

India



"The eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him."

—2 Chronicles 16:9

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The Bible Student Friends of India Committee Newsletter

Spring 2010

Way Back When ...

I was about 12 years old when Sister Livermore told me about this incredible experience her husband had as a young man in the British Navy. Their ship was docked in a port in India. While off-duty, young sailor Livermore and his friend dove into the water and were enjoying a swim in the balmy waters. Without warning, they saw a group of crocodiles swimming toward them. They swam as fast as they could to get to the ship. Livermore made it to the ship. His friend did not. This dramatic experience was a turning point in his life and the starting point of Brother Livermore's consecrated life. You can imagine how wide-eyed I was listening to Sister Livermore tell me the details of this amazing event.

What is most interesting for us is that Brother Livermore's visit to India as a young British sailor planted the seeds that developed into our India committee work today. On that tour of duty Brother Livermore made contact with some of the Indian Bible Students. That was not all that difficult because the Bible Students had existed in India since the days of Brother Russell. After Brother Livermore returned home, he never forgot the Indian brethren. In those days, the Indian brethren were mostly destitute and in need of the basics of daily living. He galvanized the brethren in Portland and the Northwest to send boxes of clothing and supplies to them. That effort spanned many years. As time passed and the living conditions of the Indian brethren gradually improved, the support efforts evolved into helping them with study material, convention and pastoral support.

After Brother Livermore passed away, the committee torch was passed to Miles and Louise Fitzpatrick of Tacoma and Portland. Then David Bruce and Ray Krupa carried the torch for many years. Now we have a revitalized committee of knowledgeable brethren to keep our committee vital in the 21st century. We're greatly appreciative of the Lord's providence for these many years and, as I think of the history of our committee, I always think of the two sailors and the crocodiles.

—Tim Krupa, Chairman, BSFOIC ■

25 Days in India

It was a great privilege and blessing from the Lord for Bros. O.B. Elbert, Ernie Kuenzli and Sr. Janice Kuenzli to visit the Indian brethren from January 29th through February 23rd. During the trip, we met with over 32 ecclesias and hundreds of brethren.

Upon our arrival at the Bangalore airport, we were met by Bro. Samuel Prasad, his son Bro. Pradeep, and Bros. Roman and Israel. They took us to the hotel where we rested up for our Friday evening meeting with the 'Dawn' ecclesia. Approximately 30-40 brethren attended the meeting that evening.

Saturday, January 30 was spent visiting ecclesias at Nagenahalli and the Kolar Gold Fields. Bros. Roman and Israel used their own vehicles to drive us to these ecclesias. Nagenahalli, located 60 kilometers

north of Bangalore, is the newer ecclesia meeting in an abandoned Korean Presbyterian church built on the land of one of the brethren, Bro. P r a b a k a r .

After the meeting, they served us a tasty lunch of spicy rice with pine nuts, and then we toured Bro. Prabakar's farm.

Then we traveled 100 kilometers to meet the Kolar Gold Fields' ecclesia. Forty attended the meeting, and we were impressed with the enthusiasm of their young people.

On Sunday, the brethren in Bangalore hosted a convention



Lunch at Nagenahalli



Young people at Kolar Gold Fields

25 Days in India—(Continued from page 1)

where 200+ brethren attended. Bro. Naresh from the Bangalore Bible Students opened the convention with a discourse on the end times and establishment of Christ's kingdom. Bro. Ravi from the 'Immanuel' ecclesia gave the closing discourse on Leaven. There were periodic problems with the sound system during the convention. During Bro. O.B. Elbert's discourse, the PA system failed, and then a halogen light exploded when the brethren tried to power the PA system back up. No one was hurt but the bang got everyone's attention. During the convention, one of the organizers, Bro. Alexander, released a book titled *God Jehovah's Words Are Truth*. It is a history of the Indian brethren and the Indian Bible Student Association (IBSA), the original association of Indian brethren.

Mysore

On Monday, February 1, we traveled to Mysore where we stayed at the home of Bro. Pushparaj and Sr. Sarojini, who visited the U.S. in 2008 and attended the U.S. General Convention. Bro. Pushparaj has built a 2nd floor onto his home consisting of a prayer hall and two adjoining guest rooms where we stayed. That evening, we met with 20 brethren of the Mysore ecclesia in the prayer hall.

Tuesday, the brethren took us to the Mysore Palace of the local maharaja, and then we saw a large stone bull worshiped by Hindu devotees. It re-



Hindu Bull Near Mysore

minded us of the spiritual darkness that rests upon many of the Indian people. How thankful they will be in Christ's kingdom when this darkness is lifted and they come to know the true God.

Nilgiris

Wednesday, February 3rd, we traveled south to the Nilgiri (Blue) hills, being similar to mountains of Western North Carolina. On the way, we stopped at Bandipur National Park where we saw a few elephants, and a number of monkeys, but missed the opportunity to join a safari which goes out in the morning to count tigers in the area.

The Nilgiris are home to many ecclesias. Wednesday evening, we met with the Coonoor ecclesia in their prayer hall built on the top of Bro. Segar's home. Bro. Segar has been invited to serve at the 2010 International Convention in Baia Mare, Romania. During the evening, Sr. Janice was asked to give out small gifts to the children in the ecclesia in recognition of their achievements in their Sunday School classes.

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Thursday evening, we met first with the class at Wellington. Their long-time elder, Bro. George, passed away suddenly shortly after our visit in late 2007. The ecclesia still misses Bro. George who was a great help and encouragement to many brethren in the Nilgiri's region.

After the meeting at Wellington, we traveled 20 kilometers to meet with one of the classes in Ooty, at the home of Bro. Samuel Premraj. After the meeting, Bro. O.B.



Sr. Janice giving gifts at Coonoor

Elbert dedicated a small recording studio in the home which will be used to create CDs and DVDs for witnessing purposes.

Friday we traveled down out of the Nilgiris, meeting first with the Kotagiri class.



Bros. O.B. Elbert and Samuel Premraj
Dedicating the Recording Studio

After lunch, we traveled onto Mettupalayam where we had an evening meeting with the ecclesia. The Mettupalayam ecclesia meets in a prayer hall built on top of Bro. Murgesh's home. He is the elder there. Then we traveled on to Coimbatore to spend the night.

Coimbatore

On Saturday, we were invited by Bro. Benny to his home where we enjoyed a lovely lunch and fellowship with Bro. Benny, his wife, Sr. Shirley, their nine-month-old daughter, Irene, and Bro. Benny's mother, Sr. Grace. Bro. Benny visited the U.S. several times for work training where he met with brethren in the Milwaukee and Boise ecclesias.

After lunch, we visited Bro. D. Daniel, a long-time Bible Student, who was suffering from the paralytic effects of diabetes. Bro. Daniel's witnessing efforts were responsible for the formation of many ecclesias in the Nilgiris. A railroad engineer, he would drive the steam cog railway train up the mountain from Mettupalayam to Coonoor, spend the evening witnessing in the Nilgiris and then drive the train back down the mountains to Mettupalayam the next day. Bro. Davy, who was used by Bro. Russell to initially spread the Truth in India, was Bro. Daniel's father-in-law. Strong in the faith, Bro. Daniel is accepting

Austin Williams' Visit to India

My first meeting was at Bro. Prasad's residence for the 'Immanuel' ecclesia's Wednesday night meeting. There were about 14 brethren who attended the meeting. I spoke about Joshua and his life. After the discourse we had an informal session about the well-being of brethren here and in the U.S., and other political and socio-economic events. They spoke about their witness activity and explored the need for more involvement in witnessing.

The next visit was with the Bangalore Bible Students, brethren who broke away from Varma's ecclesia. There were about 170 brethren who were present. I spoke on the topic of Bereans and how they searched the scriptures and verified Apostle Paul's discourses. I used this topic specifically to encourage them to continue in the new and living way which

was a good testimony evidenced by their moving away and forming their own ecclesia because of questioning their doctrinal beliefs as opposed to what was being taught.

The next visit was with Bro. Charles Suresh's ecclesia, where they meet at the same location as the above ecclesia but in the evenings. There were a lot of discussions and clarifications about our Lord's return before the meeting. I served them by talking about Stephen's life and the lessons we can extract from it. There were in all about 40 brethren assembled that night.

I proceeded to Mysore for a very short period of time and met at Bro. Pushparaj's house one weekday evening. We had a good fellowship before and after my service. I spoke on Joshua here as well. The discussions after the meeting were related to the U.S. -Israeli relationship and the peace process, the new Obama administration, the implications of the Financial crisis, and the well-being of the brethren in India and in the U.S. ■

25 Days in India—(Continued from page 2)



Bro. D. Daniel

his physical illness with quiet acquiescence and focusing his thoughts on the challenges facing his Indian brethren.

Saturday evening, we met with a small ecclesia in Coimbatore led by Bro. J. Joshua. His father, Bro. Jayaraj is the elder of the Kotagiri ecclesia. On Sunday, we met with the largest ecclesia in Coimbatore

in their prayer hall. There were 50-60 present for this meeting. It was a wonderful opportunity to renew the friendships we started in 1997 during our first visit to this ecclesia. Many of the young people we met back in 1997 have grown up, married, and are raising families of their own in the Truth. Sunday evening, we met with the small Podanur ecclesia located on the outskirts of Coimbatore.



Bro. O.B. Elbert Speaking at Coimbatore Ecclesia

Erode

On Monday, Bro. O.B. Elbert began his journey home while the Kuenzli's headed for the final two weeks of their trip. Bro. O.B. traveled by train from

Coimbatore back to Bangalore where he met with the HAL ecclesia, and then went to the airport for an early Tuesday morning flight back to the U.S.

Bro. Ernie and Sr. Janice took a train from Coimbatore to Erode where they were met by Bro. Baskar of Erode and Bro. Paul Raj of Salem, who rode up to the train station on their motorcycles. Since we had too much luggage to strap on the back of a motorcycle, we traveled by taxi to a nearby hotel.

Monday evening, we met with the larger of two ecclesias in Erode. The prayer hall was nearly full with



Sign Advertising Free Bible Study

50-60 in attendance. After the meeting, Sr. Janice answered questions from the sisters while Bro. Ernie discussed the importance of character

development with many of the brothers in attendance. This ecclesia has a sign outside their prayer hall advertising a year-long free Bible study. Currently, they have a group of 30 interested individuals attending the class.

Tuesday, Bros. Baskar, Prabakaran, Gobi, and Paul Dhillip visited our hotel room for discussions. During their 3 hour visit, they reported on their translation efforts and how we could support them. That evening we met with the second ecclesia in Erode. Bro. Ruban picked us up and drove us in his car—a Chevy Spark—to the prayer hall. A few brethren in India

25 Days in India—(Continued from page 3)

now have their own cars and they used their cars to take us to meetings, or the next stop on our journey.

Bro. Ruban conducts four different follow-up meetings with approximately 20 interested individuals in each. The typical process for Indian witnessing is to conduct a public meeting and then follow-up that meeting with 53 weekly lessons that cover the basics of the truth. At the end of the 53 lessons, those who are interested are invited to be immersed and then the new brethren are organized into a new ecclesia, or encouraged to join a nearby ecclesia.

These 53 lessons trace their roots back to hundreds of lessons taught by Bro. Jayappa, an Indian pilgrim who traveled tens of thousands of kilometers on his bicycle witnessing to the Truth. The lessons were distilled down to 52 by Bro. Varma and then refined into 53 lessons by Bro. Khurrsino Miranda. Many ecclesias take the 53 lessons, modify them as appropriate to suit their local needs and then use them in a systematic way to teach the Truth to those who attend their public meetings.

Salem

On Wednesday, Bro. Baskar accompanied us on the journey from Erode to Salem where we met with two different ecclesias. The journey was made on one of India's new divided highways. This highway was under construction at places and as a result, drivers unfamiliar with the road sometimes ended up driving on the wrong side of the divider. While this seems to be a normal occurrence in India, Bro. Baskar enjoyed seeing our worried reaction as our taxi met vehicles driving the wrong way on our side of the highway.

Wednesday evening we met first with a small ecclesia in Bro. Sekar's home. Near the end of the meeting, there was a power cut and the entire home went dark. Bro. Baskar lent us his cell phone so that we could finish our message. Then the brethren brought out snacks and coffee and we ate by candlelight.

After leaving, we traveled across town and met with the Salem Bible Students ecclesia. There were nearly 50 enthusiastic brethren who attended this meeting. After the message, they had an impromptu question meeting. Questions included: (1) What is the body



Salem Bible Students Ecclesia

referred to in Isa. 26:19? (2) Does 1 Tim. 2:12 mean that children must consecrate their lives to the Lord for a mother to be faithful to her consecration? (3) How

can we understand that the call ended in 1881?

After the meeting, we went to the home of Bro. Paul Raj and his wife for dinner. Typically, the Indian brethren eat their dinner after their evening meetings. The Indian brethren showed their great hospitality by serving us large meals of rice, chicken, and fruits after nearly every meeting.

Trichy and Surrounding Area

Thursday, we traveled with Bro. Selvaraj by taxi to Trichy (Tiruchirappalli) where we stayed for four days visiting nearby ecclesias. Thursday evening we met with the Duraisamy Puram ecclesia. We attended the dedication of this ecclesia's prayer hall during our 2007 visit. This ecclesia is conducting a follow-up meeting of 60 individuals using the 53 lessons. The brethren showed us pictures of the follow-up meeting conducted the previous Sunday where Bros. Charles Russell (Bangalore) and Francis Paul (Mettupalayam) presented the three lessons on the Anti-Christ.

Friday was spent in a day of fellowship and spiritual discussion at Bro. Joseph Daniel and Sr. Nirmala's home.

Bro. Jeyaraj (General Secretary of the Bible Student Association) and Bro. Clemen Suresh (Sr. Nirmala's brother) joined in the discussions. They brought us up-to-date on their translation efforts. Sr. Nirmala translates the Herald magazine into Tamil and her husband pays for printing 700 copies per month. Bro. Jeyaraj's son Godwin Emmanuel translates the Dawn magazine into Tamil and Bro. Jeyaraj's family pays for printing 700 copies per month. Bro. Joseph Daniel also funded the printing of 1,000 copies of the books, *12 Apostles of the Lamb* and *Adam to Zion*, in Tamil. We met in the prayer hall and enjoyed rest in the adjoining guest room which Bro. Joseph Daniel built on top of their home.

In the evening, we met with their ecclesia, and afterward had fellowship and discussions on God's covenants with 7 young brothers from the ecclesia. One of the young brothers is crippled and had to crawl up the stairs on his hands to reach the second floor prayer hall.

Saturday we traveled to the Lalgudi ecclesia, about 30 kilometers from Trichy. The ecclesia's second floor prayer hall is reached by climbing a ladder through a trap-door. Bro. Anand, the ecclesia elder and Sr. Nirmala's uncle, composed a new hymn and had the ecclesia sing it in honor of our visit. Since the meeting was held during the day, many of the brothers could



Duraisamy Puram Ecclesia

25 Days in India—(Continued from page 4)

not attend because they were working. After the meeting, we had lunch, fellowship and more spiritual discussions at Bro. Anand's home.

Leaving Lalgudi, we traveled back to Trichy and met with the Thiruverumbur ecclesia. Before the meeting, there was spirited discussion in Tamil about the Lord's Second Presence. One of the ecclesia members, Bro. Joseph, was looking for additional proofs that our Lord had returned in

1874 to refute the arguments of a few who are questioning this doctrine. As the meeting was about to begin, we plugged our computer into a power outlet and the entire prayer hall went dark. We waited for 15 minutes while a local man climbed the roof of a building across the street and re-connected the prayer hall's power line to a spaghetti nest of power wires. The lights came back on and the meeting was able to proceed.

Manaparai and Dindigul

On Sunday, we traveled to Manaparai to meet with the class there. On the way, we stopped at Bro. Jeyaraj's small farm, where we had the water and meat of tender coconuts. Often Bro. Jeyaraj hosts an open-air convention on December 25th under a grove of palm trees on the farm. He usually has two goats



Bro. Newlin Rajkumar and Site of December 25 convention

prepared to feed the convention attendees. Then we traveled on to the small, thatched roof prayer hall where Bro. Jeyaraj's Manaparai ecclesia meets. It was standing-room only. After the



Bro. Jeyaraj lends a helping hand up the ladder at Lalgudi

woes of Revelation? (3) What is meant by the statement in Mark 12:25-27 that God is the god of the living and not the dead?

The Manaparai ecclesia provided lunch, and then we traveled 60 kilometers for a late afternoon meeting with the Dindigul ecclesia. There were 50-60 enthusiastic brethren who attended this meeting. This is a new ecclesia formed through the witnessing efforts of many brethren. After meeting, it was a 2-hour drive back to Trichy, dropping off Bro. Jeyaraj at his home on the way. During the four days we were in Trichy, Bro. Suresh graciously used his car to take us to the area ecclesias. He worked nights, then would spend the days providing this service for us. During our stay in Trichy, we had a lovely time with, and greatly enjoyed, the fellowship of Sr. Nirmala, her husband Bro. Joseph Daniel, Bro. Suresh and family, their parents (Bro. and Sr. Susairaj), and Bro. Jeyaraj.

Chennai

Monday, we took a 1-hour flight to Chennai and were met at the airport by Bro. Selveraj and Sr. Esther. That evening, we met with the Ayanavaram ecclesia. The ecclesia meets in a prayer hall built over the home of Bro. Udhaya Kumar and his wife, Sr. Thelma Rani. Traffic in Chennai is very bad and it took over one hour to travel the few short kilometers to the ecclesia prayer hall. Bro. Alex Barnabas, who now works in Chennai, was able to use his company car and driver to pick us up, and then take us back to the hotel after the meeting. This was only the second meeting where the discourse did not have to be translated into the local language.



Ayanavaram Ecclesia

Vizag and Rajahmundry

Tuesday, we took a 90 minute flight to Vizag (Visakhapatnam) for our first visit to the ecclesias in the India state of Andhra Pradesh. Bros. Prasad, Ravi Chandra and Pushparaj had traveled 24 hours by train from Bangalore to meet and accompany us during our visits to the local ecclesias. That afternoon we met with 20 brethren, mostly sisters, of the Vizag ecclesia in the prayer hall built next to the home of Bro. Moses. This is a newer ecclesia and they are growing in their understanding of the Truth. The sisters sat on mats during the meeting. Music was provided by Bro. Moses twelve-year-old son Enoch, who played the bongos.

After the meeting, we took a 4 hour taxi ride to Rajahmundry, arriving late evening, where we stayed



Vizag Prayer Hall

prayer hall on the top floor. We greatly appreciated the hospitality of the Satyanarayana family who saw to our every need.

The next day we met with Sr. Ruth Kottalingam who we had met back in the U.S. Her husband, Bro. Kottalingam, became the ecclesia elder after Bro. Varma's witnessing efforts resulted in formation of the ecclesia. When Bro. Varma stopping believing our Lord had returned in 1874, Bro. Kottalingam kept the entire ecclesia together and faithful to the Harvest Truth before he died in 2007. Sr. Ruth has been active in translating Truth literature into the local language, Telegu. She translated the *Daily Heavenly Manna* into Telegu, which has been published, and the *Songs in the Night*, which has not been published. She has translated part of Volume 1, *The Divine Plan of the Ages* into Telegu.



Srs. Ruth Kottalingam and Janice

Wednesday evening we met with the Rajahmundry ecclesia and nearly 60 were present filling the large prayer hall. A number of brethren came from the Dhraksha Rama ecclesia, 50 kilometers away. They invited us to visit their ecclesia on our next trip. Just before the meeting, there was an unscheduled power cut. Bro. Satyanarayana was in the process of obtaining a generator to power the prayer hall when the power came



Rajahmundry Ecclesia

at the home of Bro. Satyanarayana's son, Venkanna Babu. Bro. Satyanarayana, the ecclesia elder, owns a 4-story building where both of his sons live, and he built the ecclesia

power came

back on. After the meeting, we met with a number of brethren from the local area. One was a young man named Prasad who was both crippled and appeared to be blind. He reminded us of the entire human family, blinded to God's truth due to the work of the adversary, and crippled by sin, unable to walk in a way pleasing to God. How we all look forward to Christ's earthly kingdom when man's spiritual, as well as physical, blindness and lameness will be cured. Then man will be able to know God and walk in his paths.

Chennai

On Thursday, we traveled by taxi back to Vizag where we flew back to Chennai. On the ride back, our taxi had to stop suddenly as a local farmer drove his herd of water buffalo across the divided highway. Bro. Prasad Reddi, who was accompanying us, witnessed (in Telagu) to our young taxi driver during much of the trip back.

Thursday evening, we met with the Anbudaiyan ecclesia in Chennai. Here we met Bro. George's widow, Sr. Violet, who was staying with her daughter Sr. Sheeba. It was a tearful reunion with her, our first since Bro. George had died.

We have always appreciated the studious nature of this ecclesia. Because they are a newer ecclesia, they have instituted a volume study in their ecclesia and will not select an elder from among their members until that study is complete. Meanwhile, Bro. Selvaraj, from the Tiruvottiyur ecclesia, serves as their elder, visiting this ecclesia once per month to serve them as he also does with the Tambaram ecclesia.



Tambaram Ecclesia

Friday evening, we met with the Tambaram ecclesia where we met a young brother Zecharaeus. Raised as a Hindu and growing up next to a Hindu temple, he told us about his incredible journey to become a Christian and then coming to the Truth. His mother once threw hot coffee at him when he told her he would never again worship Hindu gods or their idols. Through his witnessing efforts, his mother, brother and sister have now come to an understanding of the Truth and are now part of the Tambaram ecclesia.

Saturday evening, we visited the Tiruvottiyur ecclesia and, afterwards, were treated to a lovely dinner and fellowship at the home of Bro. Selvaraj and his wife, Sr. Esther. Bro. Selvaraj was elder of the Tiruvottiyur ecclesia for many years. Recently, the ecclesia selected another elder which has freed up Bro. Selvaraj to focus on his translation efforts and to help out with the Anbudaiyan and Tambaram ecclesias. Bro. Selvaraj



Sr. Esther
Daughter Hepsi and husband Dandridge

Bro. Selvaraj

has translated and organized the printing of Volumes 2, 5, and 6 of *The Studies in the Scriptures* in Tamil. He is now correcting translations of Volumes 3 and 4 and hopes to have Volume 4, *The Battle of Armaged-*

don, printed in Tamil by the end of 2010. Both Bro. Selvaraj and Sr. Esther accompanied us on our visits to the other Chennai ecclesias, trying to teach us a little more Tamil during the journeys.

Vellore and Chittoor

On Sunday, we started our journey back to Bangalore and our return to the U.S. Bro. Selvaraj and Sr. Esther accompanied us to our first stop, Vellore. There we stopped for breakfast at the home of the ecclesia elder, another Bro. Selvaraj. Then we went to the meeting where we were asked to dedicate their new prayer hall. Since the second floor prayer hall was not quite complete, the meeting was held next to it under a tent. At the encouragement of Bro. Selvaraj from Chennai, the two ecclesias in Vellore joined together for this meeting. During the meeting, there was the



Meeting Under Tent at Vellore

typical, scheduled power cut which disabled the fans and PA system. Our translator, Bro. Francis from Bangalore, had to raise his voice to be heard above the city noise. After the message, we

were asked to give a small present of fruits and Volume 5 of *The Studies in the Scriptures* in Tamil to the 7 brethren who had been immersed that morning.

After the meeting, the ecclesia treated us to a lovely lunch of chicken briyani (chicken and spicy rice) and then we were taken to the thatched roof prayer hall of the other Vellore ecclesia. This ecclesia is the largest of the two in Vellore, having around 90 members. There we met their elder Bro. Anbarasan and were served a second lunch of chicken, quail, and rice. Then it was a 90 minute taxi ride to Chittoor where we attended a joint meeting of two ecclesias. Because we had crossed back into Andhra Pradesh, parts of the

meeting in Chittoor were conducted in 3 languages—English, Tamil and Telegu. Bro. Devar John, elder of one ecclesia, composed a song for the meeting and led the entire congregation in singing it. After the meeting, we parted with Bro. Selvaraj and Sr. Esther and were driven on to Bangalore by Bros. Roman and Ravi Chandar. We especially enjoyed their fellowship and questions during this 4-hour ride.

Bangalore

On Monday, our last day in India, we were visited by 17 brethren at our hotel who wanted to say good-bye or have discussions before we left. That evening, on our way to the airport, we stopped for one last meeting at the Bangalore HAL ecclesia. We met in the home of Bro. Anthony Jayaraj where two rooms were full of brethren. After the meeting and dinner, we were taken by Bro. Louis Devanand to the airport for our plane flight home.

This was Bro. O.B. Elbert's first and Bro. Ernie and Sr. Janice's seventh trip to India. During each visit, we are impressed with the zeal and enthusiasm of the Indian brethren for the Truth, their love for God and the brethren, their willingness to witness to the Truth, and translate the Truth into their local languages. Their witnessing and translation have become grass-root efforts with nearly every ecclesia involved in at least one and usually both of these activities. While their temporal circumstances are more difficult than ours, this has liberated the Indian brethren to focus on their first love—the Lord, the Truth and the brethren. It is our great privilege and blessing to come to know these brethren and convey their example to those of you who may never have the opportunity to meet them face-to-face.

—O.B. Elbert, Ernie and Janice Kuenzli ■

2010 International Convention

The BSFOIC will sponsor six Indian brethren to attend the 2010 International Convention. The BSFOIC will be sponsoring two speakers for the convention: Bro. Segar from Coonoor and Bro. Inbanathan from Bangalore. Both will be accompanied by their wives. The BSFOIC will also sponsor Bro.



Bro. Inbanathan



Bro. J. Joshua

Joshua from Coimbatore and his wife to attend the convention.

For IC 2010, the BSFOIC will contribute \$2000 to each couple. This will cover their convention expenses, and provide \$1500 for their airfare. The Indian brethren will be responsible for the rest of their expenses. ■

An Important Clarification

Regarding the Indian brethren that the BSFOIC deals with, how do we know what they believe and how they conduct themselves as followers of our Lord Jesus Christ? These questions are difficult to answer in our own country, and we have additional challenges in answering these questions with our India brethren living halfway around the world.

But, we as a committee take great measures to ensure that to the best of our ability, the brethren we work with are considered to be devoted to 'Present Truth.' This includes enthusiastically embracing the Harvest Message and the doctrines we study and hear of in our ecclesias and conventions. We also appreciate greatly those who labor in the efforts of pastoral work and spreading the Gospel.

We are aware that not all associated with the Bible Students in India hold to these standards. We do not support the ecclesias, conventions, or organizations that do not hold to these standards.

Over the years, we have found that nothing replaces on-site visits to Indian ecclesias, conventions, elder's meetings and even to their homes. These are not inspections but these visits are invaluable in getting to know our brethren, their situations and their sacrifices.

In the past five months, three of our committee

members have visited India. Two were repeat visitors and for one, it was the first time. Their reports continue to give us confidence that the Lord is overseeing our efforts, and with humility we trust we are fulfilling the stewardship that we have with respect to helping our brethren in India. We thank you also for your confidence, trust and support in these areas. ■

Correction

The Winter 2010 issue of the newsletter incorrectly described Messengers of Christ (MOC) as an association of ecclesias. MOC is a witnessing organization. While ecclesias such as the Bangalore Bible Students cooperate with MOC, these ecclesias are all independent and do not belong to MOC.

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