

Bible Society of Egypt **Highlights 2010**

2010 Brewing Frustration in Egypt

With a fast-growing population, insufficient jobs, corruption, inadequate education, bureaucracy, and rising global competition, Egypt continued to face economic difficulties throughout 2010. More than 40% of the population lives at poverty level, with an income of less than \$2 per day. Frustration was building up in the political arena, as well and many people were losing hope, with feelings like they could no longer cope.



The year 2010 began AND ended in horrifying terrorist attacks on Christians in church services in the far South and far North Egypt, as sectarian violence escalated. Christians were feeling vulnerable, angry, and fed-up with turning the other cheek. For the first time in history, they took to the streets in protest.

All in all, 2010 can be described as a year of brewing frustration, festering and escalating, and as we all witnessed in early 2011, the volcano erupted!

Praise the LORD!

Despite the weight and brewing intensity of 2010, we Praise the LORD! It is really remarkable how much was accomplished this year, in the face of all the difficulties. Thankfully the denominational tensions of 2009 eased up a little, and the Bible Society of Egypt (BSOE) continues to provide common ground for all, as God's Word provides the uniting factor.

In 2010, we actually saw an overall 6% GROWTH in local fund-raising. Furthermore, it was a major accomplishment to have maintained the 28% growth in sales income that was achieved in 2009 along with an increased 3% growth in 2010. A total of 2 million units of God's Word were distributed!

Item	Number of items distributed in 2010
Bibles	196,411
New Testaments	438,196
Bible Portions	110,720
Study Books	634,063
Media	201,546
Selections	390,307
Miscellaneous	46,344

Bible Distribution

Through **Bible Society Bookshops and activities** God's Word is made Accessible, Understandable, and Affordable to ALL. Our Bible Bookshops and outlets, strategically placed across the nation, are an effective and indispensable ministry tool to provide a vast distribution network, serving as a bridgehead for supporting churches and other ministries.

Bookshops Customers

Because our Bible Bookshops are public shops, usually in a prominent location, there are many people who can access the Scriptures that would never have otherwise. Many customers come from neighboring countries, and are grateful for the opportunity to freely purchase a Bible. There are many students who are studying religion or languages, and come regularly to purchase the Scriptures. Many have doubts about the authenticity of Bible and the Christian faith, and desire to check for themselves. Some come to debate aspects of faith. Some people come in by accident, and are pleased to realize that it is possible to buy a Bible. Many still don't know where to find one. People who wouldn't know where to find a church often come to ask for direction and advice. The BSOE plays a very crucial role of connecting people with the local church, as the bookshop is often more accessible and approachable.

The Cairo International Bookfair 2010

In spite of the economic, political and religious tensions, this was the most peaceful and pleasant bookfair yet. New Testaments were sold for just 1 LE each (18 cents). One special offer was a complete Bible at a discounted price of \$3. In just 2 months, 45,000 of these were sold. A mother and daughter came to the bookfair looking for the Bible Society. They had seen our billboards on the highway, promoting: *"The Bible is the Best Gift for Every Occasion."* They bought 4 New Testaments and one Bible as gifts for special friends.

Media

We continued with our marketing campaign *"The Bible is the Best Gift for Every Occasion"* working to gain a much larger clientele, promoting Scripture resources through Newspaper and TV Ads, with Billboards, and large signs and screens in the street, and the underground Subway. Our hotline number 19250 for free home delivery is always included in all of the advertising.

We are excited about a new opportunity this year in partnership with CTV (Coptic TV) Satellite channel, the most watched Christian satellite station in Egypt. "Think with us" is a Bible-based weekly competition. Two Bible Society ads run during the program, but more importantly, we provide the winners with Scripture products as the prize. Each week, 3-5 winners come to the local Bible Society bookshop (from throughout the whole country) to pick out their prize!

Kingo

Teaching Biblical virtues and values, Kingo the loveable lion, and his fun and furry friends introduce children to the greatest book of all - the Bible. This year, God's Word was made relevant to over 170,000 children throughout Egypt through 190 Kingo events. All children received a special activity booklet, as well as a VCD with 2 Kingo episodes, a fun Kingo hat and even a snack! A Teacher's book was also prepared to use along with these booklets.

One of the dramas presented, "Mission Impossible," follows the story of a young lamb who has been asked by his master to go to certain place and carry out a mission to be shown him. As the story unfolds, it turns out that this sheep is the one used to take the place of Isaac. This drama, which shows the sheep willingly and lovingly taking Isaac's place, never failed to draw tears from the audience, both old and young, leader and child and parent. Several children said, *"I didn't really think about just how much Jesus loved me."* *"Oh, Jesus loves me so much!"*



Special Needs: In 2010, we added sign language to 24 episodes of Kingo to be distributed for free to the deaf and dumb. A few Kingo events were also geared for the deaf and dumb and for the mentally disabled. When possible, we encourage some integration, to decrease the isolation that is felt by those with special needs. As they participate together in events and receive similar products, the disabled are encouraged and happy to be together with others, and all learn a little more about being part of a community, and the value of ALL people, even the disabled!

School Distribution

The Bookshop teams throughout Egypt were busy this year tracking down Christian 7th graders in all the surrounding villages and cities in order to distribute 150,000 free New Testaments throughout the country. This specially-produced NT has several extra supplements. One appendix in particular, apologetic in nature, provides evidence to confirm the historicity and reliability of the Biblical text. Some of the staff members prepare a practical presentation to encourage Bible reading to go along with each distribution made, whether it be to a group of 200 students or just a few. In many of the villages, the distribution event is attended by family members and friends as well.

Religion Classes

This year we were able to develop specific resources for the 4th and 5th grade Religion Curriculum used in all schools in Egypt: student activity booklets and a corresponding guide book for the teachers. A test for a totally new and unknown program, it has been very warmly welcomed by all teachers, parents, students and church leaders.

Bible World

6000 young children were affirmed as Egyptians and their heritage as early keepers and translators of God's Word. Children are learning that translation is a good thing, and how the early translations and spread of manuscripts protected the Bible from corruption. Visitors come away with more confidence and assurance of the reliability and authenticity of God's Word. In 2010 we were able to develop a second tour track for teenagers, with new films and narration and a different level of information and style of presentation.

Post-Literacy

Helping adults and children to read, using the Bible as textbook, is one of the best stimulants to continuous education and progress in reading skills. This year we had 750 volunteers teaching 17,500 people involved, with 3,550 graduating from the fourth and final level. People in the program become more involved in church, as they can now study the Bible and no longer feel ignorant or embarrassed.

Study Bible

The Arabic Van Dyck Bible translation from 1865 is the most accepted Bible translation in Egypt and in the Arab World. The language however, remains the same, difficult 140-year-old Arabic, which is in great contrast to the contemporary Arabic used today. We are producing a Study Bible with historical, geographical and background notes based on the different cultural backgrounds of the Bible and on the Greek and Hebrew languages. Thoroughly revised, the New Testament was published in 2006 after 7 years of work, and we continue with the goal of releasing the Old Testament Study Bible in 2014

Cross-Reference Bible

In 1905 the Bible Societies of the Middle East produced the only Van Dyke Arabic Cross Reference Bible in existence. It is extremely popular, but the plates used to print have simply worn out. For the past many years, we have been working to review and revise all of the references, as well as all the footnotes, computerizing it all. We continue work with the goal of launching this new Bible in 2012.

Coptic Christian festivals

In Egypt, Coptic Christian festivals are held every year at various Holy Sites of the Coptic Church, in honor of a variety of saints. The Bible Society seizes this opportunity to reach hundreds of thousands of nominal Christians, most poor and illiterate, with Scripture materials in print and in audio that are suitable to all family members. All packages are sold at highly discounted prices. Along with the heart-breaking physical need, there is tragic spiritual need.



Subsidized Scriptures and Temporary Outlets

Most of our products are sold for much less than the actual expenses involved. Temporary Outlets make subsidized scriptures available especially during the holidays. Our 2 outlets, on the Cairo-Alexandria highway and at a popular summer vacation spot, would be a losing business financially, however, the vision and goal of such outlets is to reach those who would never access the Scripture otherwise. The Orthodox Church-wide Virgin Mary celebration is also a very important channel of distribution during summer vacation, as 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.

Bible Sundays

Each year Bible Society staff present the ministry and vision to the church congregations, receive an offering and make further contacts, and set up a Bible Table to exhibit and sell our products. In 2010, we held Bible Sundays in 642 churches. We thank God for this opportunity, not only for fund-raising, but to establish relationships with the Churches, and open doors for further service and support of the local people through our tangible presence.

Central Warehouse

Praise God! In August 2010, we purchased a Central warehouse within Greater Cairo, on a major road in the perfect location. We have been amazed at the funding made available and the subsequent purchase and ownership of this much needed facility. Our faith has grown and the name of the Lord is glorified.

Pray for 2011

Revolution Response: The Revolution in Egypt has been inspired by a revolt against corruption and injustice, yet true reformation of life-style and values can only be achieved when people's hearts are changed by the Holy Spirit. We cannot fail to seize this opportunity to share the relevance of God's Word during this momentous time in Egypt's history. The Vision: To flood Egypt with God's Word, freely distributing creative Scripture materials, both print and audio-visual, along with a massive Public Media campaign, including electronic and social media.

Ongoing/Long-Term Request is to see how we can make God's Word available in a relevant format, to make use of the rapidly changing technology and new media. Although methods change, Egypt is an Oral Society. We must connect with the young people, and we must also reach the poor and illiterate, with the channels they are using. Please pray for us.

Central Warehouse: We are now in the process of registering the building, and are making plans for needed renovations which are necessary before we can occupy it. Our hope is that these renovations (and funding for it) will be completed soon and we will be able to move into the new warehouse by end of 2011.

Please pray for the long-term presence of the Bible Society of Egypt. Pray that the grace of God and His mighty power would sustain this organization and the ongoing Bible Work in Egypt in the face of the political upheaval and the significant loss of income from sales and local donations.

"You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in Your Word."