

LATEST NEWS # 362, August 3, 2006

The following news concerns Israel.

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Bible Society to deliver New Testaments to families in Galilee

ISRAEL — As the conflict between forces in northern Israel and southern Lebanon continues, so local Bible Societies are seeking to meet the need for Scriptures on both sides of the border. One project to provide aid to the refugees in Beirut has already been launched by the Bible Society in Lebanon (see *Latest News* #358). The Bible Society in Israel is now preparing to respond, too.

Bishop Elias Chacour is the Melkite Catholic Bishop of the whole of Galilee, which includes Haifa, Nazareth and Acre. In the first week of the present conflict, he had been due to meet with Peter Wigglesworth, the United Bible Societies (UBS) Europe-Middle East Area Secretary. Their meeting had to be postponed because of the situation in Haifa. Speaking instead by telephone, and then in a letter, he expressed the urgent need for New Testaments to use in his continuing ministry:

“Among my major promises, if not my very first priority, is to distribute the Holy Scriptures to all our parishioners and community members,” he said. “The social and spiritual needs are very large. It is of prime importance to enhance and continue to restore the knowledge of the Word of God to local Arab Christians. Doing so, we might succeed in implementing our role as ministers of reconciliation and continue to build peace in this country.”

UBS has announced a special project, worth US\$20,000, to provide 4,000 Arabic New Testaments for distribution in Galilee. The cost of US\$5 per copy reflects the high cost of transport from the publisher to northern Israel. (267 words – ISRAEL.03.08.06)

Anyone who wishes to contribute to special project 79416 should contact John Poole, World Service Program Accounts Manager, at the UBS World Service Center (jpoole@ubs-wsc.org).

**For further information please contact amathewson@ubs-wsc.org
Alternatively, write to:**

**Andrew Mathewson,
UBS Editor
UBS World Center
Reading Bridge House
Reading
RG1 8PJ
England**