



BIBLE STUDENTS' COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA



Newsletter

Winter 2009

Greetings from the BSCFA

At the July 2008 annual meeting the Bible Student Committee for Africa adopted a provision to elect a board of directors to manage the business of the committee. It is a great pleasure to report that the committee is now actively engaged in every aspect of the effort and in extending the scope of the work to serve the brethren in Africa and elsewhere. We soon expect the BSCFA will have an operating web site.

As we enter into the opening year, the Lord's words of comfort to the Apostle Paul are worthy of consideration. Indeed they are worthy of adopting as a theme text for the entire year (2 Corinthians 12:9) "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

What a strange statement! During this period of apostolic miracles, we learn from Act 19:11-12 that, "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons,

and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."

This special period of miracles is now ended since every apostle has long since died and it is clear that this healing power the Apostle Paul had was used for the benefit of others and for others only. It was not for Paul himself to be physically delivered from "infirmities." It is believed that these "infirmities" were a never completely healed disease of the eyes which got better, then worse, then better, but never was cured. Words of comfort meet us in Paul's loving acceptance of God's wisdom and grace, hushing every fear. The Heavenly Father's grace tender, strong and faithful caused Paul to rejoice, or "glory."

Following his example in the New Year let us go onward then, and fear not, as beloved children of Jehovah. For His word shall never, never pass away as he speaks, "I, the Lord, am with thee, be thou not afraid; I will help and strengthen, be thou not dismayed. Yes, I will uphold thee with my own right hand."

May the Lord bless you in all spiritual things.
Bro. Richard Doctor, Chairman, BSCFA



Brethren who symbolized at Okpuala Ngwa

Report from Nigeria

Visitations by Bro. Cajetan Egbu

During the period November 4 through 17, 2008, Bro. Cajetan visited five ecclesias. At Okpuala Ngwa he was greeted by Bro. Goodwin Adele, his family and other brethren. During the several days at that location, Bro. Cajetan conducted a study on "Benefits of Living a Holy Life." Two films also were shown on "The Truth About Hell" and "Why Does God Permit Evil?" A highlight of this visit was Bro. Cajetan's privilege of giving a baptismal discourse and conducting an immersion service for ten brethren. Bro. Chucks Jacob conducted a testimony meeting and there was also a question-and-answer session.

At Aba 2 Ecclesia Bro. Cajetan was especially welcomed by Bro. Nkem Ukah and Sr. Elizabeth Onwumere, the widow of the late Bro. Anthony Onwumere. Following a study on "Love of the Brethren," and "Consecration," additionally, films were shown on the topics "The Truth About Hell" and "The Gospel of the Kingdom." As with his visit to the previous ecclesia, Bro. Cajetan provided a baptismal talk followed by an immersion service where

fourteen brethren symbolized their consecration. In addition to testimony and question meetings in which this new ecclesia took part, they requested several materials related to the Harvest message and received those items that were available at the time.

Bro. Maurice Ugor then welcomed Bro. Cajetan at the Ohoba Ecclesia. The first discourse he gave was entitled "Life Lost by Adam and Life Promised by Jesus Christ." After a baptismal discourse, Bro. Cajetan immersed eleven candidates who desired to symbolize their consecration. These brethren also gave testimonies following this special occasion.

At Ihiagwa Owerri Ecclesia, Bro. Cajetan was greeted by Bros. Moses Ashiegbu and Ambrose Jacob. While fellowshipping at the home of Bro. Moses, discussions centered around the means of promoting the spiritual growth of this class. In view of his advancing age and need of special prayers, Bro. Moses will work closely with Bros. Ambrose Jacob and his son Ikechukwu Ashiegbu to help meet the needs of the ecclesia.

Bro. Cajetan visited Kwale Ecclesia a new class and was greeted by Bro. Goodwin Edoja.



Brethren at Ohoba Ecclesia

Bro. Cajetan led a study on the “Chart of the Ages” and showed a film on “For This Cause.” The friends in this class requested several Truth related materials to assist them in their studies.

The final stop on Bro. Cajetan’s journey before returning to his home was with the Agwa brethren. There he gave a discourse on “The Call” and showed a film on “Israel.” During the period of fellowship there were discussions regarding the spiritual development of this class.

Lagos Ecclesia Convention

A convention was held in Lagos on October 4, 2008. Its theme was “Let all things be done unto edifying” (1 Corinthians 14:26). In view of the high cost of transportation, many invited brethren were unable to attend. The following brethren served:

1. Bro. Edward Ekeh chaired the convention.
2. Bro. Moses Shotunde welcomed the friends with a talk on “Doing God’s Will.”
3. Bro. Edward Ekeh spoke on “Christ Our Passover.”
4. Bro. Celestine Oledibe’s sermon was titled “Think on These Things.”

Some testimonies were given, primarily expressing gratitude to God for the convention despite the difficulties experienced by the brethren.

Ibadan Bible Students Convention

A thanksgiving convention was hosted by the Ibadan Ecclesia on December 6, 2008 with the theme of “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift” (2 Corinthians 9:15). Seven other classes attended even though several classes were unable to participate because of various difficulties. The following brethren served:

1. Bros. Stephan Obayagbona and Hen Bassey co-chaired the convention.
2. Bro. Cajetan Egbu welcomed the brethren with a talk on “The Call.”
3. Bro. Celestine Oledibe’s sermon was captioned “The Life of Moses.”
4. Bro. David Obayagbona spoke on “The Truth.”
5. Bro. Lazarus Ukpai’s message was titled “Love.”
6. Bro. Edward Ekeh led the Young People’s program which featured beautiful renditions from “Hymns of Dawn.”



Some sisters at Ibadan Convention



Study session at elders' seminar

7. Bro. Chuks Edward conducted the testimony meeting.
8. Bro. Celestine Oledibe chaired the General Convention Committee meeting. Many details were discussed concerning planning for this event. There was also reconfirmation that the dates for the Nigerian Bible Students seminar would be February 20-22, 2009.

Report from Bro. Moses Obire

The following is a report concerning the second Nigerian elders' seminar as reported by Bro. Moses Obire.

"I am happy to report that the Lord God Almighty has once again given us his grace to

hold another elders' seminar in Nigeria. This second seminar began on the 3rd of November and ended on the 5th. The venue was Uromi in Edo State in South-South Nigeria. Brethren from five classes attended. They were:

1. Bro. Goodwin Edoja, Kwale Class
2. Bro. Sunday Enang from Ntak Obio Akpa Class
3. Bro. Monday Ntukidem, Ntak Obio Akpa Class
4. Bro. John Isife, Lagos-Ketu Class
5. Bro. Donatus Onochie, Lagos-Ketu Class
6. Bro. Monday Okoekoh, Uromi Class
7. Bro. Friday Otuekere, Uromi Class
8. Bro. Bro. Charles Aluede, Uromi Class
9. Bro. Paul Ighalo, Uromi Class
10. Bro. David Ena-Obire, Warri Class
11. Bro. Moses Ena-Obire, Warri Class

"None of us is so strong in the new nature that he can disregard the fellowship of kindred minds. But even if we did feel sufficiently strong for ourselves, the spirit of love in us should so control that we would delight to meet with "the brethren" for their sakes, if we ourselves received no benefit therefrom. But we are more or less like coals of fire, which, if separated, will tend to cool rapidly, but which, if brought together, will tend to increase in fervency the entire mass. Our Lord has encouraged his people to seek each other's fellowship for companionship in the study of his Word, and in prayer, pronouncing special blessings upon the meeting of his people together, even if so few as only two or three." -- Reprints 4076



Attendees at Ghanaian leaders' seminar

Topics covered at the seminar included 30-minute discourses prepared by attendees condensing each assigned chapter of the *Divine Plan of the Ages* (Volume One of the *Studies in the Scriptures*). Others were detailed studies on 1) Consecration, 2) The Tabernacle, and 3) What It Costs to Be a Christian of the Genuine Sort.

These studies brought to the fore deficiencies in ecclesia organization, roles being played by elders and foundations laid in ecclesias in inception. These subjects no doubt reawakened in brethren the fire of zeal which at first informed their desire to consecrate their all to the service of the Father as evidenced by statements and remarks by attendees during and after the seminar. Testimonies by those who attended the first seminar revealed the growth which they have experienced since the June seminar. They expressed the desire to have another seminar in no distant time.

I used this opportunity to call on all Nigerian Bible Students to avail themselves of the opportunity these seminars afford in accurate knowledge acquisition to help them improve their relationship with the Heavenly Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, the brethren and the Truth.

They stand to gain from studies as indicated by the scriptures (2 Tim. 2:15; Acts 13:15-26; 1 Tim. 4:14-16; etc.)”

Report from Ghana

The eighth Ghanaian leaders' seminar was conducted by Bro. Moses Obire during the period of September 3-9, 2008 at the home of Bro. Samuel and Sr. Elizabeth Amoo in Kumasi. As usual, Bro. Obire led a series of studies with the Ghanaian leaders that focused upon internalizing the spirit of the Truth. Six such subjects included: “Need for Great Confidence in God’s Word,” “God’s Standard Is Perfection,” “Seeking First the Kingdom,” “Dual Personality of the Christian,” “Sufferings of Christ and His Church” and “Development of Christ-Likeness.” In order to make these sessions as meaningful as possible, each topic was followed by a question-and-answer period in which each participant was asked to give at least one point of importance that differed from the responses previously given.

Other aspects of the seminar in addition to testimony meetings included discourses followed by questions on the following subjects: “The Sanctifying Power of the Truth,” “Mortality and



Brethren at Dunkwa on Offin

Immortality,” “Signs of Thy Presence,” “Satan’s Devices” “The Tree of Life,” “Peace,” “The Prerequisites for Justification,” “Our Inheritance in Christ,” “Elimination of Evil,” “The Selection of the Church,” “The Way of Eternal Life,” “The Hope of Universal Peace,” “The Will of God,” “When a Man Dies,” “Evidences of Consecration,” “Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled” and “The Grace of God.” Although some of the brethren demonstrated a need for increased diligence in their discourse preparation, overall the quality of presentations has improved greatly.

The brethren expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the seminar especially those who attended for the first time. They appreciated the learning which occurred during this spiritual gathering. The seminar formally came to an end with prayers, *Songs in the Night* and the singing of Hymn 64.

Report from Dunkwa On Offin

The fifth annual Central Region convention was held in Dunkwa on Offin during the period November 28-30, 2008. The theme text of this

occasion was “Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord, that walketh in his ways” (Psalms 128:1). The following brethren served:

1. Bro. Leonard Plange gave three discourses.
2. Bro. Samuel Amoo provided two discourses.
3. Bro. Edward Nkansah offered two discourses and led a testimony meeting.
4. Bro. Thomas Nti had one sermon.
5. Bro. Enoch Amoah had one talk and also led a “Chart” study as well as a testimony meeting.

The participants at this gathering were from Kumasi, the Western Region as well as the greater Dunkwa area.

Other highlights of this gathering included an elders’ meeting to consider matters related to future conventions as well as a vesper service in which the children sang hymns, as well as recited poems and Bible stories. One twelve-year-old boy also conducted a short “Chart” study. The adults greatly enjoyed the presenta-

tions by these young people. Throughout the weekend there were expressions of love, appreciation and unity. Bro. Leonard Plange closed the convention with prayer after which the brethren sang "God Be With You." Bro. Plange also asked that much love be sent to all the friends in America as well as the BSCFA for their prayers and support.

Pilgrim Report from Bro. Edward Nkansah

From time to time we have shared reports of this brother's Truth activities. Since he has a family and is away a considerable period of time from his home in Kumasi each month, his zeal in meeting with the brethren in the greater Cape Coast area as well as following up on witnessing leads in the city of Accra are worthy of mention. Here is one of his recent reports of such activity.

"Dearly Beloved in Christ,

Greetings from our Lord and Savior. By the grace of our good Lord I was also granted a traveling mercy this time too. After spending one week in Cape Coast with the brethren there I traveled to Accra on Thursday evening which was on the 6th and on the next day which was Friday the 7th, I did fellowship with Bro. Felix and one Sr. Jacqueline from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on the topic of "Our Lord's Return" which Bro. Felix told me he needs some clarification on. I explained it to him as we both searched from the scriptures. The next morning, which was Saturday the 8th I traveled to Odorkor to meet Bro. Smart and we had a study for 3 hours as I took him once again through the explanation of the "Chart" from 10:15 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Then I continued to search for one brother called Amos who is in Domi Accra, and at 3:15 p.m. we had a study on "Who Are the Bible Students" and "How to Study the Bible and Have It Make Sense." Thank God he had Volume 1 and he told me he had been corresponding with the Chicago Bible Students for 3 years now and they told him that there are some of the brethren here in Ghana and I would be coming to him. He also showed me other study aids from them and told me that I will hear from him again very soon as he wants to pray if this is the real truth. Additionally, I shared with him how I also came into the Truth after being with the Baptist church for 14 years. The reason I told him of

my experiences was that he is in a very big and beautiful church building and is one of the associate pastors so it will be difficult for him to leave but he knows what I am telling him is right.

The next morning was Sunday the 9th and I went to Jonathan Samdzi's house to fellowship with him for 3 hours and then left for Dansoman and met Eric Baffoe and Diana Ashie. When I asked how they came in contact with the Bible Students, they told me it was through the Yahoo search on the Internet. I was happy to meet them and gave them some copies of "Who Are the Bible Students," "How to Study the Bible and Have It Make Sense," "Where Are the Dead," and a "Chart of the Ages." God willing, I will visit them again next month.

On Monday I was supposed to be at Pastor Williams place but he called to say he could not keep the appointment so I used that day which was the 10th to have studies with Bro. Felix for 3 hours on the topic Hell Fire and then departed for Winneba. That evening I met with the Winneba class and had a study with them for two and half hours on the topic (The Mystery Hid) from "Joy Cometh in the Morning". Those present were five in number and the next morning we continued the same topic. In all, the good Lord did grant me traveling mercies and I thank you for your prayer support."

Continued Appreciation

The brethren in Africa have consistently expressed their gratitude for the prayers and support from brethren around the world that have enabled them to grow in the knowledge and love of God's divine plan that will bless all the families of mankind in due course. As space permits, from time to time testimonies are published which the friends in Africa have expressed for the privilege of assembling together with other brethren of like precious faith even in the midst of great material adversity. We appreciate their sharing these experiences.

Who May Celebrate?

Concerning our Lord's Memorial, we read the following.

“We answer, first of all, that none should commune who do not trust in the precious blood of Christ as the sacrifice for sins. None should commune except by faith he have on the doorposts and lintel of his earthly tabernacle the blood of sprinkling that speaketh peace for us, instead of calling for vengeance, as did the blood of Abel. (Heb. 12:24) None should celebrate the symbolical feast unless in his heart he has the true feast, and has accepted Christ as his Life-giver. Further, none should commune unless he is a member of the one body, the one loaf, and unless he has reckoned his life, his blood, sacrificed with the Lord's in the same chalice, or cup. There is here a clearly drawn line of distinction, not only between the believers and unbelievers, but also between the consecrated and the unconsecrated. However, the line is to be drawn by each individual for himself—so long as his professions are good and reasonably attested by his outward conduct. It is not for one member to be the judge of another, nor even for the Church to judge, unless, as already pointed out, the matter has come before it in some definite form, according to the prescribed regulations. Otherwise the elders, or representatives of the Church, should set before those who assemble themselves these terms and conditions—(1) faith in the blood; and (2) consecration to the Lord and his service, even unto death. They should then invite all who are thus minded and thus consecrated to join in celebrating the Lord's death and their own. This, and all invitations connected with this celebration, should be so comprehensively stated as to leave no thought of sectarianism. All should be welcomed to participate, regardless of their faith and harmony on other subjects, if they are in full accord in respect to these foundation truths—the redemption through the precious blood, and a full consecration unto death, giving them justification.

It is appropriate here to consider the words of the Apostle: *"Whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh condemnation to himself, if he discern not the Lord's body."* 1 Cor. 11:27-29

The Apostle's warning here seems to be against a careless celebration of this Memorial, which would make of it a feast, and against inviting persons to it in a promiscuous manner. It is not such a feast. It is a solemn Memorial, intended only for the members of the Lord's "body"; and whoever does not discern this, whoever does not discern that the loaf represents the flesh of Jesus, and that the cup represents his blood, would, in partaking of it, properly come under condemnation—not "damnation" as in the common version, but a condemnation in the Lord's sight, and a condemnation also in his own conscience. Before partaking of these emblems each individual, therefore, should decide for himself whether or not he believes and trusts in the broken body and shed blood of our Lord as being his ransom price; and secondly, whether or not he has made the consecration of his all that he may thus be counted in as a member of that "one body."

Having noted who are excluded, and who properly have access to the Lord's table, we see that every true member of the *Ecclesia* has the right to participate, unless that right has been debarred by a public action of the whole Church, according to the rule therefore laid down by the Lord. (Matt. 18:15-17) All such may celebrate; all such will surely desire to celebrate—will surely desire to conform to the Master's dying admonition, "Eat ye all of it; drink ye all of it." They will realize that unless we eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, we have no life in us; and that if they have in heart and mind partaken of the merits of the Lord's sacrifice really, and of his life, that it is both a privilege and a pleasure to memorialize this, and to confess it before each other and before the Lord."—*Studies in the Scriptures*, Volume 6, pages 472-474.

Our Lord's Memorial
Tuesday, April 7, 2009 (after 6:00 p.m.)

*"But they cried, saying,
 Crucify him, crucify him."* Luke 23:21

Newsletter items as well as fully tax-
 deductible donations may be sent to:

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