

The Bible Society of Egypt Annual Report 2008

In spite of bad weather and lower sales than 2007, the Bible Society is indeed grateful and encouraged by this unique opportunity provided by the Cairo International Bookfair 2008 to make God's Word accessible to all. While we hear many inspiring stories, we will never know the full extent or impact. We trust that God is committed to validating the authority and relevance of His Word to the reader's heart. Distribution Numbers for Bookfair 2008: Bibles: 44,463, Testaments: 45,290, Scripture Portions and Selections: 326,773, Audio and Visuals: 117,590



One of our most ambitious dreams was realized in 2008 as **Bible World** was **officially opened** on October 23rd. 2,000 children have already visited this exhibition, designed to establish a trust in the historicity and reliability of the Bible and their Christian faith. Please pray with us, that this creative, hi-tech, completely automated, interactive, educational and life-changing experience will inspire and challenge a whole

generation of young Egyptians (9 to 10 thousand per year) as to the importance of having an understandable Bible in modern Arabic. Pray that these children will be affirmed as Egyptians, proud of their heritage as early keepers and translators of God's Word, resulting in a stronger and more effective local church.

In 2008, we released the **First Ever New King James Version/Van Dyck Diglot Bible**. The Arabic Van Dyck Bible translation, produced in 1865, is one of the oldest Bibles in use today; the most read and trusted translation in Egypt and the Arab world, by far. The New King James Version is a perfect fit with the Van Dyck. Having the English alongside will be of great benefit and aid in understanding the difficult 140-year-old Arabic of the Van Dyck, which is in great contrast to the contemporary Arabic used today. This Bible will be a useful resource for the Arabic-speaking world, and a great help in making the Scriptures more understandable, as comparison is made with the English text. Also included in the list of potential beneficiaries are Egyptian minorities abroad, young people who are learning English, and those for whom Arabic is a 2nd language.

Post Literacy Program - Achievements 2008:

A total of 18,759 student packages were distributed, 85% of which to school children who are desperately in need of this supplemental help and follow-up, not only in literacy, but in making the Bible practical and understandable. The new simplified translation of the Book of Ruth has been printed and we are presently working on the Book of Jonah. Approximately 1,300 facilitators received training and follow-up meetings, evaluations and activities, and there are still 15 Coordinators employed, to aid in the implementation of the program.



Three meetings were held this year, with the prospect of establishing our literacy program in new areas. During 2008, a total of 4200 people graduated from the 4th and final level. They were awarded a Large-Print New Testament during the celebrations held at local churches, to which area Bishops, Priests and Church Leaders were invited.



n 2008, the BSOE continued with its ongoing outreach in 22 Coptic festivals, 50 Kingo festivals impacting 50,000 children with values from God's Word, over 160,000 colloquial cassettes were distributed, along with thousands of other subsidized Scriptures, providing God's Word in simple everyday language, as temporary outlets and **billboards** and **advertising in the**

media and **satellite programs** continues to provide and promote God's Word and make it accessible to all. In 2008, **100,000 Children's Bibles** were distributed to 7th grade children, penetrating those homes and lives with God's Word. As a result of these school distributions, which have influenced schools and educators throughout Egypt, the BSOE is developing an exciting program to train and inspire Christian Religion teachers in the school system.

2008 had a very special focus for the BSOE, **celebrating 125 years of Bible work in Egypt**. A series of 15 anniversary events were held throughout the country, with the goal of increasing local support as we celebrate the great impact that God's Word is having all over Egypt. These celebrations have provided a completely new perspective for fundraising, accessing thousands of people who were not aware of BSOE resources and ministry. The unique common factor of all these celebrations was that Christians and their leaders from Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant churches **were gathering together in these cities for the first time!**

Culminating the year was a **historic gathering**, presided over by the three official representatives of Christianity in Egypt - Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant. This final Bible Society Anniversary celebration was held in the Coptic cathedral, with over 6,000 people in attendance and millions watching via TV, as three Egyptian Christian satellite channels shared cameras and broadcast the event simultaneously. Praise God for the unique role of the Society in uniting Egyptian Christians around his Word.

In 2008, we launched our 2 year campaign, the **Adopt-a-Bookshop** program, with the goal of raising ongoing pledges of support for our 11 bookshops. This is progressing well, with approximately 36% of the need pledged towards this project. Also launched was a new fundraising effort by way of internet, the "**10 Bibles-a-Month Club**."



Again, our goal is to help cover the difference between the cost of Scriptures and the return on sales. This program has had a slower start than expected, however, we feel like it has real potential, and hope to develop it further.

Praise the Lord, in 2008 we were able **to purchase the Bible Society bookshop in Sohag**, with the existing license, and thus ensured the long term presence of the Bible Society in this strategic location in Upper Egypt. There is still a loan of \$80,000 taken out for this purchase, which we are seeking to raise in 2009.

The end of 2008 finds us still in desperate need of a **Central Warehouse**, with high hopes, but in light of the financial downturn worldwide, facing a great "mountain" as we seek to raise the necessary funding for this project. As of March 2008, the Bible Society of Egypt was evicted from one of our two main warehouses in Cairo. A short-term solution has been found, resulting in additional and further costs, and underscoring the dire

need for a Central Warehouse.

Summing up 2008... We are learning practically that *"The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."* We have also learned that, *"Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails."* As the Bible Society of Egypt, we have been driven us to our knees and reminded that *"It's not by might, not by power, but by My Spirit ' says the LORD of hosts."*

Looking forward to 2009...



The annual Cairo International Bookfair will be from Jan 21 – Feb 5. Pray that God's Word would comfort and enlighten and truly be experienced as relevant to many people who would not access the Scriptures otherwise. (Especially in light of the Gaza war and resulting issues and anger of many)

Pray for the right Financial Budget to be put in place for 2009, as we seek to reduce expenses where possible, and strive to solidify the financial situation of the BSOE in view of the worldwide financial crisis.

The United Bible Societies have reduced their annual grant to us by 40%.

Pray as we seek to raise the necessary funding for the **Central Warehouse**, as a National Service Center to further establish and develop Bible Work in the region.

Pray for the implementation of the exciting new project to empower and enable and inspire **Christian religion teachers** in the Egyptian school system that many will come to view their job as a mission and opportunity to creatively train and instruct students in the faith

Pray also for our big dreams of one day having a **movable Bible World** to take this effective exhibition to the rest of Egypt. We have big dreams of a boat or a bus, or some mobile and creative method to share this valuable exhibit with children throughout the country, not just Cairo vicinity.

We appreciate your prayers, as we seek to live and minister according to the principles of God's Word: *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."*