—Before Sept. 11, the American Bible Society (ABS), headquarters at 61st and Broadway in New York City, was known as a repository of Scripture knowledge and art.

That is still true, even in a time when so much has changed. Yet Bible House—as it is called—has earned another reputation. It has cemented its reputation as a spiritual storehouse providing solace to the grieving and battered.

When the events of Sept. 11 unfolded, workers at ABS, just some three miles uptown from the World Trade Center Ground Zero, went into action. Almost immediately, ABS began distributing Scripture Portions offering spiritual solace to a troubled city and nation.

The Portions—containing a stark image of three firemen in front of the scarred remnants of the massive towers and quotations from the Bible offering comfort for the afflicted—soon became a New York fixture. They adorned makeshift memorial shrines around the city. They were seen at hospitals where the wounded were treated. And they were distributed at Ground Zero, providing solace to rescue workers searching for the dead amidst the ruins.

A Muslim man took a Scripture Portion from an ABS worker outside Bible House headquarters. “I want to get God’s words of comfort to any who hurt. We’re in this together,” he said.

The aftermath of the bombing may prove to be the most dramatic Scripture outreach ever attempted by ABS. More than a million Scripture items were distributed around the country in the aftermath of the attacks.

It is, while particularly dramatic, just part of ABS’ 185-year-old legacy, which has served the nation through strife, depressions and wars.

Today ABS occupies 12 floors of New York office space and distributes more than 105 million copies of various Scripture products each year. The Society not only publishes and distributes Scriptures



The American Bible Society offers many resources including its Archives and Gallery.

but translates them as well, from readable and accessible English-language versions to Native American languages.

The ABS library serves as a resource for Bible scholars. It has the largest collection of printed Scriptures outside of the Vatican. Both the Library and the ABS archives are open to the public via appointment.

The Archives contain fascinating histories about famous ABS members, including Abraham Lincoln, as well as correspondence and documentation from 19th century China and other areas where ABS translators worked.

The Gallery at the American Bible Society also contributes to appreciation and knowledge about the Bible. It has been described as the only exhibition space devoted exclusively to Judeo-Christian art. Its current exhibition, scheduled through the end of this year, focuses on the religious folk art of Guatemala.

More information on the work of the American Bible Society in its Scriptures’ distribution efforts or its educational and artistic programs can be obtained by calling 212-408-1200 or by visiting the ABS Web site at www.americanbible.org.