

The Bible Society of Egypt Annual Report 2009

2009: CHALLENGES AND SURPRISES

In light of the **financial crisis worldwide**, there was some apprehension as 2009 loomed before us. Intending to solidify the financial situation of the Bible Society of Egypt, we chose to forego the annual increase for all employees, cancelled the annual staff conference, and rationalized for all expenses. All service was maintained however, and activities were not reduced. We praise God and give Him credit for the **remarkable year** in 2009! God has blessed us with growth in both sales (21%) and in local fundraising (18%)!

2009 has also been an exceptionally tough year, with **increased denominational tensions** and it has been challenging to sensitively provide needed service to all, in spite of the increased polarization and denominational conflict. Many are grieved at the enmity. Please pray for discernment, for healing and peace.

ACCESSING EGYPT



Bible Society bookshops throughout the country provide the infrastructure that allows us to really know and be known, enabling us to serve and support the local people through our tangible presence, and especially in times of pressure when people need God's Word the most. This **geographical penetration throughout the country** is a prerequisite to success, and these bookshops position us to access the surrounding smaller cities and villages.

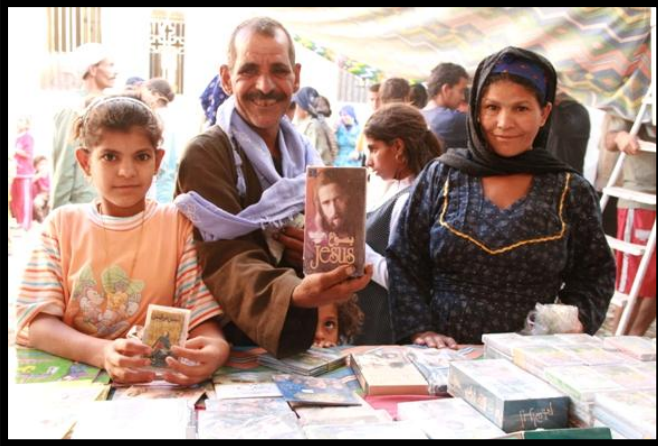
Through the **bookshops and activities**, we are able to effectively maximize opportunities for Bible distribution and local fundraising, to make Bible Resources **Accessible, Understandable, and Affordable to ALL**. An effective and indispensable ministry tool to reach nominal Christians and those from other backgrounds, the bookshops are bringing about increased Bible engagement in providing a place where seekers can make inquiries about the truth of God's Word and find suitable Scripture resources.

Temporary outlets were again placed in a crowded, inexpensive summer resort area, and also at "Masters," the most popular rest-stop on the major highway between Alexandria and Cairo. The vision is to reach those who would never access the Scripture otherwise. These outlets also give the Scriptures a higher profile in this country – and the Scripture booth right there on the street next to the ice-cream booth, declares that this is not some obscure and unknown mysterious book... but rather a valid and legitimate Book, easily available and affordable to all.

As always, the **Cairo International Bookfair** provides the opportunity for those unfamiliar with the Scriptures to inquire, and discover for them selves. While distribution numbers and financial figures are an indicator and practical fact of life, no price can be placed high enough to assess the value and the riches of God's Word. Comparing the distribution figures for the last years, we see a steady increase in the desire for *complete* Bibles, as opposed to New Testaments only. **Distribution Numbers for Bookfair Season 2009:** Bibles: 55,240, New Testaments: 32,681, Portion & Selections: 310,980, Audio & Visual: 74,190.

EQUIPPING THE CHURCH

Subsidized scriptures were made available in the churches throughout the year, and especially during the holidays, and in the celebrations that the Churches organize during summer vacation when children and their families are free of their heavy burden of school. This service to the Church and the families also continues to deepen relationships with the Church and open doors to continued and further service. In 2009, we were able to attend **18 Coptic Festivals** as well.



Our Publishing Department is working on several projects, two of the largest being the **Old Testament Study Bible**, and the Arabic **Cross Reference Bible**. The **Bible World** project continues to help children (7,300 so far) learn that translation is a good thing, and how the early translations and spread of manuscripts protected the Bible from corruption.

2009 **School Distribution** project targeted the 9th graders, and 87,800 copies of the Gospel of Mark, in Arabic and English, were freely given. Our **Post Literacy** project continues, helping establish over

20,000 new readers, whether adults or children, and develop their reading skills through reading the Bible, and practically applying it to behavior and attitudes.

KINGO!!!

We continue in our 4th year of providing the very popular **Kingo festivals**, this year reaching 140,000 children through 115 festivals! Children in Egypt are greatly in need of this education and affirmation and the Church is desperate for such events and materials in the “heart language.” Parents, children, church leaders are encouraged and supported in their responsibilities of establishing their young children in basic Christian values. Doors continue to open to further interaction and cooperation with the church. **Working with children of all Confessions** helps them to relate and realize the common ground they share.



Various music and drama teams that lead in events are from the local churches. The Kingo events provide **a platform and opportunity for these young people to serve and use their talents to minister to others**. The events also open up new opportunities for lay people to minister. Many have asked the BSOE to provide their Sunday-School teachers with training for Children's ministry.

In many of the villages, there are no activities or entertainment for the children at all. The Kingo events are often a celebration for the whole community and village, with whole families included, not just the children. The majority of these attending in Upper Egypt would be poor, and at least half or more, illiterate. The children are extremely pleased with the gifts of a Kingo flag to wave and a cassette of Kingo songs to take home. A direct relationship between these families and the BSOE is created through Kingo. As many of these villages are far from the city, and many are yet unaware of BSOE supplies and resources, the Bible Tables exhibit the materials and make that connection.

PROMOTING THE BIBLE

As people become familiar with the Bible Society, a clear difference in attitude is felt in our stores and outlets. People are more open and accepting, and typical questions have changed over the years. An integral part of our marketing campaign, **newspaper and TV ads, and billboards** give the Bible Society a stronger presence and wider access. The **hotline number and free home delivery service** is always advertised, making it possible to have God's Word conveniently delivered to your door!

Promoting the GOSPEL as "The Best Gift for Every Occasion," is the theme for the billboards that were just placed at the end of the year 2009 on the busy Cairo-Ismailiyya Highway and also on other major roads. Please pray that many in Egypt will indeed find the Gospel relevant to every occasion in life.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2010

Praise God! In 2009, significant funding was provided for a **Central Warehouse for the Bible Society of Egypt**. We have looked at no less than forty possibilities and there are now three that we have settled on as the best options at present. Although we are urgently in need of this warehouse, we will make a wise and solid investment. Please pray that we would be able to settle on the right option.

Funding is also available for an exciting new project to empower and inspire Christian **religion teachers** in the Egyptian school system to view their job as a mission and opportunity to creatively instruct students in the faith. Materials have been developed to train and aid the teachers in learning how to present the subject matter (the Biblical part of the curriculum) to the students in a simple and interactive way. Please pray for the implementation of this project in 2010.

Although methods are changing, Egypt is an Oral Society. Our challenge is to find the means to provide our valuable **audio resources in Colloquial Arabic** to the present generation. Satellite is now the main means of communication and entertainment. We want to make use of the latest electronic and new media, and to make sure that we are reaching all, and especially the poor and illiterate, with the channels they are using. Please pray for us.

We continue with our fundraising campaigns, the **Adopt-a-Bookshop** program, and the "**10 Bibles-a-Month Club**" via the internet with the goal to raise ongoing pledges of support to help cover the difference between the cost of Scriptures and the return on sales. We believe there is still great potential for both of these campaigns and we need your prayers that we would really be able to develop both of these programs even more.

This year, we plan to develop another level/track for the **Bible World tour**, communicating the same concepts to the teen age-group. Pray also for the **Kingo festivals 2010**, as our main objective is to secure the quality and depth of impact of these events, that Bible Engagement would be increased.

I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. 1 Timothy 2:1-4

