



GOSPEL OUTREACH TO SOUTH SUDAN

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South Sudan, the newest nation in the world, is in East Central Africa. It is bordered by Ethiopia to the East, Kenya to the Southwest, Uganda to the South, the Congo to the Southwest, Central African Republic to the West and North Sudan to the North. The historic Nile River flows through the nation. The Sudan were part of the dynasty Cush, son of Ham, Genesis 10:6, and grand-son of Noah, Genesis 10:1.

The Sudan Nation was captive to Egypt and Britain. The nation gained freedom January 1, 1956, when the Egyptian and British flags were lowered and the new Sudanese flag raised declaring independence. Muslims had complete control of the government and most the population adhered to the Islamic Faith and Sharia Law.

The longest civil war in Africa, 1983 to 2005, occurred in Sudan prompted by a decision on the part of the Muslim government to enforce Sharia Law throughout the country. The Southerners, approximately 1/3, resisted due to their Judeo-Christian faith. South Sudan became a battlefield. Villages were burned, men were killed, women and girls were raped and sold into slavery, boys were forced to be child soldiers, attacking and killing their own people. Refusal to fight meant torture or execution.

Over two million South Sudanese deaths occurred during the war. Arguably worse, it is said, "More people died from hunger than guns." The journey of the Lost Boys also took place during this time. Books and movies document the experience of 20,000 boys ages 6-17 walking 1,000 miles to Ethiopia and Kenya to escape Muslim soldiers. Unfortunately, half of them died during the journey from starvation, disease, wild animals, drowning in rivers, and Muslim bullets and machetes. Luckily, through the hard times, several million did escape. Many nations assisted the displaced Sudanese by establishing refugee locations. Ethiopia alone established seven camps where millions have settled for safety.

In January 2011, 99.7% of the South Sudanese people in Sudan and Refugee Camps throughout the world voted in favor of a Comprehensive Peace Agreement to free the South from the North and Sharia Law. On July 9, 2011, South Sudan proudly declared its independence.



The new nation now faces struggles of trying to establish itself. The economy is in shambles, infrastructure is destroyed, roads, public water and electricity range from poor to non-existent, no postal system, etc. South Sudan News, an internet news service, recently reported most young men are unemployed, heavily armed and deeply suspicious of other tribes. Tribal warfare, cattle rustling, murder and nonstop retaliation still exist.

Despite all the despair and struggles, most the Southern Sudanese people have a receptive spirit when it comes to Christianity. Furthermore, the leaders understand religion can play a major role in bringing unity to the country.



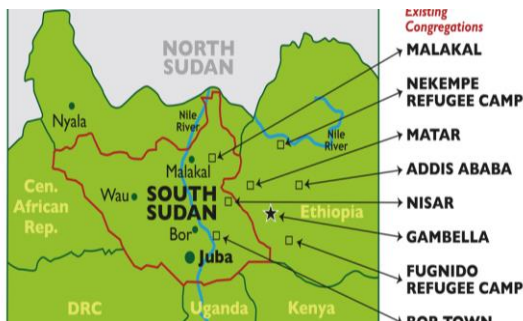
Years before the implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement, an Ethiopian Brother, Behailu Abebe (left), began evangelizing in the Refugee Camp in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. After a few weeks, Roger Talanyg (right), was converted. The two continued to work together evangelizing in the area and bringing more believers to Christ. Recognizing the great potential to evangelize in Addis Ababa and other refugee camps in Ethiopia, Brother Behailu and other Ethiopian Brethren began a School of Biblical Studies to train Sudanese preachers. The goal was to equip and encourage men to preach the gospel and seed congregations in their respective refugee camps – 2 Timothy 2:2.



In 2006, the Sunset International Bible Institute teamed with the Ethiopian School. The school was well received as evidenced by the incredible interest and the approximately one hundred fifty graduates to date. Many have since continued their education receiving an Associate or Bachelor Degree from universities in Ethiopia. After graduating from the universities, the men must work for the

Ethiopian Government for three years to fulfill the financial obligation of their education. Fortunately, most work in or near Sudanese Refugee Camps allowing them to also work with refugee congregations.

Many graduates have a burning desire to preach the gospel to their families and friends in Sudan. Consequently, several relocate near the South Sudan border traveling in and out Sudan seeding congregations despite the continued threat of persecution and/or loss of life.



Most graduates plan to work in South Sudan after fulfilling their commitment to the Ethiopian Government. They desire to be Vocational Missionaries, supporting themselves through their secular work and using their free time after work and on weekends to teach the gospel to their families, friends and countryman. Resulting from the independence of South Sudan, these men can

work and teach without fear of Muslim persecution. To date, congregations have seeded in the Malakal and Upper Nile Region, and the Jongeli Region of South Sudan. Congregations can also be found in all the Ethiopian Sudanese Refugee Camps in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Fugindo, Ethiopia, Matar, Ethiopia, Bagot Ethiopia and in Gambella, Ethiopia.

I am blessed to have taught in the School since 2008. I accomplish this by making 6-week mission trips each year. In August 2011, the director, myself and others associated with the school in Addis Ababa, decided to relocate the school in Gambella. Additionally, I was asked to direct the school and gladly accepted this challenge committing the next five years to full-time ministry to direct, train, mentor, and help relocate graduates desiring to return to South Sudan.



Relocating the school was advantageous for the following reasons: Gambella is geographically close to the South Sudan border; the Sudanese have free access to the border between South Sudan and Ethiopia; Gambella is centered among the Ethiopian Refugee Camps; the Ethiopian Government gave the Gambella Church 22,000 meters of

land for a place of prayer; the Brethren from Fresno, California constructed a building which seats one hundred people on the land; there is an existing congregation of approximately sixty five members, mostly graduates, etc.



The 2011 inaugural class in Gambella was very difficult. Students were housed in the church building and slept on four-inch rubber mats. The food was cooked and served under a make shift shelter and classes were held under the trees. Despite the conditions, twenty-one men graduated. Everyone expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to learn.

To aid in the continuation of the school, we must build additional structures. In 2013, we plan to double the size of the existing church building, add class rooms and construct a guest house for visitors, supporters, and instructors of the school. The guest house will have three or four bed rooms, sanitary rest rooms and a much-needed kitchen to prepare food.



Building a quality and permanent campus in Gambella will be expensive. Almost everything will be transported from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. We must provide our own well water, electricity, and sewage system. We are determined to do the job right. Once built, our hope is an efficient campus that allows us to focus on operating a school, not maintaining facilities.

Experience tells us windows of opportunity open and close rapidly. We must take advantage of teaching the gospel in this area while they are open. Difficulty will be the norm considering only 27% of the Sudanese over 15 years old are literate; however, many of the younger Sudanese speak decent English. To help accomplish this great mission we solicit God's favor, fervent prayers and financial support.



The fields are truly white unto harvest. I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this great English speaking mission opportunity with elders, mission committees, congregations and/or individuals.

Congregations or people desiring to contribute to this opportunity may make their **TAX-DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION** to Porter Church of Christ, ear marked South Sudan Mission and mail the same to Porter Church of Christ, P.O. Box 770, Porter, Texas 77365.

TAX DEDUCTIBLE donations of automobiles, campers, boats, etc. for resale or use in the ministry are welcomed. Donated laptops will be used in the ministry or given to preachers working in the mission. (Tax deductions for donations are based on appraised value).

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