

August 2013

Spiritual Beliefs and Practices of Akrampa, Part 2

Dear Friends,

Last month I began to respond to the first story request from the congregation. The topic requested was the spiritual beliefs and practices of Akrampa prior to the mission - and now. This article is part two of that answer. I hope to get more requests from the congregation soon! First Lutheran and I began the mission in Akrampa, Ghana in the mid 1990's after I returned home from Ohio from my first hip surgery. There have been many challenges, but also much joy in teaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the people of Akrampa.

In the fourth year of the mission, there was an outbreak of tuberculosis in Akrampa. The people presumed that it was a curse from the 'gods', and again began to sacrifice animals to the idols, seeking to know what offense they had committed. Two villagers died even after making sacrifices. I begged them to let me take over, and take the sick to the local hospital. They yielded to me as a challenge. The villagers that I took to the hospital for treatment lived! One, a woman named Yaayaa, who had two sons that she had 'given' or 'dedicated' to the fetish gods, has become a living example for the village. To the glory of Jesus, after Yaayaa survived the tuberculosis, she made her sons remove their dreadlocks and unshaven hair that were part of their dedication to the fetish gods. Her sons began attending the Akrampa mission school. And now the only time she kills a fowl is to be eaten for Christmas dinner. Yaayaa and her sons now attend a local church, and Yaayaa's brother, sister-in-law and Aunt have recently been baptized into the local Methodist church! Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and your household will be saved!

The villagers of Akrampa began to realize that their fetish gods and the ancestors were not going to save or protect them from anything. They began to see the sacrifices of spilled blood, broken eggs and chicken & goat carcasses as the unhygienic reasons for their illnesses. The teaching of the Gospel was beginning to make an impact on them. The villagers made a unanimous decision to move away from the past 'darkness', and enter into the Light of education through the mission school and the teachings of Jesus!

Now that some years have passed, the villagers can see that the first set of children to attend & graduate from the mission school have a different and more positive outlook on life and their future. Akrampa is cleaner, and with the fresh drinking water provided by First Lutheran and The Chapel, the whole village is healthier. There is a sense of freedom from the idol worship and the fear that came with it. Jesus Christ, the Light of the World, has indeed brought Light into Akrampa.

Thank you!
Pastor Ben