

church & religion

Hash Returns From African Mission

By Yvette McCullough
Staff Writer



Staff Photo by McCullough

Bishop R.K. Hash shows his wife the traditional tribal skirt he wore during his stay in Nigeria. Mrs. Hash is also wearing an african dress which was a gift from her husband.

After two weeks in an underdeveloped area of Nigeria, Bishop R.K. Hash has returned home thoroughly impressed with a people who are spiritually enriched materially though deprived.

Bishop Hash, on a missionary visit, went to Nigeria to see how much the missionary work his church was doing was paying off. What he found was no viable means of employment, superstitious religious and barely any modern conveniences.

"Much is needed there," Bishop Hash said. "They are highly superstitious and live in primitive ways."

The area that Bishop Hash visited and lived in for two weeks has very few modern conveniences. There are no job opportunities or industries. Most of the food that is eaten, grows wild and housing consists of huts or buildings without roofing.

However, the area, governed by five chiefs, has very little crime and rape is almost unheard of.

"People can sleep in the streets and no one would bother them," Bishop Hash said. "The law is handled by the chiefs (which are elected by the settlement) and they can also sentence a person to be killed."

Bishop Hash said that the people he met were very interested in Christianity. He said they discussed Biblical principles and he received "Great joy" out of teaching them. Before he left he was named Honorary Spiritual Chief.

"There were various structures that were built and left deserted by previous churches," Bishop Hash said. "There were structures built by the Lutherans, Methodists, three or four active churches of the Assembly of God and the Catholic Churches."

"The Catholic Churches are on the decline in this area," Bishop Hash continued. "Basically because the Catholics have promised them things and nothing has materialized."

The area desperately needs some type of health facility

or clinic, Bishop Hash said. The nearest hospital is 200 miles away and most people die before they get to it. The main goal is to try to stimulate interest so that the people can get the medical attention they need.

While he was there he stayed in the home of one of the settlement's chiefs. He found eating the African food difficult but once "the ice" was broken he found the food enjoyable. Most of the food eaten grew on the trees around them and consisted of oranges, bananas, plantains, pineapples, nuts and other fruits. Meats consisted of chicken and fish.

Women in the settlement did all of the work. The men would sit around all day, except they did build the houses. Women gathered the food, carried the water, cooked and cared for the children. Polygamy was also practiced, with some men having more than 20 wives.

"The only thing the men are required to do is to furnish a place for their wives to live," Dr. Hash said. "The men did go to work if they wanted their children to attend high school, since you had to pay to go to high school."

The people he met were basically warm hearted people. The people felt they had a positive connection to him and most American blacks.

"They see us Blacks like the children of Egypt, because we were forced to leave our home," Bishop Hash said. "Just about everyone I talked to wants to us to give help, but only so they can help themselves."

"They are very interested in Christianity because Christianity is offering them something religion hasn't offered them," Dr. Hash continued. "There are many religions, as such where they pick out someone and call him the messiah."

In the church he visited he found that the people enjoyed worshipping which consisted basically of singing and Bible reading. In one service he said they took up six offerings, where they would chant and march to the table and place their offering.

"I only wished in America with our bountiful blessings that we would give with the same spirit that they gave in their poverty," Bishop Hash said.

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THE GRACE OF GOD

Grace is a word that has popularity in the Christian vocabulary. Though used often, it is vastly misunderstood. Sometimes we confuse words as mercy to mean the same as grace. Mercy in its primary meaning has the idea of compassion shown toward the suffering whereas grace always carries the idea of favor of blessing toward the unworthy.

The use of grace in the Old & New Testaments reveals its proper definition. The Old Testament makes use of three words and others derived from them to signify grace. The Hebrew term **Ahebah** which means love tells of God's feeling toward His people Israel. Deut. 4:37; 23:5 are passages which tell us of the sovereignty of this love as Israel was a people unworthy but chosen because of God's free favor and oath to their fathers. (In the New Testament believers are beloved and accepted in Christ, Eph. 1:6). Chen or chanan is another term which means "to bend or to stoop," suggesting (fallen mankind). It is unexpected and undeserved favor because of our willful rebellion and sin against God. Indeed, we cannot even please God, Rom. 8:7,8. This favor is often mentioned in the Psalms as deliverance from trouble, oppression, poverty, calamity, and other problems. It is seen in proper names as Hananeel (God is gracious) and Hananiah (Jehovah is gracious). A third term Chessed means mercy, Ex. 20:6, also may mean "kindness," "lovingkindness," "goodness," or "steadfast love" because it is expressed thus: "Surely goodness and mercy (chesed) shall follow me all the days of my life."

In the New Testament the Greek word Charis signifies grace. It conveys the idea of "bestowing upon" or to be favored unmeritoriously. The cause of it being freely given is found in the bestower not the object so favored. In Luke 1:28, Mary was "highly favored." Mary was singled out from among many Jewish women to be Messiah's mother, but this was because God was gracious toward her.

Grace is always opposed to works. Works is the effort of fallen men to please the thrice holy God with a righteousness described by the prophet Isaiah as "filthy rags." It is the motion of man upward whereas grace is the motion of God downward on behalf of fallen men. Works give men something to boast of whereas grace removes all fleshly glorying and reminds men that all they have was given as undeserved favor or gift from God to whom be all the praise. The Apostle Paul declared this eternal principle, "Now to him that works is the reward not reckoned of grace but of debt," Rom. 4:4, "if it be of grace it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace," Rom. 11:6.

Grace is a stumblingblock to legalists or those who suppose their ability to obtain God's favor. Grace operates mainly with respect to man's sin, unrighteousness, blindness, unprofitableness toward God. Sinful man is "without strength," Rom. 5:6, the enemy of God and Christ, Col. 1:21, and "dead in trespasses and sins," Eph. 2:1. Thus men are utterly unable to perform any works pleasing and acceptable to God. God is gracious, indeed, the "God of all grace." Jonah said, "I know thou art a gracious God." All our salvation and preservation flows from Him as gracious.

Sunday School.....9:50 a.m.
Morning Worship.....11:00 a.m.
Evening Service.....7:30 p.m.
Monday Bible Study.....7:30 p.m.
1201 W. 13th St. [FAS-0877]

Church Notes

Hanes C.M.E.

Stewardess Board #4 of Hanes C.M.E. Church will present "The Wedding," a one act comedy written Emma T. Duren, assistant professor of education, Winston-Salem State University, Sunday, Dec. 30 at 5 p.m. The public is invited to attend. There is no admission. Rev. Clarence M. Savoy is the pastor.

Mt. Sinai

The second annual Ushers Banquet of Mt. Sinai United Holy Church of Sparta was held Sunday, Dec. 16 at 6 p.m. in the Sirlain Room at the Bonanza Steak House on 30th Street.

Many awards, comical and serious, were given out. Carol Choats, was given the Usher of the

Year Award, the most sought after award. The usher board also gave thanks to the pastor El-dress Grace Wilkins.

The officers of the board are as follows: Vanessa C. Jones, president; James A. Choate; Regina Brown, secretary and David Jones Jr., treasurer.

Obituaries

MR. ALFONZO NEWLIN

Funeral services for Mr. Alfonzo Newlin, of 162 Granville Dr., were conducted Thursday, Dec. 20 at United Metropolitan Baptist Church with Dr. J. Donald Ballard officiating. He died Sunday, Dec. 16 at his home. He was a lifelong resident.

Mr. Newlin was one of nine children born to the late Robert and Annie Holt Newlin, formerly of Alamance County. He was a member of United Metropolitan Baptist Church and a retired employee of Brown and Williamson Tobacco Company.

Survivors are one son, Nathaniel Newlin of the city; one sister Mrs. Cecil Newlin of the home; and several other relatives and friends. Interment was in the Evergreen Cemetery. (HOWARD-ROBINSON)

Help Hostages, Buy T-Shirts

A group of concerned Winston-Salem citizens have come up with a way to help the family members of the American hostages in Iran. T-shirt and a savings account have been set up here and letters of the projects are being sent to the hostages families.

T-shirts bearing the slogan, "Iran, Let Our People Go" have been printed and will sell for five dollars, with the money from the sales going to the families. A savings account for each of the families has been set up at Forsyth Bank and Trust Co. in Winston-Salem, to be used for expenses now or as a trust fund.

With each setting sun, there comes an hour of sadness. Come let us sit together and watch the nightfall... and supporting each other await the coming sunrise. For after a night of sadness, dawn will come at last. In your hour of need... your friends will see you through.

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Hunger Drive Continues

The "CROP World Hungry," and may have forgotten where to send their money: Make the checks payable to "CROP Hunger Event 1979" and mail them to Mr. John Murphy, Treasurer, Wachovia Bank & Trust, N.A., P.O. Box 3099, Winston-Salem 27103.

Year-end and one-time contributions should also be sent to Murphy. Highland Presbyterian Church, which was the local originator of the "Share Your Meals With The Hungry" plan, has collected more than \$3,300 since January. (this amount is not included in the above \$12,000 figure.)

This year's effort ends December 30.

WORD OF GOD

Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face continually.

1 Chronicles 16:11

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