



Newlyweds Br. Bernard and Sr. Salomay Hicks flanked by well wishers

African Bible Students' Web Site

A new web site, (www.africanbiblestudents.com) has been under development that may be of interest to our readers. Its purpose is for witnessing, locating, and contacting brethren on the continent of Africa. It has a separate section for each country where there are brethren, or where there are Truth witness activities including Benin, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, etc.

The Home Page has a large map of Africa. Clicking on a country opens up that section with a large map of that country. That map will highlight each city having Bible Students or ecclesias where individuals can obtain information, literature, and find meetings or studies.

It is planned for each country's section to include articles in English from the Harvest Message. In addition, brethren in each country will be encouraged to translate booklets, tracts, etc. from the Harvest Message into their native

dialects, or write their own articles. This may include announcements of local interest such as public talks, meeting locations, offers of free literature, CDs, DVDs, etc. As a result of this initiative the Internet will be used to proclaim God's message of Truth throughout the African continent.

The public may order Truth materials which will be filled by brethren in the United States operating this website. The contact names and letters will be forwarded to the closest ecclesia or individuals for further follow-up. If at a later time an ecclesia or individual wants to receive and fill such orders on its own, it may do so by contacting Bro. Bill Dutka (Dutka5@aol.com).

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



BIBLE STUDENTS' COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA



Newsletter

SPRING 2009

Greetings from the BSCFA

Many of us participated in the recent Memorial service (Tuesday, April 7, 2009) with rich meaning and importance, for Christ asks us to do this. While this service is a symbol, the daily living of our lives *in Christ* is the reality. We, of the Bible Students' Committee for Africa would appreciate communications from the various gatherings who celebrated the Memorial, informing us of any details you might wish to share as to location, the number partaking, and names.

This service is only for the consecrated to partake of, and Psalm 56:11,12 reflects the attitude of those who accept this offer and who consecrate themselves. "In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me. Your vows are upon me, O God: I will render praises unto you."

Many religious groups require emotionalism to convince others to take their "stand" for Christ. Though motivated by stirring eloquence, these souls often drift back to their former habits soon after they leave the meeting. Consecration is not a trivial matter. It is a lifetime contract. Unlike some "lifetime" vows which are easily broken, the Lord will require us to perform what we have promised. "When you vow a vow unto God, defer not to pay it, for he has no pleasure in fools: pay that which you hast vowed. Better is it that you should not vow, than you should vow and not pay." (Ecclesiastes 5:4, 5)

If we fully submit our wills, we have the benefit of all God's promises to watch over us. The Lord gave a parable to impress upon us the necessity of knowing just what is involved if we decide to follow him.

There were large crowds traveling with him; so he turned and said to them, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate ("love less"—Strong's)

his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, *yes, and his own life*, he cannot be a disciple of mine; whoever does not *carry his own cross* and come after me, he cannot be a disciple of mine. For which of you wants to build a tower and does not first sit down to calculate the expense, to see if he has enough money to complete? In case, after he has laid the foundation and then is unable to finish the building, all the spectators start to make fun of him, saying, 'This fellow started to build but he could not finish it.' " (Luke 14:25-31 – Moffat translation)

God's word shows that we would not be called to consecrate if it were not possible to "pay" our vows. As our appreciation of God deepens, we begin to see how little it costs. In his letter to the Romans, Paul gives his judgment about the cost:

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. What shall he then say to these things? Since God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:18, 31)

May the Lord richly bless you in spiritual things.

Bro. Richard Doctor, Chairman BSCFA



Bro. Khurrsino Miranda giving a discourse in Ghana

Report from Nigeria

Leadership (Servants) Seminar

The Nigeria Bible Students' leadership (servants) seminar was conducted in Obudi Agwa Owerri from February 20-22, 2009. Its theme was "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him. If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed. And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31, 32)

Forty brethren participated in this gathering from sixteen ecclesias including Ibadan, Lagos, Onitsha, Agwa, Abuja, Ohoba, Obile, Ihiagwa, Okpuala Ngwa, Aba 2, Udung Uko, Oron City, Mbokpu Uko-Akai, Mbokpu Oduobo Okobo and Awarra.

The chairmen for the weekend were Bros. Stephen Obayagbona, Vitalis Ekeh, Frances Edet, Ikechukwu Ashiegbu, Chuks Edward and Isaac Ihejirka. Testimony leaders were: Bros. Joseph Ogbunike and Hen Bassey.

Additional services were provided as follows:

1. Bro. Cajetan Egbu welcomed the brethren with a lesson entitled "Order of Servants and Servants of the Truth." He also provided an introduction on "53 Bible Study Lessons" a product of Messengers of Christ from India.
2. Bro. Celestine Oledibe gave two discourses on "Discipline in the Church" and "Fundamental Doctrines."

3. Bro. David Obayagbona led two studies on the topics "What is Truth" and "I Will Come Again."
4. Bro. Lazarus Ukpai gave a discourse on "The Day of Jehovah."
5. Bro. Chuks Edward's sermons were on "Consecration of Christ, an Example to Us" as well as "Prayer."
6. Bro. Stephen Obayagbona gave two discourses on "Obedience and Pride" and "Keeping His Commandments."
7. Bro. Hen Bassey's sermon was on "Dwelling Together in Unity."
8. Bro. Maurice Uzor's discourse was entitled "Faith."
9. Bro. Anthony Olinya's talk was on "God's Best Test and Rest."
10. Bro. Godwin Adiele gave a discourse on "Parables of the Kingdom."
11. Bro. Boniface Obiukwu entitled his discourse "Love."
12. Bro. Ikechukwu Ashiegbu's lesson was on "The Bible Stone."
13. Bro. Joseph Ogbunike gave a discourse on "Trials and Temptations."
14. Bro. Francis Edet's discourse was captioned "In the World Today – Signs and Wonders, Problems and Prospects."



Group photograph of attendees at Leadership (Servants) Seminar

Jerome Rogers, Thomas Duah, Edward Nkansah, Kyei Berko and Enoch Amoah. Two of several challenging topics presented dealt with "The Lord's Second Presence" and "The Sin Offering." Since brethren worldwide consider these as an important part of their doctrinal development, the leaders in Ghana have also been given opportunities to confirm their understanding of such matters.

Additionally, Bro. Obire conducted studies for two days on "Order and Discipline in the New Creation" from Volume Six in *Studies in the Scriptures*. Additional studies from the Harvest message featured Reprint articles including "Consecration Followed by Temptation," "Our Cleansing—Inward and Outward," and "The Knowledge of God—Its True Value." The final study taken from the Sermon book was "The Central Purpose of God's Message." The overall conduct of the seminar which included testimony meetings and opportunities to discuss business matters involving the brethren made for a profitable gathering of the participants.

The following quote from Bro. Obire describes his experience after leaving the seminar en route to his home in Nigeria.

"Accompanied by Bro. Nkansah, I left Kumasi at about 1:00 A.M. local time on Friday 30th April for Accra. We arrived at about 5:30 A.M. local time and we took a taxi straight to the airport. Bro. Edward remained with me for sometime before departing. My flight was on schedule at 8:10 A.M. local time. I arrived in Lagos at 10:00 A.M. Nigerian local time and headed for the bus station to begin my journey home from Lagos. Due to a traffic jam on the way I arrived home at 11:25 P.M. Nigerian local time. Very near Warri, my town, our vehicle narrowly missed armed robbers' attack. They had blocked the road with a bus with all doors opened wide. The luck we had was that our vehicle was following a trailer truck. When the trailer zoomed past the robbers we followed him directly behind, hence they could not stop us, but every other vehicle after ours had some brush with them. It was the Lord's doing that I arrived home safely."

We are most grateful for the Heavenly Father's providence on behalf of our brother.



Leaders at Ghana 2009 Spring Seminar



Group photograph of Agwa Convention attendees

awareness of areas of strength and weaknesses both on the individual and class levels. Brethren testified to mind purifying effects of the subjects treated and a sense of longing for more engendered by these effects on the individuals. Personally, I felt the uplifting effects of the subjects to such an extent that I wished all elders in Nigeria were at the seminar to be so affected.

Once again, may I use this opportunity to call on all Nigerian Bible Students that are teaching in their classes 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 as well as enhance their teaching abilities. They stand to gain from studies as indicated by the scriptures (2 Timothy 2:51, Acts 13:25-26; 1 Timothy 4:13-16; etc.)

Many testimonies of appreciation to God also were given by the brethren.

Agwa Bible Students Convention

The Agwa convention was conducted on April 11, 2009. Its theme was: "But let a man examine himself and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." (1 Corinthians 11:28) Bros. Vitalis Eke and Goodwin Adiele served as chairmen and nine ecclesias were in attendance. The following brethren also served in different capacities:

1. Bro. Boniface Obiukwu gave a welcome discourse entitled "Remain Faithful in the Truth."
2. Bro. Celestine Oledibe's sermon was on "Test of our Consecration."
3. Bro. Chuks Edward spoke on "The Great Multitude or Company and The Little Flock."
4. Bro. Maurice Uzor gave a discourse with the topic "Not My Will but Thy Will O Lord."



Attendees at January 2009 Ghana Leaders Seminar

5. There was a question meeting with Bros. Cajetan Egbu, Celestine Oledibe and Chuks Edward as panelists.
6. Bro. Chuks Jacob conducted the testimony meeting.
7. The Nigeria Bible Students' General Convention Committee meeting chaired by Bro. Celestine Oledibe dealt with matters needful for the brethren to understand.

The Agwa brethren expressed their gratitude to all that contributed in one way or the other for the success of the convention.

Report from Ghana

January 12 – January 30, 2009

During this time Bro. Lee and Sr. Ila Hicks as well as Sr. Lynn Murray were in Ghana for a variety of spiritual activities commencing with a Leaders' seminar on January 13th. Bro. Homer and Sr. Beverly Montague as well as Bro. Bernard Hicks arrived on January 16th and, therefore, did not participate in the Leaders' seminar that commenced on January 13th. The American brethren who attended the seminar generally gave favorable reports as to the perform-

ance of the Ghanaian leaders who gave discourses of thirty minutes followed by fifteen minutes of questions from the congregation.

A major highlight of the seminar was a series of workshops presented by Bro. Khurrsino Miranda of India. He introduced a program entitled "53 Lessons" which purports to summarize the major concepts taught in the six volumes of *Studies in the Scriptures*. Everyone at the seminar was extremely impressed with this witnessing program which has been used with great effectiveness in India. It consists of a dramatic presentation of basic Truth doctrine of approximately two hours to groups who have an interest in learning about the Bible. Follow-up meetings are conducted each week and after 53 weeks of instruction, those individuals who remain, generally form a new ecclesia and conduct their own affairs in a similar fashion to Bible Student classes throughout the world. Bro. Khurrsino remained in Ghana until January 24th during which time he gave several discourses in Kumasi, demonstrated with a new group for three evenings how to implement the "53 lessons" program, and showed the brethren who had computers how to install these lessons on their machines. The Monta-

gues were privileged to be with Bro. Khurrsino through the morning of January 23rd when they returned to the United States.

Following his departure to India on January 24th, Bro. Khurrsino sent several packages of materials to a number of Ghanaian brethren to encourage and assist them in their witnessing efforts.

Another highlight of this visit to Ghana involved Bro. Bernard Hicks, son of Bro. Lee and Sr. Ila Hicks, and Sr. Salomay Amoo, daughter of Bro. Samuel and Sr. Elizabeth Amoo. On January 17th Bro. Bernard and Sr. Salomay and their families participated in a traditional Ghanaian engagement ceremony. The following day, the couple was officially united in holy matrimony by means of a Bible Student Christian wedding service that was viewed by more than two hundred attendees and proved to have been a most festive occasion.

Bro. Lee and Sr. Ila Hicks, as well as Sr. Lynn Murray, accompanied by Bro. Edward Nkansah traveled back to Dunkwa for studies with a new

class on January 19th. Between January 20th and 21st they visited various classes in the Western Region and also participated in a one-day seminar. During this interval Bros. John Quaidoo and Collins Asomaning symbolized their consecrations by water immersion.

During the period January 22nd to 25th, class visitations occurred in the greater Cape Coast area and a one-day seminar was conducted when twenty brethren from the region gathered together for this activity. The balance of the remaining American brethren's journeys took place in Accra where they had fellowship with individuals who expressed an interest in the Truth. There were also visitations to possible sites where, God willing, the 2010 Ghanaian/Nigerian seminar may be held.

Kumasi Leaders' Seminar Report

The ninth Ghanaian leaders' seminar (April 24 to 29, 2009) conducted by Bro. Moses Obire at the Amoo residence in Kumasi featured discourses by Bros. Noah Amoo, Leonard Plange, Thomas Nti, Moses Baah, Samuel Amoo,

There was a panel discussion on "End Time Events" with particular reference to the present economic meltdown worldwide and what is happening in the Middle East with Israel in focus. Also, there was a question meeting.

The seminar was designed to encourage both new and old leaders (servants) of ecclesias in Nigeria.

There was a separate sisters' meeting based on "The Christian Wife – Unfading Loveliness" and "Women's Role in the Church Today."

Sr. Georgelyn Egbu was the chief speaker. Srs. Juliana Ukpai, Cecilia Adiele, Elizabeth Onwumere and Benadeth Uzor participated. It was an interesting, encouraging and fruitful meeting.

Several Bible Students' films were viewed during the seminar including the Connellsville 2008 convention which proved Christ's second presence since 1874.

Report from Bro. Moses Obire

"I am happy to report that the Lord, God Al-

mighty has once again given us His grace to hold another Elders' seminar in Nigeria. This third seminar began the 10th of April and ended on the 12th. The venue was Ntak Obio Akpa in Akwa Ibom State. Seventeen brethren from 10 classes attended. They were: Bros. Sunday Enang, Monday Ntukidem, Owo Okon, Saviour Inyang, John Isife, Donatus Onochie, Monday Okoekoh, Edwin Udofa, Bassy Okukwana, Peter Udochi Ekeh, Bassey U. Akpan, U. T. Umoh, O.M. Akpan, Daniel John, Vincent Aggreh, David Obire and Moses Ena Obire.

Topics covered at the seminar included discourses of 30 minutes each 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) Berean Bible Study on "Patience," (2) "The Sufferings of Christ and His Church" and (3) "God's Standard is Perfection."

The result of the three days of studies and sweet fellowship manifested an obvious



January 2009 Attendees at Cape Coast Seminar



Attendees at the 3rd Nigerian Elders' Seminar