



MP News – Sept. 2016

Light disperses darkness: Gospel in Egypt

The indigenous mission workers in Egypt work sacrificially usually among the poorest and often illiterate people. Their mission is twofold: to share the message of the gospel and do social work, which virtually brings the bright rays of light in a dark reality.

Baptist witness in Egypt

The multiethnic and socially diverse population of Egypt numbers nearly 80 million. About 90% of the Egyptians are Muslims and only 10% are Christians, Coptic and Orthodox being the largest groups. The Evangelical believers are the “minority of minority” in Egypt because they comprise only about 10% of the Christian margin.

The beginning of Baptist movement in Egypt is usually associated with Rev. Saddik Gerges. He was the first Egyptian Baptist to study theology in the United States, and returned back home in the early 1930’s to start the Baptist ministry in his homeland. Through his efforts many indigenous churches were planted.



The Baptist Convention in Egypt is now led by pastor Mounir Malaty from Cairo. The convention is comprised of 19 local churches and many groups which are considered church plants. The small convention has become active in seeking opportunities to plant new congregations. They send either some full time individual church planters or teams for the two handed mission: with the message of the gospel in one hand and social work in the other.

The EBF has been supporting several indigenous mission workers in Egypt and here are some excerpts from their current reports:

Youssef

In early 2015 our goal was to serve 100 families by the end of the year. Now I'm glad to say that we even passed this number... Near the end of 2015 we also started

evangelistic meetings that were held in a private house of a believer. Following that a team of Christian workers started a weekly gathering. We have seen how studying the Word of God influenced the lives of those who participated. Some have made decisions to accept Christ and gave up smoking.

Our goal now is that by the end of year 2016 we will have ministered to 200 families. In 2016 we hold our meetings on Fridays and Sundays. Additionally on Sundays we continue the children ministry for about 30 kids and organize a Bible study for adults on Wednesdays. The challenge is that we serve the people who are not originally evangelicals so there are some doctrinal issues that we have to deal with and most of our new contacts refuse to attend the meetings in private homes for cultural reasons.



Pastor Mounir and Yousef



Friday night service

As part of our work we also run a learning center for children. Some orphans and children of people who can't afford other schooling attend. There are ca. 70 kids and 7 teachers who are paid from donations as there are no fees because children come from poor families. The children learn how to read and write as well as how to care for health etc. This center started in October 2015 as the response for illiteracy which is a problem in Egypt.

Pray with us that we:

- Will reach 200 Families by the end of 2016 and raise full time helpers,,*
- May be able to continue the schooling center,*
- Complete the church building which will enable us to reach many more people.*

Saad

By God's grace we minister to about 300 persons. Since the last report we have added a prayer meeting on Saturday. We continue to meet on Thursday for a Bible study and organized an evangelistic campaign. Ten of the forty five who attended made sincere decisions to follow the Lord and we keep in touch with them. We are planning to have a baptism celebration soon.

We regularly visit the illiterates to tell stories from the Bible, sing songs and help them to memorize Bible verses. We have also helped many families with food packages. Our people keep praying for our own church building instead of the rented apartment that we are using right now. The Egyptian culture emphasizes the value of the church building. We collect offerings during services and five persons who have jobs tithe monthly. Most of that goes to the rent of the apartment.



Saad with his family



Congregation

We started an NGO as a sort of cover up for a day care for children and social help (distribution of parcels to the poorest). There are several helpers: someone is responsible for a teenage work, another for children's ministry, another for the day-care center. Team members lead bible studies and do home visitations. They visit up to 400 people and about 70 of this number attend our meetings.

Pray with us that:

- *The Lord may open the people's homes and hearts for the gospel,*
- *We may be able to train more workers to carry out the ministry,*
- *We may raise more finances to continue the ministry.*

Nabil

I call our congregation 'a mobile church' as meetings are organized in different homes. The recipients of our ministry are farmers and it is impossible to gather them together for one regular meeting because of the long distances and the differences in the working times. I visit them on a regular basis according to their social and spiritual needs. Personal visits in homes are helpful in building relationships with them.

The number of those we serve is increasing. They live under very tough conditions so we need to give a lot of our effort and time to care for them. Ten people have lately accepted the Lord and professed Jesus as their Savior and we are following them up. However there is opposition as the priests of the traditional church in the community threaten those who keep in touch with us. Although we are very encouraged when they call us back and ask us to continue visits with them. Another obstacle is the long distances between the farms which make it difficult to have everybody together.

Most of our contacts are illiterate people, so we use the orality ministry techniques. We are praying that the Lord may help us to start a reading class. I am planning to have a fixed discipleship group in the future in order to grow leaders. I plan to build a bigger team to reach out among the numerous people who are in our neighborhood.

Pray with us for:

- *Wisdom to be able to continue the ministry according to God's leading,*
- *Spiritual growth to those who recently accepted the Lord,*
- *Extension of mission team.*



Visit of mission worker with a family

Final conclusions and prayer requests:

It is evident that these mission workers work hard and sacrificially among the poorest and often illiterate people. They usually start ministry from providing social help in order to build up the trust and later try moving towards the gospel presentation through so called 'orality method' (telling bible stories to the illiterates), and eventually invite them to meetings where the bible stories may be discussed in groups and the principles of spiritual life explained. The Egyptian mission workers emphasize how particularly essential for them is to have church buildings which is somehow culturally imprinted in their understanding of a church.

1. Pray that the Evangelical churches may witness boldly and take current opportunities to do so.
2. Pray for the Egyptians that the light of the Gospel may disperse the spiritual darkness, including illiteracy.
3. Pray for wisdom and strength to overcome obstacles in the ministry, including fanaticism that hinders people from listening to the Word of God.

In Christ,

Daniel Trusiewicz
EBF Mission Coordinator

Planting new churches together!
For the glory of God!

