



BIBLE STUDENTS' COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA

Newsletter

Winter 2014

Greetings from the BSCFA

We are told in Isaiah 35:5 that, "THEN (not now) the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped." We might at first think of how thrilling this is for the **literal** lifting of the curse of physical blindness and deafness, but let us not stop here. It is the lifting of the **curse of spiritual blindness and deafness** in Christ's Millennial Kingdom that we await. For when spiritual blindness is lifted, the RANSOM for sin will be clearly seen for the first time. Because God cares, He did not abandon the world of mankind in a hopeless condition. This phrase, the **ransomed of the Lord** of Isaiah 35 must refer to all who will accept Christ as their redeemer; as the corresponding price for father Adam; as the satisfaction for sin. Those ransomed will be raised to life from the grave and given an education in righteousness. (Isaiah 26:9)

God did not allow death to be the FINAL condition of innocent, suffering millions. He has provided a **"ransom"** - the basis of the only true hope for a world in despair. (Hosea 13:14) The Apostle Paul confirms this in 1 Corinthians 15:54, 55. The curse of death that **Adam brought upon all** is offset by the **price paid for all** by Christ in laying down his life for mankind. (1 Timothy 2:3-6)

The church of the firstborn is NOT on this Highway of Holiness although they are intimately associated with it. This **highway** is not a **narrow way of sacrifice for Christ's followers today**. (Matthew 7:14) **This Highway** is for the "weak" and the "feeble"

(Isaiah 35:3, 5) and it is even for the "foolish." (Isaiah 35:8) For all these failings those on this highway will not be unclean, but their change will take the full work of the kingdom.

Harmony and **At-one-ment** with God is the natural state of man LOST through Adam's sin. The ransomed come by the greatest "Highway" ever. Not a highway built by man, but a spiritual highway which takes the lost and perishing condition to **Zion**, the Holy City where our heavenly Father eagerly awaits. And how glorious that will be.

The shed blood of Jesus bought all the creation as well. The earth was "made to be inhabited," the Edenic paradise shall be restored -- both the plant and animal creation will be restored to their proper balance; nature with all its pleasing variety will call to men from every direction to seek and know the glory and power and love of God; and mind and heart will rejoice in him. The restless desire for something new, that now prevails, is not a **natural** but an **abnormal** condition due to our imperfection, and to our present unsatisfactory surroundings.

The beginning of a New Year is a time for reflection and resolve to make the coming year the one with the greatest efforts in service to the Lord. It is the time to pray that the coming year may be a time of the greatest opportunities to serve the Lord, the Truth, and the brethren. May 2014 be a year of blessing and growth for you. Earnestly pray "Thy Kingdom Come."

Bro. Richard Doctor, *Chairman BSCFA*



Attendees at Nigeria Bible Students' General Convention

Report from Nigeria

The Nigeria Bible Students Ecclesia Mission conducted its General Convention from August 23 - 25, 2013. Its theme was "Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction." (Philippians 4:14)

Thirteen Nigerian ecclesias were in attendance on this occasion as well as Bro. Jim Watkins from the United States. During the three days of convention the total recorded attendance was 358. Twelve candidates symbolized their consecration by water immersion. Nine brethren served as chairmen or testimony leaders during the weekend. The following elders led studies and/or gave discourses.

1. Bro. Ikechukwu Ashiegbu welcomed the brethren with the topic "The Efficacy of Jesus Christ."
2. Bro. Jim Watkins led studies on "The Proof of 1874 as Parousia of Jesus Christ" as well as "Resurrection." He also gave the "Baptismal" discourse.
3. Bro. Cajetan Egbu spoke on "Rejoice in the Lord" and also conducted the immersion service.
4. Bro. Celestine Oledibe discoursed on "Glorify God", "Filled with the Spirit" and chaired the business meeting.

5. Bro. Lazarus Ukpai spoke on "The Prayer That God Answers."

6. Bro. Chuks Edward gave a sermon on "Behold I Make All Things New."

7. Bro. Maurice Uzor captioned his presentation "Things That God Chooses."

8. Bro. Joseph Ogbunike titled his remarks "The Effect of Wickedness" and also assisted with the immersion service.

9. Bros. Jim Watkins, Cajetan Egbu and Celestine Oledibe served as panelists during the question meeting.

In addition to his participation at the General Convention, Bro. Jim Watkins had extended fellowship and served the brethren at Agwa, Obile, Ogwashiukwu, Ibadan and Lagos. The various classes expressed their appreciation to Bro. Jim for his many labors among the friends as well as for his words of encouragement.

Nigerian Elders/Leaders' Seminar

The 5th BSCFA sponsored Nigerian Elders and Leaders' Seminar was held in Agbarho from September 28 - 30, 2013. Twelve brethren were present for this occasion. Those who served with studies and/or discourses included Bros. Godwin Adiele, Chuks Jacob, Frances Edet, Vincent Aggrah, Believe Aggrah, Peter Eke, John Isife, David Obire and Moses Obire.



Nigerian Elders/Leaders' Seminar Attendees

One focus for the weekend was the presentation of discourses based upon Study Four of "Our Lord's Return" in the booklet, "Joy Cometh in the Morning." Other topics of study included "Gathering or Scattering," (Reprint 3883) "Provide Things Honest in the Sight of All Men" (Volume Six of Studies in the Scriptures, pages 563 - 578) and "Our Life of Consecration." A general question and answer session was handled by Bros. Peter Eke and Moses Obire followed by a testimony meeting moderated by Bro. John Isife. Following dinner, Bro. Moses Obire conducted a business meeting. Overall, the brethren greatly appreciated the seminar including the temporal arrangements and desired to have these gatherings continued because the content was deemed to be very profitable.

Ibadan Ecclesia Convention

On Saturday, December 13, 2013 the Ibadan Ecclesia held its end of the year Thanksgiving convention. Its theme was "Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people." (1 Chronicles 16:8) The convention was chaired by Bros. Bright Utok and Maurice Uzor in the morning and afternoon sessions respectively.

The following brethren also served.

1. Bro. Stephen Obayagbona welcomed the brethren with the topic "Love."

2. Bro. Celestine Oledibe's discourse was titled "Keeping Yourselves in the Love of God."

3. Bro. Joseph Ajise's sermon was on the subject "Personal Responsibility to God."

4. Bro. Ikechukwu Ashiegbu spoke on "The Words - Spirit and Ghost."

5. Bro. Lazarus Ukpai's discourse was captioned "Prayer."

6. Bro. Chuks Edward titled his talk "The Parable of the Hidden Treasure."

7. Bros. Cajetan Egbu, Ikechukwu Ashiegbu and Lazarus Ukpai were the panelists during a question meeting.

8. Bro. Joseph Obunike conducted the testimony meeting.

9. Following the convention Bro. Celestine Oledibe also chaired a business meeting.

Report from Ghana

Ghanaian General Convention

The third Ghanaian General Convention was held in Abura - Dunkwa, a suburb of Cape Coast during the period July 26 - 28, 2013. Its theme was "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." (1 Corinthians 2:2) Those who served were Bros. Jerome Rogers, Leonard Plange, Thomas Nti, Noah Amoo, Felix Daddah and Samuel Amoo. Discourse topics included "Two Salvations," "Consecration and Baptism," "The Mystery Hid," "Obedience Is the

Test," "Christian Fellowship," and "The Kingdom Is at Hand." Other features of this convention included two panel discussions, a vesper service, one public discourse, distribution of tracts and group studies with subsequent presentations on the theme text. The heartfelt testimonies on this occasion were noteworthy. Here is one such example.

"I am very happy to be part of this General Convention and I have something to testify although I am not a member of the Bible Students but from what I have heard for three days, I have seen that the Bible Students have the real truth and they live by it as well. They take time to explain scriptures by scriptures and you cannot get this anywhere in the nominal churches. I am touched how they fellowship, sleep together and eat together and treat each one equally. In the nominal churches when you are in their midst, the pastors, elders and deacons

are treated differently from the members, as they have good places to sleep and their food is made very special. If you are not part of the Bible Students and fellowship with them, it is very hard to know the elders and leaders and this tells me how our Lord Jesus lived and stayed with his disciples. My wife, Sr. Comfort Blankson from Nigeria, was once part of the Assemblies of God church and told me that she has found a new home with the brethren. You who are in the Truth already are blessed. Please hold fast to what you have been taught." (Mr. Blankson)

Ghanaian Leaders' Seminar

The eighteenth Ghanaian Leaders' Seminar was conducted by Bro. Moses Obire during the period October 18 - 20, 2013 at the home of Bro. Samuel and Sr. Elizabeth Amoo in Kumasi. Assigned studies on scriptural principles were led by several brethren throughout the weekend. The participants were very active and contribu-



Attendees at Ghanaian General Convention

tions during discussions were very constructive. There was an air of brotherliness evident and a willingness to add appropriate comments was noteworthy. Bro. Moses Obire also conducted in depth studies based upon portions of the harvest message. In particular, the final such study titled "Our Life of Consecration" was especially meaningful in emphasizing God's requirements for those who follow the narrow way. A general question and answer session was then entertained. The last session of the seminar was a testimony meeting during which the brethren recounted extremely moving experiences and vocalized how very appreciative they were for the topics explored during the course of the three days and as a closing hymn the friends agreed to sing "To God Be the Glory." The brethren continued singing for about two minutes even after everyone had gone around shaking hands and embracing one another. This spontaneous and heartwarming reaction helped to conclude the seminar on an extremely high note.

End of Year Conventions

The Western Region held its first annual gathering from November 8 - 10, 2013. Following Bro. Edward Nkansah's opening study on "Covenant by Sacrifice" a heavy downpour interrupted the start of a public meeting but after the rain subsided, Bro. Leonard Plange was able to make a presentation on the Truth before a large crowd for about 90 minutes. Some of the brethren mingled among those in the audience and distributed many "God's Kingdom Is at Hand" tracts that were translated in the local language of Twi. The following day the invited speakers discoursed upon various themes related to discipleship and sanctification. Additionally, an extended question and answer session provided opportunities for the brethren to obtain clarification on a number of doctrinal matters. The final day of convention featured group studies and presentations on 2 Peter 3:17. One of the special blessings of the convention was the

expressed desire during the closing testimony by one of the attendees to symbolize his consecration through water immersion.

The Central Region held its 12th annual convention during the period November 29 - December 1, 2013. Two events caused some adjustments in the brethren's schedule. First, the funeral of the area chief of Dunkwa - on - Offin prevented a public meeting from occurring. Additionally, on one road where distant brethren were traveling to the convention, there was a terrible accident involving a minivan bus and a large truck in which 23 individuals lost their lives. It took two and one half hours to reopen the road for regular passage and thus some attendees were delayed in their arrival at the convention. So very often brethren in Africa express gratitude for the heavenly Father's traveling mercies since driving conditions can be extremely difficult at times. Despite the foregoing, the brethren at the convention were filled with joy in being together once again. Several discourses were given on various portions of Matthew 28:19, 20. These were followed by group studies on Acts 1:8 and there were also two testimony meetings, additional discourses and a vesper service. After closing remarks were given by Bro. Leonard Plange, the brethren departed for their homes filled with rejoicing following the singing of hymn # 64, "God Be with You."

The Kumasi Ecclesia's convention was held from December 20 - 22, 2013. Several discourses given were based upon the attributes of God with the publication "Three Keys to the Bible" being used as a reference for consideration. Other aspects of the gathering included a panel discussion on the topic "Reasoning Together," a sisters' study and a testimony meeting. There was general agreement that the brethren who gave discourses treated their topics effectively. As an aid to providing devotional material in the local languages,

Bro. Noah Amoo had translated the entire Daily Heavenly Manna into the Twi dialect and worked diligently during this same weekend with Bros. Leonard Plange and Jerome Rogers to edit this invaluable resource for the brethren. It is anticipated this task will be completed in the very near future and the Manna will be duplicated and distributed to the brethren in the next few months. It is hoped that with the successful completion of this project, other Truth related materials will be translated so that brethren who are not fluent in the English language will have access to more scriptural resources in their native tongue.

Report from Uganda

There is a wonderful sense of fellowship and Truth activity among the brethren in Uganda, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Bro. Eliezer Jjuuko highlights some of the foregoing in his report as noted in the following paragraphs.

The Paidha seminar provided for two days of intensive study on July 20 - 21, 2013. About 60 brethren were in attendance and 5 brethren symbolized their consecrations

through water immersion. Eight brethren presented discourses of one hour on the topics "How to Wrestle/Overcoming," "Jordan Consecration," "The Tabernacle Overview," "The Tabernacle Teachings," "Christian Living," "The Passover Lamb," "Symbols in the Bible" and "Sin Offering and Question session."

The established classes in Congo include Gwako - Nyeri, Rhuta, Ngote, and Mahazi/Paidha which is a border location and serves brethren from both Uganda and Congo. There are also study groups that are separated from the nominal churches at Dali, Angal and Avonal. The established ecclesias in West Nile and northern Uganda include Goli, Russi-Nebbi, Angal, and Gulu.

From September 13 - 15, 2013 we were blessed to participate in a seminar in Rwanda. It was an occasion of personal edification in the Truth for all who were in attendance. Of special note was the baptismal service for two brethren in our fellowship. There were 7 present including one new interest in the Truth. She stayed



Study Session at Rwanda Seminar



Some Brethren at a Truth Seminar in Suba, Kenya

for three hours and enjoyed the various studies. Among others who are learning the Truth but have not yet made a consecration, four of them are teachers. Following some introductory lessons regarding basic features of the divine plan, Bro. Silver Mugisha will facilitate the use of Studies in the Scriptures to strengthen their understanding. Most of these friends emigrated from Uganda, one is from Congo and a few of them are natives of Rwanda. Please keep them in your prayers.

Report from Kenya

Truth activities are engaged in by numerous brethren in this area of East Africa and nearby countries. During July 2013, Bro. Pius Were reported concerning a witness opportunity for two days at a village in Busia County where approximately 40 individuals were present and requested the establishment of regular classes for Bible study. Bro. Jim Watkins who visited this area in August 2013 also supplied Truth resources for those who received the scriptural message from Bro. Pius. From August 16 - 18, 2013 a Truth seminar was con-

ducted in Suba as discourses were given to provide an overview of many features of the divine plan for mankind. Some of the brethren involved in this undertaking included Bros. Zablun Anyumba, James Onyongo, David Mutei, Jamin Malova and Kelvin Marofu. During September 2013 a seminar in Malaba included attendees from both Kenya and Uganda. Lessons from Habakkuk 2:2 as well as Bible studies were provided and assorted booklets on "Salvation" and "How to Study the Bible and Have It Make Sense" were distributed to attendees in this rural village. In October 2013, Bro. Eliezer Jjuuko traveled to Kenya for Truth seminars in Kyavakali and Kamukunywa. Bro. David Mutei has also been active serving several classes and emphasizes to the friends that even more important than witnessing to those with hearing ears is that of personal sanctification for those who are already consecrated. Bro. David also traveled to Tanzania to assist with the Truth efforts in that country. Although the details of his report are not available at this time, Bro. Khurrsino Miranda of India served several classes in

Kenya from November 1 - 14, 2013. Truly the harvest goes grandly on!

Pan-African Seminar Update

Plans are now underway in earnest for the 2014 Pan-African Seminar in Accra, Ghana, Lord willing. There will be three full days of seminar from Saturday, April 19 - Monday, April 21, 2014 although there also will be a mini - seminar for the Ghanaian leaders commencing the afternoon of Thursday, April 17 through midday on Friday, April 18. Additionally, there will be opportunities for sight-seeing for those who are interested. A variety of discourses, panel discussions, devotional programs and testimony meetings as well as one evening of extended fellowship will be arranged for the expected 115 brethren present. Confirmed reservations have been made for attendees from Kenya, Malawi, Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Ghana, Pakistan, Cameroon, Nigeria, South Africa, India, Morocco, Romania and the United States. Please keep this gathering of the Lord's people in your prayers to the end that we may glorify our dear heavenly Father.

BSCFA Board of Directors

The current Board of Directors for the Bible Students' Committee for Africa is as follows:

Chairman: Bro. Richard Doctor

Secretary: Bro. Austin Williams

Treasurer: Sr. Nannette Nekora

Other Board members include Bros. Joe Dolan, Bill Dutka, Bob Gray, Kent Humphreys, Ray Luke and Homer Montague.

In Memoriam

Sr. Chai Darmstadt, of New Jersey, passed from us July 29, 2013, after lengthy physical difficulties. Sr. Chai was a tireless worker on behalf of expanding the Truth in Africa, including Ghana and Kenya and her service is fondly remembered by brethren there. One remembrance from Bro. Rogers

of Ghana is as follows: "All brethren in Cape Coast send condolence for the death of our dear and beloved sister Chai who has just finished her course. You will not dispute the fact that it was through her effort and Brother Edward's that the Bible Students in Cape Coast stand as they do now. We do understand that it is God that does the calling but he does that through someone. My prayer is that we now hold the mantle to teach the word and not let her effort be in vain." Other brethren have remembered the countless hours she spent in emails with African brethren, advising, encouraging, and scheduling Truth seminars, the large sums she spent shipping materials and funding speaker travels in Africa, her works of charity and mercy, and the remarkable increase of the Truth to thousands upon thousands of engaged and appreciative recipients in Africa. "She hath done what she could" (Mark 14:8) and the results have been abundant.

Thought for the Memorial Celebration

"It is one cup, though it be the juice of many grapes, even as it is one loaf, though it be from many grains. The grains cannot maintain their individuality and their own life if they would become bread for others; the grapes cannot maintain themselves as grapes if they would constitute the life-giving spirit; and thus we see the beauty of the apostle's statement that the Lord's people are participants in the one loaf and cup.... There is no other way that we can attain the new nature than by accepting the Lord's invitation to drink of His cup, and be broken with Him as members of the one loaf, and to be buried with Him in baptism into His death, and thus to attain with Him resurrection glory, honor and immortality." Manna April 12

Our Lord's Memorial

Sunday, April 13, 2014 (after 6:00pm)

"But they cried, saying, crucify him, crucify him."

Luke 23:21

Newsletter items as well as fully tax deductible donations may be sent to:
Bible Students Committee for Africa
P.O. Box 111, West Hempstead, NY 11552