

Update: *Africa Bible Commentary* Revision Project

What a joy for us at Langham to work alongside ministry friends like Holy Trinity Anglican Church to advance the gospel of Christ in places where the greatest needs exist.

In November 2020, you made a generous gift of \$5,000 toward the incredible task of revising and updating the groundbreaking *Africa Bible Commentary*, originally published in 2006, so it can more effectively speak into the continent's changing environment.

While the first commentary is already quite revolutionary in scope and purpose, an updated volume is timely as we have come to grips, in recent years, with some serious dilemmas and fresh opportunities that cannot be ignored, among them:

- a young generation that grows critical of traditional faith and beliefs,
- pressing issues and breakthroughs that have huge global impact, and
- an urgent need to recast the commentary to be a more useable seminary textbook.

When the work is finished, the revised commentary will provide an even richer contextual guide to Africa's pastors, Bible students, and all readers, thanks to the addition of homegrown proverbs, stories and riddles. Equally important, it will address lingering needs and challenges associated with church growth and will bring a stronger focus on the relevance of God's truth in the midst of a digital age and growing social media influence around the world.

Dr. Elizabeth Mburu, theological editor and the coordinator of the revision project, pointed out that the internet has opened up the world to everyone so much so that a girl in a sun-drenched African village can be on Instagram and have an instant connection with girls her age in snowy Seattle or elsewhere in the world. She said this is one reason "we felt it was time to just give [the commentary] a little bit of a facelift."



"I minister to teens and young people, and they raise a lot of questions that were not an issue when I was growing up. Traditionally, Ethiopians are a Christian society. The generation now is becoming critical of that. They ask, 'Why do I need to be a Christian?' and 'Is God for real?' I need to equip myself to serve them."

— The updated *Africa Bible Commentary* will help leaders like Tigist Gelagle (above), a youth leader in Ethiopia, to address questions from Africa's next generation.

In spite of a pandemic, the commentary revision makes progress

By the grace of God, the revision process is going very well despite some delays due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We are happy to report that:

- Close to 165 commentaries and articles are in various stages of copyediting and final revisions.
- In addition to the 37 articles being revised and updated, new articles are being written – 58 of them – on urgent topics like Islam, marriage, youth ministry in the 21st century, overcoming powers of darkness, and prosperity gospel.
- The revised *Africa Bible Commentary* is expected to publish by April 2023.



Africa Bible Commentary revision team (L to R) Dr. Nathan Chiroma, Dr. Liz Mburu, Dr. Yacouba Sanon, Dahlia Fraser, Dr. Edouard Kitoko-Nsiku

Without a doubt, the work is Herculean on many aspects, but it is exciting! Part of the excitement is that the project has allowed some seasoned senior theologians and editors to mentor younger African thinkers, theologians and writers. These emerging leaders have their fingers on the pulse of modern-day African socio-cultural dynamic – and they are being mentored and prepared to become the biblical thinkers, writers and editors their continent needs.

That's why our hearts overflow with thanksgiving to God for you – for your support of the revision project and your partnership with Langham in spreading the gospel of Christ. Please continue to pray for the ABC revision team – that they will be safe and healthy and energized to bring the work into completion.

Here are some other ways to pray for Langham's work across the global church:

- Pray for Langham's local pastor training movements as they continue to adapt to Covid restrictions. Where possible, trainings have shifted online. In the words of Langham-trained pastor Alex in Peru: "God's Word is not in quarantine!"
- Pray for the new Langham Scholars who will be moving to a new country to start their PhD studies. Pray for God's provision and encouragement.
- Pray for the progress of our one-volume Bible commentary projects. In addition to the revision of the *Africa Bible Commentary*, work continues on *The Central and Eastern European Bible Commentary*, the *Central Asian Bible Commentary*, and a commentary for a sensitive region we refer to as "The Big Country."

On behalf of the global church, thank you for your support. A project this big is made possible only by the faithful partnership of friends like you. We pray for God's rich blessings upon your leadership, congregation and ministry around the world.